

NEW PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL MET IN REGULAR SESSION IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON MARCH 9, 2026 WITH PRESIDENT DON KEMP PRESIDING. MR. RIPPETH OFFERED A PRAYER, AND ALL IN ATTENDANCE RECITED THE PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.

COUNCIL MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE

MR. KRIS KREINBIHL
MR. DAN LANZER
MRS. CHERYL RAMOS
MR. STEVE RIPPETH
MR. BRIAN SEARS
MR. TOM SIMMELINK

EXCUSED ABSENCES: MR. MICHAEL WALKER
MAYOR JOEL DAY

- MRS. RAMOS MOTIONED TO ADD RESOLUTION 3-2026 TO TONIGHT'S AGENDA
MR. LANZER SECONDED THE MOTION
6 YEAS
RESOLUTION 3-2026 HAS BEEN ADDED TO TONIGHT'S AGENDA
- MR. KREINBIHL MOTIONED TO APPROVE TONIGHT'S AGENDA
MR. RIPPETH SECONDED THE MOTION
6 YEAS
TONIGHT'S AGENDA HAS BEEN APPROVED
- MRS. RIPPETH MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE FEBRUARY 23, 2026 REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL
MR. LANZER SECONDED THE MOTION
6 YEAS
MINUTES FROM THE FEBRUARY 23, 2026 REGULAR SESSION OF COUNCIL HAVE BEEN APPROVED

CORRESPONDENCE CLERK, JULIE COURTRIGHT

1. To Council and Administration from Mayor Day, dated February 24, 2026. This is an email titled "Financial Health Indicators"
2. To Council and Administration from Mayor Day, dated February 26, 2026. This is an email titled "Agenda for 3pm budget work session"
3. To Council and Administration from Municipal Court Administrator Judith Dzigiel, dated February 27, 2026. This is the New Philadelphia Municipal Court 2025 Annual Report.
4. To Council and Administration from Income Tax Administrator Carly Loos, dated March 2, 2026. This is the February Month End Report.
5. To Council and Administration from Auditor Heather Denham, dated March 3, 2026. This is a reply to the Income Tax Department Reports with the Income Tax Department's December 2025 Income Tax Revenue and Refunds Report, as well as the 2025 Income Tax Year End Totals report with additional details as well as the January 2026 and February 2026 month-end reports.
6. To Council and Administration from Executive Administrative Assistant to the Mayor Jami Bailey, dated March 3, 2026. This is the February Month-end Report.
7. To Council and Administration from Mayor Day, dated March 4, 2026. This is the Mayor's Annual State of the City Report.
8. To Council and Administration from Danielle DeMattio with the Auditor's Office, dated March 5, 2026. This is the February Month-end report.

9. To President Kemp from Law Director Fete, dated March 6, 2026. This is an email titled "Please Assign to Mr. Rippeth's Committee with Ordinance 3-2026 attached. President Kemp asked Mr. Rippeth to take this legislation into his Committee.
10. To Law Director Fete from Auditor Denham in reply to the previous email. This email states the following "Marvin, this ordinance will need to be revised to exclude #1 under section 2. Law Director Fete sent a revised Ordinance to the Council Clerk
11. To Council Clerk from the Ohio Department of Commerce Division of Liquor Control, dated March 3, 2026. Responses Must be Postmarked no later than April 2, 2026. This is a C-2, C-2x Liquor License Request from Bell Stores Incorporated, BellStore 1176 Drive Thru 729 S. Broadway New Philadelphia Ohio. I sent this request to President Kemp to place in the proper Committee.
12. To Council and Administration from Mayor Day, dated March 9, 2026. The Mayor's Report.

