

THE CITY OF HURON, OHIO
Proceedings of the Huron City Council
Regular Meeting Tuesday, May 26, 2026 at 6:30pm

Call to Order

The Mayor called to order the regular Council meeting of May 26, 2026 to order at 6:30pm. The Mayor called for a moment of silence. After the moment of silence, the Mayor led in saying the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Roll Call

The Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll for the regular meeting of Council. The following members of Council answered present: **Joe Dike, Sam Artino, William Biddlecombe, Monty Tapp, Mark Claus and Tom Harris**. Member absent: **Joel Hagy**.

Motion

Motion by Mr. Claus to excuse the absence of Councilman Hagy.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe, Tapp, Claus (6)

NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed and Mr. Hagy's absence was excused.

Staff in attendance: City Manager Stuart Hamilton, Law Director Todd Schrader, Attorney Matt Waters of Seeley, Savidge, Ebert & Gourash, Fire Chief Kevin McGraw, Police Chief Terry Graham, Parks and Recreation Director Doug Steinwart, Water Superintendent Jack Evans and Terri Welkener, Clerk of Council.

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mr. Harris to approve the minutes of the regular Council meeting of May 12, 2026.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe, Tapp, Claus (6)

NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed and the minutes of the May 26, 2026 regular Council meeting were adopted.

Audience Comments

The Mayor directed members of the audience having comments to approach the podium, state their name and address Council, and advised that they would have 3 minutes to make their comments.

Three residents addressed Council during the public comment period.

Magdalena Payne, 215 Pittsburgh Avenue, expressed frustration over damage to her yard, driveway, and property resulting from two water main breaks on Cleveland Road West near Pittsburgh Avenue over the Memorial Day weekend. She described mud accumulation throughout her property, water that ran uncontrolled for several hours, and being awakened by police at 3:00 AM due to flooding in her backyard. She requested to know when repairs to her property would be made and who would cover the costs of water used in cleanup. She also requested an apology from a staff member at the water department whom she described as dismissive when she called on Saturday. Mayor Tapp acknowledged her concerns and advised her to remain for the City Manager's report, in which the matter would be addressed directly.

Sandy Nickoli, 915 Strowbridge, raised two concerns related to the upcoming Route 6 construction closure. First, she expressed worry about the anticipated increase in traffic on Adams Avenue, which is expected to serve as an alternate route during the closure period, particularly on event days at Fabens Park. She asked whether proactive plans were in place, including potential police presence, speed bumps, or parking restrictions. Second, she noted concerns about motorized scooters, minibikes, and e-bikes being operated unsafely in the neighborhood, including on sidewalks and down the middle of the street, and asked whether the city had addressed policies governing their use. Mayor Tapp indicated both matters would be addressed in the City Manager's report and that the Police Chief would be called upon to speak to the e-bike issue.

Cindy DeFazio, 567 Adams Avenue, echoed Ms. Nickoli's concerns about Adams Avenue traffic, noting that parked work trucks and other large vehicles already create narrow passing conditions on the street. She described past incidents of reckless behavior by visitors to Fabens Park, including motorcycles performing wheelies on Adams Avenue. She asked whether traffic could be directed one-way on Adams during the closure, with an alternate exit route through Wilbur or Wilder Street. She also expressed concern about e-bikes traveling at unsafe speeds on the sidewalk and through the neighborhood, and urged Council to develop solutions before someone is injured.

Old Business

Ordinance No. 2026-11 (second reading)

Motion by Mr. Dike that Ordinance No. 2026-11 (AN ORDINANCE AMENDING PARAGRAPH 331.37(a) OF SECTION 331.37 (DRIVING UPON SIDEWALKS, STREET LAWNS OR CURBS) OF CHAPTER 331 (OPERATION GENERALLY) OF THE HURON CODIFIED ORDINANCES) be placed on its second reading.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe, Tapp, Claus, Harris (6)
NAYS: None (0)

There being five or more votes in favor, the motion passed and Ordinance No. 2026-11 was placed on its second reading. The Law Director read the Ordinance by its title only.

City Manager Stuart Hamilton provided context, noting that approximately three months prior, staff conducted a comprehensive review of all codified ordinances pertaining to e-bikes and low-speed mobility devices, working within the framework of the Ohio Revised Code to clarify where these devices may and may not be operated. During that review, a direct conflict was discovered between two sections of existing city code — one permitting low-speed mobility devices on sidewalks and another prohibiting the same. Because Ohio Revised Code establishes that low-speed mobility devices are permitted on sidewalks, the ordinance was amended to align city code with state law and eliminate the internal conflict.

