

**City of Aurora, Ohio
CITY COUNCIL
Meeting Minutes
Monday, January 27, 2025**

The City Council of the City of Aurora, Ohio met in the Council Chambers on Monday, January 27, 2025, to hold a regular public meeting. President George C. Horvat called the meeting to order at 6:27 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

ROLL CALL

Present: Reva Barner
Brad Duguay
Peter French
Sarah Grdina Gilmore
George C. Horvat
Dennis G. Kovach
John J. Kudley, Jr.
John Seitz
K. Scott Wolf

Also Present: Ann Womer Benjamin, Mayor
Dean DePiero, Law Director
Karen Pope, Chief of Staff
Harry Stark, Director of Public Services
Tim Clymer, Finance Director
Laura Holman, Director of Parks and Recreation
Brian Byard, Police Chief
Matthew McBirney, Fire Chief
April Secura, Deputy Clerk of Council
Marie Lawrie, Clerk of Council

RECONSIDERATION OF A PRIOR ACTION

None.

CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES

MOTION: To adopt the January 13, 2025, meeting minutes

Mr. Wolf moved; Mr. Duguay seconded. The motion carried on a 7-0-2 roll call vote.

AYES: Duguay, French, Horvat, Kovach, Kudley, Seitz, Wolf

NAYS: None

ABSTENTIONS: Barner, Grdina Gilmore

MAYOR'S REPORT (See attached)

Mayor Ann Womer Benjamin thanked the dedicated city employees who have worked tirelessly to plow the roads during recent storms. She stated that they dealt with water main breaks in frigid temperatures as well. She thanked the City Council for passing the 2025 budget at the last meeting.

Mayor Womer Benjamin invited everyone to attend the State of the City luncheon on February 26, 2025.

The Mayor gave a brief update on her activities since the last meeting including meeting with the representatives for the Fill a Bag, Feed a Family annual food drive and Silver Creek Church.

Mr. Kudley asked the community to drive carefully during blizzards and to be cautious around the city plow trucks.

LAW DIRECTOR'S REPORT (See attached)

Mr. DePiero stated that Ordinance 2025-010 deals with updating the City Charter after the November election. He stated that all the changes are in effect, but that the charter will need to be reprinted. He asked members to take a look at those changes, which were highlighted in yellow.

Mr. DePiero stated that Ordinance 2025-011 deals with updates to the Aurora Codified Ordinances. He said that as laws change in the Ohio Revised Code the Aurora Codified Ordinances need to be updated to be consistent.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT (See attached)

MOTION: To amend the agenda by adding Ordinance 2025-012 through 2025-020 as discussed earlier at the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Wolf moved; Ms. Barner seconded. The motion carried on a voice vote.

He also reminded administrators to turn in worksheets for the Committee of the Whole meeting in a timely manner to allow as many readings as possible for each piece of legislation.

Mr. Horvat thanked Mr. Stark and his crew for doing a great job during the storms. He received many compliments on how clear the City of Aurora roads were compared to surrounding communities.

CITIZENS COMMENTS - LEGISLATION

There were none.

COUNCILMAN REMARKS – LEGISLATION

There were none.

LEGISLATION:**Ordinance 2025-008**

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF ANNUAL SOFTWARE AND TECHNOLOGY PURCHASES LISTED ON EXHIBIT "A" THROUGH LTECH SOLUTIONS, LTD IN THE AMOUNT OF \$198,129.90 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY TO ENSURE THAT ONGOING TECHNOLOGY NEEDS OF THE CITY ARE MET IN A TIMELY MANNER

MOTION: To suspend the rule that requires an ordinance read on three separate occasions

Mr. Wolf moved; Mr. Seitz seconded. The motion carried on a voice vote.

MOTION: To adopt Ordinance 2025-008

Mr. Wolf moved; Mr. Duguay seconded. The motion carried on a 9-0 roll call vote.

AYES: Barner, Duguay, French, Grdina Gilmore, Horvat, Kovach, Kudley, Seitz, Wolf

NAYS: None

Ordinance 2025-009

AN ORDINANCE CREATING THREE NEW FUNDS – FUND 68 SPECIAL PURPOSE UTILITY FUND, FUND 97 BAINBRIDGE AURORA JEDD FUND, FUND 98 JEDD MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENT (M&I) FUND AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY IN ORDER TO TIMELY RECEIVE AND ACCOUNT FOR RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES ASSOCIATED WITH THE BAINBRIDGE-AURORA JEDD

To 3rd Reading.