MAYOR'S REPORT/REQUESTSMAYOR JOEL B. DAYEXCUSED ABSENSE

SERVICE DIRECTOR..... Service Director Ron McAbier:

Mr. McAbier had the following report:

- The House of Stones Quadrant: We had to remove the Honey Locust Trees. They had originally wanted those to stay, but if anybody noticed the earth mounded there. It would have taken raising the curb and bringing up some gratings to bring it down to the catch basin, which came in at around \$29,000. We have roughly \$31,000 of retainment, so we made the decision to remove those trees. Right now, the project's about 32% complete.
- The Gavins Quadrant: I'm sure we're going to get into another electrical issue. The concrete is done and the conduit is right under it or in it, so there will be a patch there. Those have typically run between \$17,000 and \$22,000 for each change order on those. The decision was made to remove those trees, and General Services removed them on Friday.
- We will have some money for reinstalling some trees, so we'll get a price from our local arborist and landscaper. It will be about \$7400 for that.
- The RFPs that were going out at Tuscora Park. I made contact with DL Smith. On October 9th we thought we ordered everything, but found out they were never ordered. We have 12 to 16 weeks before they come in.
- The Southside Restroom Pavillion: I reached out with Gorcon Construction today, and they assured me it would be done by the end of this month.
- General Services: After they picked up the tree branches this morning they went out with cold mix and patched some areas. Tomorrow they're hoping to put out Dura Patch and Cold Mix. We usually put Dura Patch in alleys versus main roads. Both of those should be out tomorrow with the manpower and we'll get those started again. There are plenty of areas that need done. We'll get some hot mix around the 2nd week of April and get those permanent patches.
- Last Friday, the Mayor and I went out to every department with Treasurer Campbell, and I encourage each and every one of you to do the same thing. I think it was eye-opening, and it was nice to actually visit the departments.

AUDITORMRS. HEATHER DENHAM

Mrs. Denham has the following report:

We're still working on our financial statements and we're working on several policies throughout the department. It seems the City was very lacking in policies. We have to start from scratch with several new policies. Our audit was done late in the year and it was just released in February. We're now getting requests for corrective action plans concerning some of the issues that were found in the audits. We also just received a request for a corrective action plan for the 2023 audit. The good news is, when I first stepped into this role I was hit by three IRS penalties for prior years. I just got word this past week that all three penalties have been dismissed. Out of a total of \$212,000 fines, we only had to pay \$1,207.

We're continuing to work on our day-to-day and our budgets. When the departments submitted their budgets at the end of October and November, I had stated that they had to be reduced, some that were resubmitted were actually higher instead of being reduced. We don't have the revenue to submit the expenses that are being turned in on budgets. We're going to have to make cuts. Talking with the State I thought there were a lot of things that I had control over that I don't have control over. Once the budget is approved, I have to pay it.

I just forwarded the revised employee handbooks that I received last month. I had no input and I wasn't aware that I was being revised. I did oppose the new employee handbook and the changes that were in the handbook. Employees will have to cut expenses somewhere else in order to afford the additional incentives and payouts that the non-bargaining will receive.

We're still working on the budget issues, primarily the General Fund, Safety Forces, the Street Department, the Cemetery Department, our Income Tax Department, and our Street Lighting Department. Those are all the departments that are really taking the hit.

TREASURER.....MRS. MICHELLE CAMPBELL

Mrs. Campbell had the following report:

Our interest income for the month of February was \$28,912.24. You can see the uptick on our interest income from January to February for the First Fed Money Market Account. That should start to help some of our shortfalls. We are filing with the state the Unclaimed Funds Filer. We have a ten year look back period. We have 120 days to become compliant and we only have to file one report for a 10-year period, not 10 individual reports, because we did a voluntary compliance. The Service Director had mentioned that I spent Friday with them. I asked Kevin to let me piggyback next time he tours the Safety Services. We really need to go look and see what the condition is of the departments. When he says that there isn't a department that does more with less, it's eye-opening. We need to see the departments before we make decisions about them. I'm thinking it's an annual thing we need to do right before budget time.

SAFETY DIRECTORMR. KEVIN MILLIGAN

Mr. Milligan had the following report:

I want to talk briefly tonight about some annual report numbers from both of the departments. The Fire Department responded to 3,569 calls, about 80% of them EMS related, and of those 12% in Goshen Township. That's flat as far as call volume for the past couple of years. As far as staffing the department remains down 5 full-time firefighters and paramedics. That's creating some challenges and some impact on the service calls. We completed 977 inspections. Of those inspections he reinspected 167 times and only had to issue one citation.