In light of the audience comments, City Manager Hamilton elaborated on the city's broader approach to e-bike management. The Police Department's School Resource Officer initiated an educational program in local schools to inform students about applicable rules and speed restrictions. The city also enacted legislation permitting confiscation of e-devices from violators, with the intention of engaging parents directly in the solution. Hamilton acknowledged that technology in this area evolves rapidly, making regulation an ongoing challenge.

Police Chief Terry Graham was called upon to address the issue further. He affirmed that officers actively stop violators — primarily juveniles — and pursue education as the primary tool, while enforcement up to and including confiscation remains available. He acknowledged that 100% compliance is not a realistic expectation, drawing a parallel to persistent adult violations such as speeding and impaired driving. Chief Graham emphasized the importance of residents calling the non-emergency dispatch line — **419-433-4114** — when violations are observed in real time, rather than reporting them days later when officers can no longer respond effectively.

Law Director Schrader addressed a question from Councilmember Dike regarding whether the city could outright ban e-bikes. He explained that Ohio Revised Code prohibits local authorities from banning bicycles or electric bicycles from streets, and that the city's regulatory authority is limited to areas such as helmet requirements, where local ordinances may expand upon — but not undercut — the thresholds set by state law. He characterized the overall regulatory landscape as a "labyrinth" that continues to evolve as new devices emerge, citing an electric unicycle capable of reaching 93 miles per hour as a forthcoming example of the challenge.

Councilmember Harris raised the question of at what point an electric bike effectively becomes a motorcycle requiring licensure. Schrader noted that state law already classifies electric bicycles into Class 1, 2, and 3 categories based on weight, voltage, and top speed, though enforcement remains practically difficult given the challenge of identifying device classifications on sight.

Vice-Mayor Biddlecombe asked Chief Graham to share the non-emergency dispatch number for the benefit of the public, which the Chief provided as noted above.

New Business

Resolution No. 46-2026

Motion by Mr. Tapp that the three-reading rule be waived and Resolution No. 46-2026 (A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A GRANT APPLICATION SUBMISSION BY THE HURON FIRE DEPARTMENT TO THE ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT PROGRAM IN THE AMOUNT OF NINETY THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED NINETY-TWO AND 10/100 DOLLARS (\$90,992.10); AND FURTHER AUTHORIZING THE CITY

MANAGER TO ACCEPT THE GRANT AWARD IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED NINETY THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED NINETY-TWO AND 10/100 DOLLARS (\$90,992.10) AND ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH THE ASSISTANCE TO FIREFIGHTERS GRANT PROGRAM, SHOULD THE APPLICATION BE SUCCESSFUL) be placed on its first reading.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Tapp, Claus, Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (6)
NAYS: None (0)

There being five or more votes in favor, the three-reading rule was waived, and Resolution No. 46-2026 was placed upon its first reading. The Law Director read the Resolution by its title only.

(Note for the record: The amount was confirmed as \$90,992.10, correcting a minor transcription discrepancy noted during the reading.)

Fire Chief McGraw reported that FEMA had recently reopened the Assistance to Firefighters Grant program, which had been closed for several years, and that the city had only a 35-day window to apply for the program, which totals approximately \$240 million nationally. The grant funds would be used toward replacement of fire hose inventory, much of which dates to the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. The city's required 5% match amounts to approximately \$4,800, for which budget funds are available. He noted the department previously utilized the same grant program to purchase new turnout gear two years ago.

The Mayor asked if there were further questions. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on final adoption. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Tapp, Claus, Harris, Hagy, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (7)
NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, Resolution No. 46-2026 was adopted. The Resolution as adopted was signed by the Mayor and Clerk of Council and will take effect immediately.

Resolution No. 47-2026

Motion by Mr. Artino that the three-reading rule be waived and Resolution No. 47-2026 (A RESOLUTION ORDERING THE REPAIR OF THE PUBLIC SIDEWALKS ABUTTING CERTAIN PREMISES IN THE CITY OF HURON) be placed on its first reading.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Artino, Biddlecombe, Tapp, Claus, Harris, Dike (6)
NAYS: None (0)

There being five or more votes in favor, the three-reading rule was waived, and Resolution No. 47-2026 was placed upon its first reading. The Law Director read the Resolution by its title only.

City Manager Hamilton explained that sidewalk repair legislation for existing districts had previously been passed, but that two properties — a vacant lot on Tiffin Avenue and 310 South Street — had been inadvertently omitted. This resolution adds those two properties to the existing sidewalk repair process.

The Mayor asked if there were further questions. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on final adoption. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Artino, Biddlecombe, Tapp, Claus, Harris, Dike (6)
NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, Resolution No. 47-2026 was adopted. The Resolution as adopted was signed by the Mayor and Clerk of Council and will take effect immediately.

