

**MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF AVON, OHIO, HELD MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2026
IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS OF THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING
AT 7:30 P.M.**

PRESENT:

Council Members: Council-at-Large – Mary Berges; 1st Ward – Jennifer Demaline; 2nd Ward – Anne Marie Etienne; 3rd Ward – Tony Moore; Council-at-Large – Michelle Patton; 4th Ward – Scott Radcliffe; Council-at-Large and Council President – Brian Fischer; Mayor – Bryan Jensen; Planning/Economic Development Coordinator – Pam Fechter; Law Director – John Gasior; Safety/Public Service Director – Duane Streater; Clerk of Council – Barbara Brooks

ABSENT:

City Engineer – Ryan Cummins; Finance Director – Steve Presley

Council President Brian Fischer called the meeting to order.

1. **ORDINANCE NO. 14-26 – AMENDING SECTION 660.05 OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF AVON TO PROVIDE REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADJACENT PROPERTY OWNERS AND OCCUPIERS FOR THE CITY'S WALKING PATHS AND TRAILS** Mr. Gasior

The third of three readings of Ordinance No. 14-26 will be on Monday, March 9, 2026

Mr. Gasior reported that following the previous week's meeting, he added the word "repair" to the last sentence of subsection (b) of the Ordinance. The provision now reads "for the maintenance and repair of any City installed, publicly funded walking path." This was the only modification made to the Ordinance.

Council President Fischer asked if there were any questions from Council Members, but none were raised.

2. **ORDINANCE NO. 16-26 - CREATING THE AVON COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION (CIC) AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN AND FILE THE APPROPRIATE ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION** Mayor Jensen/Mr. Beachler

The second of three readings of Ordinance No. 16-26 will be on Monday, March 9, 2026

Mayor Jensen introduced attorney Blake Beachler to provide an overview of the Community Improvement Corporation (CIC) and its capabilities. Mr. Beachler, of the law firm Calfee, Halter, and Griswold, explained that while the CIC was originally conceived to address a specific property matter, it has broad statutory powers under City Council supervision.

Mr. Beachler outlined the CIC's extensive capabilities, including the ability to hold, manage, lease, and even mortgage properties - something cities cannot do when purchasing property. He highlighted revolving loan programs for small businesses and startups that have been turned down by at least one local bank, noting that this protects the City from lender liability by housing the loan within the nonprofit corporation.

The CIC can assist with economic development efforts by cataloging available land for sale from various public entities and private parties, helping with marketing and land assembly for larger companies. Mr. Beachler referenced the Bendix project as an example of how a CIC can facilitate development.

He emphasized that all CIC activities require City Council approval, particularly for property sales and purchase prices. The organization is subject to Sunshine Laws, Open Meetings Act, and public records requests, with limited exceptions for confidential economic development negotiations until agreements are signed.

Council President Fischer asked about other municipalities that have formed CICs, and Mr. Beachler confirmed there are many throughout Ohio and have been around since the mid-1960's, noting recent formations in Avon Lake and North Ridgeville.

Mayor Jensen explained that while originally set up to examine one specific property, the CIC would provide broader benefits. He mentioned working with Finance Director, Mr. Presley, to compile information about property values, potential income tax revenue, and costs of maintaining unused buildings for the upcoming Economic Development Committee Meeting.

Mr. Moore expressed concerns about establishing the CIC before determining whether to sell the property in question, citing 70% opposition from the residents he polled, to development at what he considers a dangerous intersection. He questioned whether they should pause and decide on their intentions before creating the CIC.

Mr. Beachler responded that the CIC could be established now without immediate use, providing flexibility for future opportunities. The setup costs are minimal, and it could pursue 501(c)(3) status, which typically takes 6-9 months for IRS processing.

Mr. Radcliffe supported creating the CIC as a proactive tool for their municipal toolbox, whether or not it's used for the current property.

Ms. Berges requested clarification on the formation process. Mr. Beachler explained that Council would first pass the Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to sign articles of incorporation (forms that are part of the Exhibit A to the Ordinance), which are filed with the Secretary of State and reviewed by the Attorney General. After approval, the CIC Board would adopt Code of Regulations and could then apply for 501(c)(3) status.

