

**NORTH RIDGEVILLE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
May 19, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER:

President Jacobs called the Council meeting on Monday, May 19, 2025, to order at 7:00 p.m.

INVOCATION:

Led by President Jacobs.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Led by President Jacobs.

ROLL CALL:

Present were Council members President Jason Jacobs, Holly A. Swenk, Eric Shaffer, Bruce Abens, Clifford Winkel, Georgia Awig, and Martin DeVries.

Mayor Kevin Corcoran, Finance Director April Wilkerson, City Engineer Christina Eavenson, Law Director Brian Moriarty, Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani, and Assistant Clerk of Council Fijabi Gallam were also present.

MINUTES - Corrections (if any) and approval:

President Jacobs asked if there were any corrections to the Regular City Council meeting minutes dated May 5, 2025. No discussion was offered. The meeting minutes stand approved as submitted.

President Jacobs noted the following minutes:

Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) Housing Council Meeting Minutes dated April 9, 2025.

LOBBY:

President Jacobs opened the lobby session. He reminded everyone that the lobby session was not meant to be an interactive question-and-answer session. However, it was an opportunity for the public to address City Council and its administration. He asked anyone who would like to speak to come to the podium and state their name and address. He further added that each person was allowed three minutes to speak.

Children's Safety and Rollerblading

Greg Bartley, residing at 7236 Songbird Lane, voiced his concerns about children's safety during the summer. He noted that a young lady in his neighborhood often rides around on rollerblades at night, wearing black and looking down with earbuds in. There have been several close calls

with her, as she's not paying attention and is looking down; there are no streetlights, only a lamppost, which makes it even harder to see her. Mr. Bartley expressed that he has no problem with the young lady rollerblading, but he is concerned for both her safety and that of the neighbors. He added that they are not asking for the young lady to stop rollerblading, but they want to know if there is any way the City can implement safety regulations. The police had already spoken to the young lady's parents, and they agreed that she would wear at least a reflective safety vest. That was last year, and it did not happen. He requested that the ordinance be implemented.

Proposed Circle K Development

Barb Ackerman, residing at 8578 Root Road, expressed her concerns about the proposed gas station located at the corner of Root Road and Lorain Road. Ms. Ackerman expressed that it is common sense to her that a gas station at the corner is a bad idea. She added that the intersection would resemble the situation at the gas station on Lorain Road and Nagel Road. It would become a nightmare once the development is completed in that area, resulting in increased traffic and congestion on the roads. Mrs. Ackerman remarked that the gas station would contribute to the illegal semi-trucks that unlawfully travel on Root Road. Additionally, the gas station would be open 24 hours, attracting kids to hang out and leading to potential crime. She noted that a fuel spill occurred into French Creek about nine years ago. A semi was traveling north on Reed Road with three rows of steel coils. It turned into the Baptist church and flipped, causing diesel fuel to spill into the ditch. She believed that accidents can still occur despite possible preventive measures.

Moved by Swenk and seconded by DeVries to allow Barb Akerman up to an additional three minutes to continue speaking.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion was carried.

Yes – 7

No – 0

Mrs. Ackerman expressed that sometimes, free is not always free. She remarked that the City could do better by bringing a different business that will bring more money into North Ridgeville; there is no need for a gas station in the area.

Kitty Salyer, who lives at 8605 Root Road, across the creek from the gas station, shared her concerns about the proposed gas station at the corner of Root Road and Lorain Road. Mrs. Salyer expressed her love for the area and explained why she moved to North Ridgeville. She noted that North Ridgeville lacks a well-planned downtown that residents could be proud of. The City is being reactive rather than proactive. She questioned the need for another gas station on Lorain Road, given that there are three gas stations within a mile and a half of each other. Mrs. Salyer mentioned that she does not want to live near Circle K and is unsure if anyone else would either. She is worried not only about traffic issues but also about litter, crime, odor, and declining property values.

James Barta, representing Faith Baptist Temple and residing at 601 Bowling Green Circle in Elyria, addressed concerns about the proposed alcohol permit for Circle K. He expressed his worries regarding a law that prohibits alcohol sales within 500 feet of a church or school. Although religious objections are not legally sufficient to block the permit, he highlighted the church's opposition to alcohol. While he occasionally visits Circle K during vacations, he is against having one directly across from the church. The church submitted a written objection but decided not to pursue legal hearings in Columbus or Lorain County.

Mr. Barta also raised concerns about increased traffic and safety at the intersection near the church, especially if a proposed traffic circle is built, which could impact church property. He noted issues with water runoff from nearby developments, which are eroding land under the church's bus barn.

Moved by Swenk and seconded by Winkel to allow James Barta up to an additional three minutes to continue speaking.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion was carried.