We distributed 238 smoke detectors and conducting a fire extinguishing class to about 200 residents of the city. Last year we implemented FireWorks Software, a long overdue upgrade in the fire department to give us the ability to better analyze our data to give us the strategic decisions moving forward. We look forward to continuing to enhance that product this year. We were scheduled to have a kick-off today for that but it was interrupted by a call for service.

So, in 2026 we're looking to complete our 5-year strategic plan and evaluate our current operating model. We're looking at what options we have to change that operating model, and we'll be looking to realign our leadership to meet those models, and we're currently evaluating our operational readiness along with our funding source.

For the Police Department we had 15,551 calls since 2023. That is a 28% increase in calls. From a staffing perspective they're still down two police officers. There have been 808 crashes in the City of New Philadelphia and one fatality. There have been 303 felony cases presented to The Court of Common Pleas and Juvenile for charging. We dedicate one detective to the Drug task force. They

continue to make a significant impact in Tuscarawas and Holmes Counties with large seizures of fentanyl, cocaine, and methamphetamines. I'm proud of the work Officer Dorsey does with the drug task force.

I want to talk a little bit about our auxiliary. They work over 2600 hours for us volunteering their time as auxiliary officers helping us at major events. They also help us do routine patrolling and help supplement our force. We couldn't be as successful without them so we appreciate their time and dedication.

The goals will be similar in 2026 for the police department. We've started the rounding process. We will be kicking off a 5-year strategic plan.

Mr. Simmelink had the following question:

Regarding the false alarm legislation, did it help in dealing with that particular hotel?

Mr. Milligan:

They are fully compliant. They have been fined around \$2,000.

Mr. Simmelink:

The increase in calls for the Police Department is about 30%, what kind of calls have they been responding to?

Mr. Milligan:

We have seen a slight increase in domestic calls that we respond to. There's also been an increase in suspicious person activity. I'm working with Captain Rossi inside their current data system to see if we can better define what those calls are.

Mr. Kreinbihl had the following question:

You said you're five short in the Fire Department and two in the Police Department. Do you foresee any of that changing in 2026?

Mr. Milligan:

We did an assessment in the fire department once those additional three left. If we choose not to hire it will cost us an additional \$60,000. We're looking at the impact of calls we're missing. We've been down two in the police department and it's taking a significant toll. Looking at those overtime numbers, it reflects that.

LAW DIRECTOR.....MR. MARVIN FETE

Mr. Fete had the following report:

I am requesting an Executive Session to discuss pending or threatened litigation.

MR. KREINBIHL MOTIONED TO GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION ON THE LAW DIRECTOR'S REQUEST

MR. RIPPETH SECONDED THE MOTION
6 YEAS

COUNCIL WILL GO INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION PRIOR TO THE LEGISLATIVE AGENDA

Mr. Fete continued:

I've asked the Fire Chief and Captain Schultz to be a part of the Executive Session.

BOARD/COMMISSION REPORTS:

PLANNING COMMISSION.....MAYOR JOEL DAYEXCUSED ABSENSE

There will be no Planning Commission Meeting in March, but there will be one in April.

BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS.....MR. RON MCABIER

The Board of Zoning Appeals will not be meeting this month due to having no variance requests.

AIRPORT COMMISSION.....MR. DAN LANZER

The Airport Commission will be meeting on March 10th at 6pm in the Harry Clever Field Airport Meeting Room.

PARK BOARD.....MR. BRIAN SEARS.....NO REPORT

The Park Board will be meeting Wednesday, March 18th at the Airport Meeting Room.

CEMETERY BOARD.....MR. BRIAN SEARS.....NO REPORT

HEALTH BOARD MR. TOM SIMMELINK

The Health Board will be meeting this coming Wednesday at noon in Council Chambers.