The discussion covered board composition, with the Ordinance specifying in Section 4 that the Mayor, Finance Director, Planning/Economic Development Coordinator, one At-Large Council Member, and three City residents appointed by the Mayor subject to Council approval. The statutory requirement is that two-fifths of members must be City Officials. Mr. Beachler cautioned that too many members might slow the process down, but the membership should be large enough that allows for appropriate deliberation.

Ms. Berges inquired about the selection process for the At-Large Council Member. Mayor Jensen suggested that Council could select more than one Council Member to serve, with the selection made among Council Members. Law Director Gasior clarified timing questions about Board appointments and bylaw adoption.

Ms. Berges asked whether specific backgrounds or experience would be sought in prospective resident members serving on the CIC. Mayor Jensen indicated flexibility in the resident appointments, which could include individuals with financial, legal, or real estate backgrounds.

Ms. Berges said it was mentioned that the CIC would be used for Master Plan recommended changes, and she asked if the recommended changes to the Master Plan would include rezoning. Mayor Jensen responded that the CIC could potentially make recommendations back to the Council on rezoning matters but emphasized that the CIC itself does not have authority over zoning decisions. Any recommendations regarding rezoning would ultimately come to the City Council for approval.

Mr. Gasior asked about the appointment process for the CIC board, prompting a discussion on whether the Board Members should be selected concurrently with the passage of the Ordinance or established later. He highlighted the possibility of introducing provisions for member removal within the bylaws, which could specify whether a simple majority or a three-fifths majority of Council would be required for such actions. The matter of when Council should adopt these bylaws was also raised. Mr. Beachler clarified that the Code of Regulations for the nonprofit would be the governing document and would be adopted by the CIC Board of Directors once established. The discussion emphasized the importance of setting up the Board thoughtfully to ensure smooth operations and alignment with Council objectives. The passage of the Ordinance was essentially authorizing the Mayor to sign and file the articles of incorporation and there was time to form the Board of Directors for the CIC. Discussion included that the Ordinance would need to be amended prior to adoption if the composition of the Board were modified.

Ms. Patton inquired about the Board's role in setting sale criteria, with Mr. Beachler confirming that while the CIC would assist with marketing and selling, all sales must return to Council for approval, including purchase price and buyer selection. He assured Council there would be no legal ramifications for Council rejecting buyers, as it remains City-owned property requiring Council approval for any sale.

Mayor Jensen emphasized the importance of having Board Members with similar thinking to Council to avoid adversarial relationships between the bodies.

Mayor Jensen reminded Council to use facts when looking at the sale of the current City Hall property. He noted that while the intersection at 36080 Chester Road may seem busy at times, it is not necessarily busier than other areas, such as the intersection of State Route 83 and Detroit Road, which sees much more traffic. The Mayor emphasized the importance of controlling and improving traffic flow through potential buyers' traffic studies and necessary infrastructure improvements. He also mentioned the financial implications of leaving the building unused, which could incur maintenance costs, urging the Council to weigh these factors carefully.

3. [ORDINANCE NO. 18-26 – TO AMEND THE SPECIAL USE PERMIT GRANTED TO THE CITY OF AVON FOR A PUBLIC PARK LOCATED AT 3701 VETERANS MEMORIAL PARKWAY AND KNOWN AS VETERANS MEMORIAL PARK TO INCLUDE ADDITIONAL IMPROVEMENTS](#) Planning Referral

Ms. Fechter explained that this Ordinance amends the Special Use Permit for Veterans Memorial Park to include lighting at the ball fields, which was requested by the Little League several months ago.

No questions were raised by Council Members.

4. [ORDINANCE NO. 19-26 – TO AMEND THE PLANNING AND ZONING CODE SECTION 1262.07\(e\)\(3\) AS IT RELATES TO THE WESTERN RESERVE DEVELOPMENT DESIGN AND IMPROVEMENT STANDARDS](#) Planning Referral

The first of three readings of Ordinance No. 19-26 will be on Monday, March 9, 2026
A Public Hearing for Ordinance No. 19-26 will be held on Monday, April 13, 2026, at 7:25 p.m.

