



**RAVENNA CITY COUNCIL
COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE MEETING MINUTES
January 21, 2025**

The public meeting was held in person in Council Chambers.

The Committee of the Whole Meeting was called to order at 6:00 P.M. by Council President, Rob Kairis.

Council present: Council President Rob Kairis, Amy Michael, Tim Calfee, Christina West, Cheryl Wood, Matt Harper, Paul Moskun, Tyler Marovich

Also in attendance: Mayor Frank Seman; Fire Chief, Mark Chapple, Service Director, Tim Contant; City Engineer, Bob Finney; Finance Director, Tami Lorence; Finance Controller, Brian Huff; Council Clerk, Chelsea Gregor; Cliff Soudil, Larry Silenius, Louis Dudek, Paul Schechtman, Pam Schechtman, Peter Martin, Ted Manfrass, Cynthia Miller

The first item on the agenda was to approve the Committee of the Whole meeting minutes from December 23, 2025.

- Motion to approve the December 23, 2025, Committee of the Whole minutes by Ms. Michael, 2nd by Mr. Moskun- **All Ayes**

The second item was an ordinance authorizing the purchase of a 2025 Chevy 1500 in the Street Department.

Mr. Harper stated that the item is to purchase another vehicle for the Street Department fleet.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

The third item was an ordinance increasing the water and sewer rates according to COLA and CPI recommendations.

Mr. Moskun stated that the increase is done most years which is very important. He said that the rate increase is 2.9% and that it is not the same every year. Mr. Moskun stated that the increase will be divided by the water meter, water and sewer departments.

Mr. Kairis noted that two separate ordinances will be needed, one for the water and one for the sewer rate.

Mr. Calfee stated that he discovered that seniors can get a 10% discount on their water rate and encouraged residents to apply for the discount.

- The item was not moved forward.

The fourth item was an ordinance creating a consultant selection committee & description of member duties.

Mr. Moskun stated that the item is in preparation of the lift station project.

Mr. Finney explained that in 2016 an ordinance was repealed from 1978 to establish that the city uses the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) to follow the procedure for a consultant selection committee but said that the City needs to outline the members on the committee.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

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The fifth item was an ordinance approving the Design Review Commission Guidelines from Perspectus Architecture.

Mr. Kairis stated that there will be a Public Hearing on February 18th to discuss the guidelines and then there will be a Special Council meeting on February 24th to vote on approving the guidelines. Council discussed placing the notice in the February water bill to residents.

Ted Manfrass gave Council a brief history of the Design Review Commission guidelines that he personally helped to put together from other communities 38 years ago. He explained that Perspectus had asked questions to review and revise new guidelines and ended up generating a document that was 24 pages, up to 120 pages. Mr. Manfrass stated that the guidelines include reference material on how to fix issues within the Historic District, along with an illustrated manual. He said that the district runs along Main St. from Sycamore St. to Linden St. and noted that residential properties are more amenable than commercial properties to keeping to the guidelines. Mr. Manfrass explained how the Commission has been working on providing options for expedited approvals, such as choosing paint colors from the approved historic palate and will be working out the details to get it put into the guidelines, adding that the inclusion should only take a few days to update the document.

Mr. Moskun asked why the project had surpassed its initial timeline.

Mr. Manfrass explained that the delay was in part due to the Commission being able to submit items in a timely manner, along with communication with Perspectus.

Ms. Michael asked if the word “shall” will be an issue down the line, and compared the words “shall” versus “should”. She said that “should” could be seen as debatable and “shall” could be seen as something you have to do.

Mr. Manfrass explained that the Commission has done its job for 38 years and verbalized how “shall” is used to recommend fixing architecture in the way it originally was, and that the Council had made it that way, adding that the guidelines are important recommendations.

Ms. Michael addressed residential homes that have stucco and stated that some residents had some concerns within the guidelines and asked that a resident be permitted to speak on it.

Mr. Manfrass said that after the Public Hearing the Commission can schedule a meeting the following day to address issues and any amendments can be made before the final reading.

Mr. Silenius stated that Mr. Manfrass deserves a lot of credit for his hard work, and that the words “should” versus “shall” have been debated and believes the guidelines should be using the word “should”. He referred to Mr. Manfrass using the word “should” and said that a recommendation is a “should”, adding that Council needs to take a look at that issue. Mr. Silenius stated the Commission should be able to reach an agreement on everything else the following day.

Paul Schechtman addressed the Historic District and the Business District and noted that some of the things don't pertain to residential and asked if there is any way to differentiate the two. He stated his next concern was the use of a certificate of approval and if it would be required to do simple patch work on his house, because according to the guidelines he said that it does.

Peter Martin stated the approved guidelines will outlive everyone present and cautioned that there were many vague items throughout the document. He was concerned that what may be said now from the Design Review Commission regarding permission, may not be what is done in the future. Mr. Martin explained that even though it may be stated now that something will not be enforced, such as planting or removal of landscaping, it could be enforced in the future.

Mr. Calfee noted there was a section in the guidelines over vegetation and landscaping that has since been removed out of the document, including the cleaning of a building will not require a certificate of approval.

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Cliff Soudil asked about the intention of the item that evening.

Mr. Kairis explained that there will be a Public Hearing on February 18th to hear public comments, Council will discuss it at the Committee of the Whole meeting, and then there will be a Special Council meeting scheduled for February 24th to vote on the guidelines.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

The sixth item was an ordinance amending Section 1268.07 of the Codified Ordinances.

Mr. Kairis explained that item six, seven and eight were to address conditional use for health spas, fitness centers and massage establishments within the C-1, C-2 and Downtown Business Districts. He said that there will be a public hearing on February 24th and that a total of four ordinances addressing massage will be passed.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

The seventh item was an ordinance amending Section 1268.08 of the Codified Ordinances defining massage establishments.

There were no further comments.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

The eighth item was an ordinance amending Section 1268.09 of the Codified Ordinances.

There were no further comments.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

The ninth item was an ordinance amending the composition of the Ravenna Parks Board.

Ms. West explained that the item is to change the composition of the board from two Ravenna School Board seats to only one. She said that by doing so it will open another seat on the board and that at any one time the school board has only provided one member.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

The tenth item was an ordinance to enter into a contract with Lightspeed for fiber services.

Ms. Lorence explained that the IT Director is ironing out the details with Spectrum and seeing if the City's contract expires in February.

Mr. Kairis stated that if Spectrum is wrong, then the City can sign a new contract.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

The eleventh item was a resolution of support for the National Infrastructure Bank Act.

Ms. Wood stated that the item is as it states and that it is to show the City's support of the Act.

Mr. Kairis explained that it is a national initiative and that the City will forward the resolution to Congressman David Joyce's office to sponsor or endorse.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

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The twelfth item was an ordinance accepting responsibility and authority over the entire CHIP program.

Ms. Wood explained that the item is a housekeeping ordinance that the City already participates in and that new verbiage is required by the State of Ohio clarify the City of Ravenna has authority over the entire CHIP program.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.

The thirteenth item was an ordinance authorizing the execution of Then and Now Certificates.

Ms. Lorence stated that the ordinance is a state audit requirement that the City does as needed and noted that sometimes annual memberships come up, which is noted on the exhibit.

- All Council present responded in favor to move the item forward for legislation.
- Motion to adjourn at 6:51 pm by Ms. West, 2nd by Ms. Michael- **All Ayes**

There being no further business before Council, the meeting adjourned at 6:51 pm

ATTEST:

Clerk of Council

Council President