STANDING COMMITTEE REPORTS:

FINANCE COMMITTEEMR. STEVE RIPPETH

Mr. Rippeth had the following report:

The Finance Committee met this evening in Council Chambers. We were called to order at 6:45pm to discuss Ordinance 3-2026, which is the Income Tax Allocation. We need to make some changes to that wording and plan to bring that back up at our next meeting. We adjourned at 6:57.

PUBLIC WORKS AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE...MR. DAN LANZER.....NO REPORT

SAFETY, HEALTH, AND SERVICE COMMITTEE.....MR. TOM SIMMELINK.....NO REPORT

ZONING AND ANNEXATION COMMITTEE.....MRS. CHERYL RAMOS

Mrs. Ramos had the following report:

The Zoning and Annexation Committee met tonight at 7:00pm to discuss Resolution 3-2026, which is a Resolution to authorize the Mayor to execute annexation petitions for City owned property along the railroad tracks to Roswell. We have a whole list of the property to be annexed but we're starting the process to petition the county to annex. We're putting that on the Agenda tonight.

SALARY COMMITTEE.....MR. KRIS KREINBIHL.....NO REPORT

PARKS AND CEMETERY COMMITTEE.....MR. BRIAN SEARS

Mr. Sears had the following report:

The Cemetery Board did not meet in February, but they do have a meeting scheduled for this coming Wednesday, March 12th, at 8:00am here in Council Chambers.

SPECIAL AND CONTACT COMMITTEE.....MR. MIKE WALKER.....EXCUSED ABSENSE

VISITOR'S COMMENTS

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Mr. Lanzer had the following comment:

Especially now as we're searching for different ways of getting new revenue for the City, I had the Law Director look into previous Ordinances that we passed that would ban recreational and medical marijuana. He did his research on Ordinances 513.20 and 513.17. We would have to repeal those to have the ability to have dispensaries legally here in the City. I don't know if you guys have seen Goshen Township's number, which is the one pretty much in our City as we speak right now, \$256,000. As we're scraping for dollars right now I think it would be smart to at least start the talking process. I would ask you, Mr. President, since it is an economic issue, that Public Works and Economic Development is my Committee, I think it would be appropriate to be assigned to me.

Mrs. Ramos had the following comment:

Let me note that it was originally in my Committee.

President Kemp assigned the issue to Mr. Lanzer's Committee.

Mr. Kreinbihl had the following comment:

I feel like Council has been a little bit under fire here lately with how things are happening from the Administration, and it's become a little bit frustrating for all of us on Council. I know I spoke last September and October and said this is going to be a very tough budget, and I challenge Administration and Council to come up with ideas to potentially cut expenses. I have not heard a single one come from anybody on Administration. Then we get a story in the newspaper about the courts that brought in a million dollars and Council didn't approve them to get them more money. We're all part-time, and we lean on Administration to come up with ideas, and I haven't heard a single one that they have come up with. Now I hear the Auditor just now say if Council passes it, I have to do it. It's March 9th and we've seen nothing. Last year we got it the last week of March. I also said in the Fall when I spoke publicly that I don't want to get this the last meeting of March. This is just absurd what we're put under to pass this budget. I'm at the point right now where I want to say no until the Administration comes up with something. That's why I asked the Law Director what happens if I do say no, and you saw how drastic that would be, but that's how frustrated I am. The other Councilmembers are extremely frustrated as well. I just feel like I had to get that on the record, because what we're being put under is absolutely insane to me. We're asking the Street Department and Safety Forces to cut, those are the most important things we offer other than water and sewer. I didn't hear anything about cuts to the courts, the health department, the parks, or anything else.

Mr. Sears had the following comment:

Mr. Kreinbihl speaks much more eloquently than I do about the situation, but we share a lot of the same feelings. I thought a lot after the last meeting. The Service Director mentioned a budget that he was concerned about and I had not even seen it. People are talking about things as if they've seen them, but Council has not. My mindset is always a unified front. I want people to work together in order to be successful. There's too much division as it is, and I don't think being split up on things is healthy. I'm not in the day to day; I rely on the people who are in the field. I'm never going to understand the budget if you give it to me a week before it needs passed.