Ordinance 2025-010

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE TEXT OF THE CHANGES OF AURORA'S CITY CHARTER, AS APPROVED BY THE VOTERS AT THE NOVEMBER 5, 2024 ELECTION AND AS COMPLETED BY AURORA'S CLERK OF COUNCIL AND ITS LAW DIRECTOR PURSUANT TO SECTION 21.05 OF

AURORA'S CITY CHARTER AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY TO UPDATE THE CHARTER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

To 2nd Reading.

Ordinance 2025-011

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING AND ADOPTING THE CURRENT REPLACEMENT PAGES OF THE AURORA CODIFIED ORDINANCES, AS PREPARED BY THE WALTER H. DRANE COMPANY AND VERIFIED BY THE CLERK OF COUNCIL, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY IN ORDER TO UPDATE THE CODE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

To 2nd Reading.

Resolution 2025-012

A RESOLUTION CONFIRMING THE MAYOR'S APPOINTMENT OF MR. JOHN C. JONES TO AURORA'S PLANNING COMMISSION, REPLACING CONNIE LEWANDOWSKI FOR THE TERM ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2025

MOTION: To suspend the rule that requires an ordinance read on three separate occasions
Mr. Kovach moved; Mr. Wolf seconded. The motion carried on a voice vote.

MOTION: To adopt Resolution 2025-012

Mr. Kovach moved; Mr. Seitz seconded. The motion carried on a 9-0 roll call vote.

AYES: Barner, Duguay, French, Grdina Gilmore, Horvat, Kovach, Kudley, Seitz, Wolf

NAYS: None

Ordinance 2025-013

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING THE PROPOSAL OF VASU COMMUNICATIONS INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$157,101.08 TO PURCHASE 40 HANDHELD PORTABLE RADIOS, 3 MOBILE VEHICLE RADIOS AND ASSOCIATED ACCESSORIES FOR USE BY THE FIRE DEPARTMENT TAKING THE NECESSARY FUNDS FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND (60) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY TO AVOID A DISRUPTION TO DISPATCH EMERGENCY SERVICES

MOTION: To suspend the rule that requires an ordinance read on three separate occasions
Mr. Kovach moved; Mr. Wolf seconded. The motion carried on a voice vote.

MOTION: To adopt Ordinance 2025-013

Mr. Kovach moved; Mr. Seitz seconded. The motion carried on a 9-0 roll call vote.

AYES: Barner, Duguay, French, Grdina Gilmore, Horvat, Kovach, Kudley, Seitz, Wolf

NAYS: None

Ordinance 2025-014

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING THE PROPOSAL OF VASU COMMUNICATIONS INC. IN THE AMOUNT OF \$38,548.76 TO PURCHASE 15 KENWOOD 5430 RADIOS FOR USE BY THE POLICE DEPARTMENT TAKING THE NECESSARY FUNDS FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND (60) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY TO AVOID A DISRUPTION TO DISPATCH EMERGENCY SERVICES

MOTION: To suspend the rule that requires an ordinance read on three separate occasions
Mr. Kovach moved; Mr. Wolf seconded. The motion carried on a voice vote.

MOTION: To adopt Ordinance 2025-014

Mr. Seitz moved; Mr. Duguay seconded. The motion carried on a 9-0 roll call vote.

AYES: Barner, Duguay, French, Grdina Gilmore, Horvat, Kovach, Kudley, Seitz, Wolf

NAYS: None

Ordinance 2025-015

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING THE PROPOSAL OF AMERICAN PLATINUM DOOR AND GATE IN THE AMOUNT OF \$28,757.83 FOR THE PURCHASE AND INSTALLATION OF ONE HIGH SPEED GARAGE DOOR AT THE BROWN-KEIDEL SERVICE CENTER TAKING THE NECESSARY FUNDS FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND (60) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY IN ORDER TO BE PLACED ON THE SCHEDULE FOR INSTALLATION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

MOTION: To suspend the rule that requires an ordinance read on three separate occasions
Mr. Kovach moved; Ms. Barner seconded. The motion carried on a voice vote.

MOTION: To adopt Ordinance 2025-015

Mr. Seitz moved; Ms. Barner seconded. The motion carried on a 9-0 roll call vote.