Ms. Fechter reported on increased activity in subdivisions requiring septic systems. The Code amendment would require developers to install dry sewers alongside septic systems for each lot, making future connections to public sewer systems quicker and easier when those systems become available in the area.

Ms. Patton commended the forward-thinking approach, noting it would minimize future costs for homeowners when connecting to public sewers.

5. [ORDINANCE NO. 20-26 – TO AMEND THE PLANNING AND ZONING CODE SECTION 1246.05\(b\)\(2\) AS IT RELATES TO WALKING PATHS AND TRAILS](#) Planning Referral

The first of three readings of Ordinance No. 20-26 will be on Monday, March 9, 2026
A Public Hearing for Ordinance No. 20-26 will be held on Monday, April 13, 2026, at 7:20 p.m.

Ms. Fechter explained that in conjunction with Ordinance No. 14-26, this amendment clarifies walking path standards to meet current requirements. The change modifies the language from requiring walking paths to "be 8 feet in width" to "be **at least** 8 feet in width," providing greater flexibility while maintaining minimum standards.

6. [ORDINANCE NO. 21-26 – TO ACCEPT IMPROVEMENTS IN THE VILLAS AT CHESTER COMMONS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION/INSTALLATION OF PUBLIC UTILITIES CONSISTING OF PUBLIC WATER, SANITARY SEWER MAINS AND APPURTENANCES THERETO](#) Mr. Streator

Mr. Streator reported this Ordinance accepts improvements at the Villas at Chester Commons development, including sanitary sewer, water, and storm sewer systems along Chester Road. All departmental requirements

have been satisfied, and he is coordinating with Mr. Presley to ensure appropriate deposits are made before the next Monday meeting.

7. ORDINANCE NO. 22-26 – AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO TAKE ALL ACTION NECESSARY TO ACCEPT THE NORTHEAST OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY COUNCIL (NOPEC) ENERGIZED COMMUNITY GRANT(S) Mr. Presley

Mayor Jensen announced the availability of approximately \$80,000 in NOPEC grant funding, similar to previous grants that helped fund lighting along Detroit Road. The Ordinance authorizes him to accept these funds.

Mr. Radcliffe asked if this was the same grant type that funded lighting along Jaycox Road and Nagel Road, and Mayor Jensen confirmed it was similar funding used for street lighting improvements about five to six years ago, particularly on Chester Road.

Ms. Patton asked about plans for the Detroit Road lighting extension. Mayor Jensen explained the money would continue the lighting system from its current location through the intersection at State Route 83 and Detroit Road, stopping just past the French Creek district boundary.

In answer to a question from Mrs. Demaline, Mayor Jensen added that the grant could also potentially fund lighting improvements at the Avon Early Learning Center parking lot, depending on final costs and budget allocations.

8. REPORTS AND COMMENTS

MAYOR JENSEN reported on his conversation with the MetroParks Director, Jim Ziemnik regarding the French Creek trail connection. The MetroParks are committed to connecting their trail when the City's trail is installed, and they are exploring the possibility of coordinating projects for potential cost savings through simultaneous bidding, though they would remain separate projects.

The Mayor addressed growing complaints about new street lighting on Nagel Road and Jaycox Road from residents who find that the lights are illuminating their front yards. He explained that Council had previously requested these dark rural streets be lit for safety reasons, but some residents are now objecting to the change. The lights on Jaycox Road were recently installed, with more installations pending. He sought Council guidance on whether to continue the lighting program, noting they face similar challenges to the fiber installation project where residents wanted the service but then complained about implementation issues.

Public Service Director, Mr. Streator, confirmed the Jaycox Road lights are operational, but installation is not yet complete, and they have received complaints from residents about lights shining in their windows.