Auditor Denham had the following comment:

I get your frustration and I'm frustrated too. This past year with the four union negotiations. I said all along we don't have the money to pay for 2026. We might have the money to pay for 2025 but not for the increases in 2026. There were ideas thrown out, but they were shut down for one reason or another. No tax increase is going to happen. No voter is going to vote on any tax increase. We talked about lowering the amount of tax paid to another city, and that's not going to happen. Someone mentioned funds from Enterprise Funds and you can't do that. We lost several grants including Covid grants, so we have to absorb that into the General Fund.

Mr. Sears:

I understand all that, but that's something you should have worked out with administration.

Mrs. Ramos:

I agree with the frustration expressed by Mr. Kreinbihl and Mr. Sears but I'm not going to blame the Auditor. The frustration has happened for many years. It is frustrating to not see a budget or even a department budget, or a list of the capital improvement that we need to have in the City. That helps us Council, who decide where the money goes, to understand what's going on. Even if we had a replacement list, so we know what needs to be replaced. I can give you a small example. In my own home our hot water heater died, so we had to replace it. We have a budget, so we anticipate those expenses. That's just a microcosm of this budget. My point being, knowing what you have in your budget, and when it's coming in and posted to their account. You can't spend money before you get it. In money management classes they tell you to work within your budget and cut up your credit cards, which is increased revenue. You have to know how to balance your budget.

President Kemp to Auditor Denham:

Wouldn't it have made sense to meet with the department heads with the Mayor and to come up with these dollar amounts. It should have already been done. I agree, we're going to come down to the last hour to try and approve a budget. We need to come up with an honest budget.

Treasurer Campbell had the following comment:

We have to have deadlines. Set the deadlines, and if you need help we'll help but not having deadlines, it's going to be the same thing over and over. The deadlines need to be October for the departments to present, and we finalize in December.

Service Director McAbier had the following comment:

The budgets were all done in October, why Council didn't get it I don't know, but the superintendents have all had that stuff.

Mr. Sears had the following comment:

We did it and then we did the rises and we never got a revised version. My understanding was that it was basically out of date.

Mr. Milligan had the following comment:

There was no budget I submitted that didn't factor in the raises that were agreed upon. I think one of the challenges is, in theory, everything we said is correct, but deadlines have to go both ways. If you give me a deadline, I have to have the information to make the decision. I understand the frustration and I too am frustrated. I agree that the budgeting process has the opportunity for improvement.

Auditor Denham had the following comment:

Things are constantly changing in our office that I have to figure out. We get an estimated revenue, then we get an ordinance that passes and I have to figure out estimated revenue again for the cemetery, so that affects all the departments. So, things are constantly changing.

**COUNCIL ADJOURNED INTO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 8:30PM
COUNCIL RECONVENED INTO REGULAR SESSION AT 9:05PM**

READING OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

ORDINANCES NONE

RESOLUTIONS:

3-2026 A RESOLUTION BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW PHILADELPHIA, OHIO AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE ANNEXATION PETITIONS FOR CITY OWNED PROPERTY, AND AUTHORIZING THE ANNEXATION OF REAL PROPERTY LOCATED IN GOSHEN TOWNSHIP, AS LISTED HEREIN, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.
1st Reading

MRS. RAMOS MOTIONED FOR SUSPENSION OF RULES ON RESOLUTION 3-2026
MRS. SEARS SECONDED THE MOTION
6 YEAS
RULES HAVE BEEN SUSPENDED ON RESOLUTION 3-2026

MRS. RAMOS MOTIONED FOR APPROVAL OF RESOLUTION 3-2026
MR. SIMMELINK SECONDED THE MOTION
6 YEAS
RESOLUTION 3-2026 HAS BEEN APPROVED

UNFINISHED OR OLD BUSINESS: NONE

NEW BUSINESS: NONE

With no other business to discuss Mr. Lanzer motioned to adjourn at 9:08 PM.

CLERK OF COUNCIL _____
Julie Courtright

APPROVED _____

PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL _____
Don Kemp