AYES: Barner, Duguay, French, Grdina Gilmore, Horvat, Kovach, Kudley, Seitz, Wolf

NAYS: None

Ordinance 2025-016

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING THE PROPOSAL OF THE GLEDHILL ROAD MACHINERY CO. FOR THE PURCHASE OF (3) SNOW AND ICE UPFIT PACKAGES FOR USE BY THE SERVICE DEPARTMENT, AT A COST OF \$404,457.77, THROUGH SOURCEWELL GOVERNMENT PRICING, TAKING THE NECESSARY FUNDS FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND (60) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY TO GUARANTEE THE EQUIPMENT IS IN PLACE AND READY TO USE FOR THE 2025-2026 SNOW SEASON

MOTION: To suspend the rule that requires an ordinance read on three separate occasions
Mr. Kovach moved; Mr. Wolf seconded. The motion carried on a voice vote.

MOTION: To adopt Ordinance 2025-016

Mr. Kovach moved; Mr. Wolf seconded. The motion carried on a 9-0 roll call vote.

AYES: Barner, Duguay, French, Grdina Gilmore, Horvat, Kovach, Kudley, Seitz, Wolf

NAYS: None

Resolution 2025-017

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE OHIO COMMISSION FOR THE UNITED STATES SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL (AMERICA250-OH) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY TO SUBMIT THE RESOLUTION TO THE COMMISSION AS SOON AS POSSIBLE

MOTION: To suspend the rule that requires an ordinance read on three separate occasions
Mr. Seitz moved; Mr. Duguay seconded. The motion carried on a voice vote.

MOTION: To adopt Resolution 2025-017

Mr. Seitz moved; Mr. Duguay seconded. The motion carried on a 9-0 roll call vote.

AYES: Barner, Duguay, French, Grdina Gilmore, Horvat, Kovach, Kudley, Seitz, Wolf

NAYS: None

Ordinance 2025-018

AN ORDINANCE ACCEPTING THE QUOTATION OF CUTTER POWER SALES, LLC FOR THE PURCHASE OF A VENTRAC KW 452 TRACTOR WITH CAB, BROOM, AND MOWER DECK IN THE AMOUNT OF \$49,707.10, THROUGH SOURCEWELL GOVERNMENT PRICING, TAKING THE NECESSARY FUNDS FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND (60) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY TO SECURE THE EQUIPMENT

MOTION: To suspend the rule that requires an ordinance read on three separate occasions
Mr. Kovach moved; Mr. Wolf seconded. The motion carried on a voice vote.

MOTION: To adopt Ordinance 2025-018

Mr. Kovach moved; Mr. Seitz seconded. The motion carried on a 9-0 roll call vote.

AYES: Barner, Duguay, French, Grdina Gilmore, Horvat, Kovach, Kudley, Seitz, Wolf

NAYS: None

Ordinance 2025-019

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF A 2024 FORD TRANSIT 350 VAN FROM MODEL 1, FOR USE WITH THE CITY'S TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM, IN THE AMOUNT OF \$81,550.00, TAKING THE NECESSARY FUNDS FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND (60) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY IN ORDER TO SECURE THE VEHICLE WHICH IS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE ON THE LOT

MOTION: To suspend the rule that requires an ordinance read on three separate occasions

Mr. Wolf moved; Mr. Duguay seconded. The motion carried on a voice vote.

MOTION: To adopt Ordinance 2025-019

Mr. Duguay moved; Mr. Wolf seconded. The motion carried on a 9-0 roll call vote.

AYES: Barner, Duguay, French, Grdina Gilmore, Horvat, Kovach, Kudley, Seitz, Wolf

NAYS: None

Ordinance 2025-020

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF A 2025 FORD F250 REGULAR CAB 4X4 PICKUP TRUCK WITH PLOW FROM LIBERTY FORD FOR USE BY THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT AT A COST OF \$54,998.00 THROUGH GOVERNMENT PRICING TAKING THE NECESSARY FUNDS FROM THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT FUND (60) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY TO SECURE THE VEHICLE

MOTION: To suspend the rule that requires an ordinance read on three separate occasions

Mr. Wolf moved; Mr. Seitz seconded. The motion carried on a voice vote.

MOTION: To adopt Ordinance 2025-020

Mr. Seitz moved; Mr. Wolf seconded. The motion carried on a 9-0 roll call vote.

AYES: Barner, Duguay, French, Grdina Gilmore, Horvat, Kovach, Kudley, Seitz, Wolf

NAYS: None

CITIZENS COMMENTS

Harry Caplan, Hillside Road, Independence, brought a letter to the council meeting and asked the members to consider supporting his idea of constructing condominiums for those age 55 and over. His property sits within a retail zoning district.