Mr. Radcliffe expressed his support for continuing the lighting program, acknowledging the adjustment period for residents but emphasizing the safety benefits for all. He noted that the addition of street lighting could significantly aid runners, walkers, and drivers, especially on roads like Jaycox Road where visibility is crucial. Mr. Radcliffe also highlighted the importance of proactive measures to ensure the City's infrastructure accommodates growing needs, underscoring the necessity of maintaining a safe and well-lit environment for residents.

Mayor Jensen noted the spacing is approximately 1,000 feet between lights, much wider than typical Detroit Road lighting. He added that they would continue with the addition of street lighting where needed as funds allow, but he wanted to make Council aware that the City was receiving some complaints.

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

MS. BERGES, AT LARGE, had no comments.

MRS. DEMALINE, WARD 1, said she had not previously heard of street lighting being added on French Creek Road. Mayor Jensen responded that it was the next natural step, especially with the plan to put a walking trail there. He mentioned that the addition of a walking trail could lead to lighting needs for safety reasons but clarified that no immediate actions were being taken. Mrs. Demaline requested to be kept involved in any discussions regarding lighting on French Creek Road moving forward.

Mrs. Demaline requested quarterly updates on capital and infrastructure projects, asking for the spreadsheet to be included in a future Work Session packet for review and subsequent discussion. She also asked that Mr. Cummins provide information on the 2026 Sidewalk Program for the March 16th meeting.

She asked about the timeline for moving into the new City Hall, and Mayor Jensen indicated they are very close, and he is planning a Council tour within two weeks. They are waiting for warmer weather to complete concrete work around the front entrance.

Lastly, Mrs. Demaline spoke regarding Mills Road repaving, and Mayor Jensen reported they are still hoping North Ridgeville will partner on the project from State Route 83 to Jaycox Road, as North Ridgeville has only committed to the section from Stoney Ridge Road to State Route 83. If no partnership develops, Avon will need to budget separately for repairs, as the road has deteriorated further over winter.

MS. ETIENNE, WARD 2, had no comments.

MR. MOORE, WARD 3, announced he would be absent from the March 9th Regular Meeting of Council. He also mentioned ongoing challenges with fiber installations, including damaged yards and interrupted internet service on Kensington Drive, asking Mr. Streater to address these issues with the fiber company.

MS. PATTON, AT LARGE, expressed her commitment to maintaining property values across all zoning types (R1, R2, R3) through improved buffering between different zoning classifications. She praised Planning Coordinator Ms. Fechter's work on recent projects like Providence Church, Biggby Coffee, French Creek neighborhood when Qdoba was added, along with University Hospital Urgent Care. She would like to research and propose enhanced buffering requirements. She plans to send research from other cities to the Planning Commission within the week and requested the Council President refer the matter to Planning Commission and coordinate with Ms. Fechter for appropriate meeting scheduling.

MR. RADCLIFFE, WARD 4, noted increasing potholes and road damage from freeze-thaw cycles and appreciated street crews' patching efforts. He requested continued attention to spring road repairs, concrete work, and sewer grate maintenance by making sure the City has time and resources devoted to keeping those items in good working order. Mayor Jensen asked Council Members to report any issues they observe in their wards or throughout the City.

MR. FISCHER, AT LARGE, had no comments.

DIRECTORS/ADMINISTRATION:

MR. CUMMINS, CITY ENGINEER, was absent.

MS. FECHTER, PLANNING/ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR, had no comments.

MR. GASIOR, LAW DIRECTOR, had no comments.

MR. PRESLEY, FINANCE DIRECTOR, was absent.

MR. STREATOR, SAFETY DIRECTOR/PUBLIC SERVICE DIRECTOR, reported February fire department statistics: 299 ambulance calls, 62 fire calls, and other emergency responses, totaling numbers approximately consistent with the previous year. The first two months of 2026 are tracking similarly to 2025.

AUDIENCE:

No audience members provided comments.

9. ADJOURN: 8:21 p.m.
There being no further business, the Work Session of Council was adjourned.

PASSED: _____

SIGNED BY: _____
Brian Fischer, Council President

ATTEST: _____
Barbara Brooks, Clerk of Council