Motion

Motion by Mr. Biddlecombe to set a public hearing on the proposed 2027 Municipal Tax Budget for Tuesday, July 14, 2026 at 6:30pm, immediately preceding the regular Council meeting.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Biddlecombe, Tapp, Claus, Harris, Dike, Artino (6)
NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed and the public hearing on the 2027 Municipal Tax Budget was scheduled for Tuesday, July 14, 2026.

Motion

Motion by Mayor Tapp to appoint George Collins to the Finance Committee, replacing the seat vacated by Lisa Hemker.

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Biddlecombe, Tapp, Claus, Harris, Dike, Artino (6)
NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed and George Collins was appointed to the Finance Committee.

City Manager's Discussion

The City Manager spoke on several topics:

Donation — Huron Lions Club: The Huron Lions Club donated \$5,978.35 to assist in vinyl siding the two boat basin shelters. Council was asked to formally accept the donation.

Motion

Motion by Mr. Tapp to accept the donation from the Huron Lion's Club in the amount of \$5,978.35.

Mayor Tapp asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Tapp, Claus, Harris, Dike, Artino, Biddlecombe (6)

NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor, the motion passed.

Route 6 Phase 2 Construction: The full closure of Route 6 is scheduled from June 8 through August 14, 2026, spanning from the west side of Williams Street to the Route 2 interchange. Crews will begin at Center Street and work westward. The general public detour will be via Bogart Road and Cleveland Road West to Rye Beach Road; the commercial detour will use Route 2 to Route 13. Hamilton clarified, in response to a comment made during audience remarks, that the closure is for a maximum of 60 days — not 90 — and that contractors are contractually obligated to meet that timeline.

Regarding traffic management on Adams Avenue during the closure, Hamilton stated that the plan for event days at Fabens Park is to allow one-way inbound traffic on Adams Avenue while blocking outbound traffic, directing exiting vehicles through Taylor and Wilbor streets. On larger event days, staff will evaluate the feasibility of opening the eastbound stretch from the Route 2 interchange to ease traffic pressure. Additional police presence will be deployed on busier days.

Hamilton also noted that newly installed green bike lane paint is being applied along the corridor, with green hash markings at intersections and white paint and symbols elsewhere. He asked the community to be respectful of the painters, noting they are volunteers whose employer is providing paint at cost, and that the work is taking longer than anticipated.

Planning and Zoning — Sign Code Amendments: The first work session on proposed sign ordinance amendments was held on May 19th. The contractor will return for further review at a public Planning Commission meeting on June 17th. Residents with interest are welcome to attend.

Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA): Council Member Steve Baron resigned his position on the BZA, leaving a vacancy. The city is actively seeking interested applicants.

Safety Services: All ODNR-approved buoys have been placed in Lake Erie by the Police Department. The annual Water Safety Days program was held successfully, with 110 third-grade students participating across various stations, coordinated through a partnership between police, fire, parks, the Coast Guard, and ODNR. The new police boat completed its inaugural weekend of active duty, and Hamilton expressed appreciation to the donor and partners who made the acquisition possible.

Income Tax Receipts: Year-to-date income tax receipts stand at \$1.68 million, trailing 2025 figures by 10%. However, the pace is more closely aligned with May of last year, suggesting stabilization.

Water Department — Main Breaks: Hamilton provided a detailed account of the two water main breaks on Cleveland Road West near Pittsburgh Avenue that occurred over the Memorial Day weekend, directly responding to the concerns raised by Ms. Payne during audience comments.

The first break was reported at 3:15 AM, and the main was isolated by 4:45 AM. Hamilton explained that response time on a large 16-inch transmission main requires two personnel, with the on-call employee

potentially traveling from as far as Castalia or Sandusky before reaching the site and mobilizing. The main was repaired, backfilled with stone, and crews departed in the early afternoon. Approximately one hour later, a second break occurred just east of the first repair site — a known phenomenon in which fixing the weakest point causes the adjacent weakest point to fail under pressure. Staff were notified of the second break at 5:15 PM and on site by 7:15 PM. Water service was restored at 11:00 PM. Throughout both events, the Fire Department deployed a pumper truck to move standing water, though efforts were complicated by storm drain blockages from debris. On the Saturday of the holiday weekend, staff successfully mobilized vendors to bring in trash pumps and hoses to remove the remaining water.

Hamilton stated that all repairs were conducted in full compliance with EPA standards, and acknowledged the significant disruption caused to neighboring properties, particularly given the low-lying terrain near Pittsburgh Avenue. Regarding property damage, Hamilton directed affected residents to first file a claim with their homeowner's insurance carrier, noting that city insurance does not cover damage to private property. Law Director Schrader added that if the homeowner's insurer concludes the city bears some culpability — even to the extent of the deductible — they will contact the municipality directly, as is common practice following similar incidents such as vehicle accidents involving city infrastructure.