Mr. DePiero commented on Mr. Caplan's letter. He gave some background information about the property including a set of retail plans that were approved by the city to be constructed on that site several years ago. He stated that the Planning Department is familiar with this proposal and the Master Plan Review Commission together with consultants considered the zoning classifications within the city. He said that it would not be fair to say that the city would support the proposal in that zoning district at this time. He said the property owner has the right to host his own campaign and go to the voters to secure signatures and add his request for rezoning to the ballot. He said the city likes to work with the property owners and be fair. Mr. DePiero stated that zoning is very important, and the city works with consultants to review zoning needs on a regular basis. He stated that there has been some engagement with the economic department, and he hoped that a viable solution could be found for this site.

COUNCIL MEMBER AND COMMITTEE REMARKS

Ms. Barner congratulated local resident John DiJulius for his role in the Amazon Prime movie "Unstoppable." She also congratulated her son, A.J. Barner, on achieving the Offensive Rookie of the Year Award with the Seattle Seahawks.

ADJOURNMENT**MOTION: To adjourn**

Mr. Wolf moved; Mr. Duguay seconded. The motion carried on a 9-0 roll call vote.

AYES: Barner, Duguay, French, Grdina Gilmore, Horvat, Kovach, Kudley, Seitz, Wolf

NAYS: None

The meeting was adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

George C. Horvat, President

Marie Lawrie, Clerk of Council

MAYOR'S REPORT

Ann Womer Benjamin, Mayor

January 27, 2025

I call the following to your attention this evening:

Winter Weather Events: Thank you to the dedicated city employees who have worked tirelessly to ensure our roads remain clear during the recent winter weather. Over 5,300 tons of salt have been applied, and we still have 3,600 tons remaining. The city remains well-equipped to handle winter weather.

2025 Budget: Thank you for approving the city's 2025 Budget at the last Council meeting. We are already moving forward with plans and purchases in the budget as you will see in tonight's legislation.

State of the City Address: The State of the City luncheon will take place on Wednesday, February 26th, at the Bertram Inn and Conference Center. I look forward to seeing you all there.

Mayor's Office: Since our last meeting I've met with representatives from the Fill a Bag, Feed a Family annual food drive and Silver Creek Church.

Law Director's Report
January 27, 2025

LITIGATION

Michelle Ice v. City of Aurora

On September 6, 2024 Officer Michelle Ice filed a Complaint in Portage County Common Pleas court appealing a decision of the Ohio Bureau of Workers Compensation. The matter is being handled by outside legal counsel.

City of Aurora, Ohio
COUNCIL PRESIDENT'S REPORT
January 27, 2025

We are assembled here to conduct an Aurora City Council meeting, and the primary purpose of the meeting is to address legislation that impacts the operation of the city or its residents. The manner of conducting this meeting has been set forth in the City Council rules. The members of Council, the administration, and any citizens participating in this meeting must follow these rules. Accordingly, all speakers must address their remarks through the chair, and members of the assembly may speak when recognized by the chair. The remarks must pertain to the topic at hand or the agenda item; speakers must avoid personalities, and under no circumstances may speakers attack the motives of an individual. As a courtesy to those speaking, sidebar remarks, conversations, and distribution of materials or literature should be avoided or taken outside of Council Chambers. The Council President is the presiding officer at all meetings of the Council and is responsible for always preserving order and decorum.

I ask that Council please support a motion to amend the meeting agenda by adding Ordinances 2025-012 through 2025-020 as discussed earlier at the Committee of the Whole meeting.

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| 2025-012 | Appointment of John C. Jones to the Planning Commission |
| 2025-013 | Purchase of portable radios from Vasu Communications for the Fire Dept. |
| 2025-014 | Purchase of portable radios from Vasu Communications for the Police Dept. |
| 2025-015 | Purchase of garage door from American Platinum Door and Gate for Service |
| 2025-016 | Purchase of (3) snow/ice upfit pkgs. for trucks purchased in 2024 |
| 2025-017 | Resolution to endorse and support the US Semiquencentennial |
| 2025-018 | Purchase of Ventrac KW 452 tractor from Cutter Power Equipment |
| 2025-019 | Purchase of 2024 Ford Transit for the Aurora Transportation Program |
| 2025-020 | Purchase of 2025 Ford F250 with plow for the Parks and Recreation Dept. |