Regarding the complaint about a water department staff member's conduct, Hamilton noted that the employee's recollection of the conversation differed from Ms. Payne's account — the employee recalled stating that rain "wasn't helping" the situation, rather than attributing the flooding to rain alone. Hamilton expressed that he was not dismissing either account, acknowledged the high-stress nature of the weekend, and emphasized that all staff complaints are taken seriously. He invited residents who cannot resolve issues through the standard phone line to contact him directly.

Streets Department: Hamilton advised that the Streets Department will be operating under restricted staffing for approximately the next month due to personnel transitions and asked for public patience during this period.

Huron Power and Power (HPP): HPP has completed replacement of all electric meter heads, bringing the entire system to fully remote reads. This infrastructure upgrade positions the city for efficiency and scalability as new customers are added.

Personnel: A part-time Zoning Inspector position is currently open and being advertised on the city's website. The position is expected to involve approximately 24 hours per week and may be well-suited for a retiree. Interested applicants were encouraged to apply online.

Upcoming June Meetings:

- Utilities Committee: Wednesday, June 3rd at 5:00 PM, Council Chambers
- BZA: Monday, June 8th at 5:30 PM, Council Chambers
- City Council: Tuesday, June 9th at 6:30 PM, Council Chambers
- Planning Commission: Wednesday, June 17th at 5:00 PM, Council Chambers
- City Council: Tuesday, June 23rd at 6:30 PM, Council Chambers

Mayor's Discussion

Mayor Tapp reiterated the importance of contacting the police non-emergency line when violations are observed in real time, noting that reports submitted days after an incident limit the department's ability to respond. He extended this guidance broadly, encouraging residents to report any concern — including unpermitted fires and other non-emergency matters — promptly so that appropriate action can be taken.

Mayor Tapp expressed empathy toward Ms. Payne, acknowledging the distress of property flooding and emphasizing that residents are always welcome to raise their voices at council meetings. He thanked Ms. Payne, Ms. Nickoli, and Ms. DeFazio for attending and encouraged residents who cannot attend in person to contact the Mayor or City Manager directly with questions.

Mayor Tapp offered condolences to the family of Lowell Johnson, a longtime Huron dentist and member of the Fire Department for nearly 40 years, who recently passed away. He also recognized the Huron Yacht Club for hosting a well-organized and meaningful Memorial Day event. He again noted the open BZA position and encouraged community members to consider volunteering.

For the Good of the Order

Councilmember Harris had nothing additional to add.

Councilmember Claus thanked the three residents who spoke during audience comments, noting the value of hearing concerns directly from the community and being able to respond with information about the city's ongoing efforts. He also extended appreciation to all city departments — particularly safety services, fire, police, and the water department — for their work during difficult emergency situations.

Vice-Mayor Biddlecombe thanked attending residents and encouraged those watching from home to reach out to Council members directly. He reported from the most recent school board meeting that retiring teachers were honored, and that the new school board members are planning to re-evaluate facility needs with a potential levy pursuit in 2027. He noted that Nickel Plate Beach season parking passes are now available for purchase at the Parks office on Wall Street. He congratulated the Class of 2026 and asked residents to come out and support our local events, programs and student athletes, and GO TIGERS!

Councilmember Artino thanked attendees for their public input and expressed appreciation for civic engagement.

Councilmember Dike extended condolences to the family of Lowell Johnson, recalling him as a unique community member. He recognized the baseball tournament held over the weekend, organized by Jason Caponi and Chris Leibacher of the Edison and Castalia communities, noting that local organizations were involved in volunteering and that proceeds benefited community groups. He expressed hope that the city continues to partner with locally connected organizers for future events. He also underscored the importance of proactive communication with tournament organizers about the Route 6 closure and Adams Avenue traffic plan. On the topic of e-bikes, Councilmember Dike acknowledged the difficulty parents face at home in regulating their children's use of such devices and reiterated the call for parental responsibility.

Executive Session

None.

Adjournment**Motion by Mr. Biddlecombe to adjourn the regular meeting of Council.**

The Mayor asked if there were any questions on the motion. There being none, the Mayor directed the Clerk to call the roll on the motion. Members of Council voted as follows:

YEAS: Biddlecombe, Tapp, Claus, Harris, Dike, Artino (6)

NAYS: None (0)

There being a majority in favor of the motion, the regular Council meeting of May 26, 2026, was adjourned at 7:11pm.

09 JUN 2026

Adopted: _____


Terri S. Welkener, Clerk of Council