Yes – 7

No – 0

Mr. Barta voiced further concerns, including litter, crime, and zoning inconsistencies in North Ridgeville. He questioned why new businesses are being permitted despite unresolved zoning and infrastructure issues. He also criticized the concessions made by Circle K, such as allowing trucks to use non-truck roads. Finally, he shared a warning from a construction expert about the long-term contamination risks of former gas station sites, urging caution in future development planning.

Jason Worcester, residing at 34290 Lorain Road, voiced his concerns about the proposed gas station at the corner of Root Road and Lorain Road. He emphasized that if he were proposing a project of such scale, he would first engage those most affected. He acknowledged Circle K's willingness to sacrifice roadside frontage and reconfigure access to accommodate a traffic circle, noting this cooperation benefits the city. However, he argued that the neighborhood should also benefit more equally. He proposed using tax increment financing (TIF) from Circle K's revenues to address traffic, stormwater, and safety concerns at the intersection, rather than diverting those funds to the general fund. Mr. Worcester praised the City Administration's planning efforts but stressed that the City Council, as the political body, has the authority to ensure a fairer outcome. He noted past council actions—such as a development moratorium, historic district designation, and restrictions on car washes—as examples of effective planning.

Moved by Swenk and seconded by Winkel to allow Jason Worcester up to an additional three minutes to continue speaking.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion was carried.

Yes – 7

No – 0

He urged the council to apply the golden rule in business, criticizing Circle K and the property owner for failing to engage with neighbors. He called for further negotiation to ensure the proposal benefits all stakeholders. Mr. Worcester concluded by suggesting a delay in approving the proposal to allow consideration of the ideas presented.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORTS:

1. Mayor:

Mayor Corcoran remarked as follows.:

- Gateway North Ridgeville – The city had a great turnout at last week's Gateway North Ridgeville Public Information Session. Gateway North Ridgeville is a multi-year project designed to transform the Lorain Road and Lear Nagle Road corridors. It will create a

vibrant gateway into the city while easing traffic congestion and improving safety in key areas for both commuters and the community. The presentation and survey are available on the City's website at nridgeville.org/GatewayNorthRidgeville.

- CodeRED - The Lorain County Office of Emergency Management transitioned to a new emergency and weather alerting software on April 1, 2025. The City also uses this software to send out messages to subscribers related to emergencies and general messaging for road closures, water main breaks, etc. Visit the City's website at nridgeville.org for more information and to access the link.
- Memorial Day Closure and Trash Delay - City Hall Offices will be closed on Monday, May 26, 2025, in observance of Memorial Day.
- Republic Services - As a reminder, Republic Services will be operating on a one-day delay due to the holiday. Trash collection in North Ridgeville will be on Wednesday, May 28, 2025.
- Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony - The Lions Club of North Ridgeville and VFW Post 9871 will be sponsoring the annual Memorial Day parade and ceremony on Monday, May 26, 2025. The parade will depart from the Senior Center at 9:45 a.m. and proceed eastbound on Bainbridge Road to Ranger Stadium, where the ceremony will be held at approximately 10:45 a.m.
- Splash Pad Opens May 24, 2025 - With the Memorial Day weekend, the South Central Park Splash Pad will also open daily from 10:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. through Labor Day weekend. The park also has a newly installed playground. Fishing is also available with no license required.
- Citywide Garage Sale Days - The North Ridgeville Chamber of Commerce/Visitors Bureau will be sponsoring its annual Citywide Garage Sale Days from June 4, 2025, to June 7, 2025. Stop by Don Mould's Garden Center, located at 34837 Lorain Road, on Thursday, May 29, 2025, or Friday, May 30, 2025, between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. to register. The cost of participating is \$5, which includes publication of the sale. Permits from the city are not required for this event. For more information, contact the Chamber of Commerce/Visitors Bureau at (440) 327-3737.
- NR Heart & Sole Scavenger Hunt - North Ridgeville Heart and Sole health collaborative invites North Ridgeville residents to participate in a community scavenger hunt. Registration began today, May 19, 2025. The month-long scavenger hunt begins June 7, 2025, and ends on June 28, 2025. There is no cost to participate, and gift card prizes will be awarded. Residents of all ages and abilities are encouraged to join a team of up to five players. Visit nrheartandsole.com for more information.
- Tickets on Sale Now for Freedom Festival and Fireworks - Tickets are now on sale for this year's Freedom Festival and Fireworks at Victory Park on Thursday, July 3, 2025. Visit the City's website at nridgeville.org for more information and to purchase your tickets. Net proceeds from the event will benefit North Ridgeville Community Care, Canine Superheroes Foundation and Save 22. This has become a tradition that brings our

community together in celebration of Independence Day, featuring fun, family-friendly activities and an incredible fireworks show. The City is especially proud that the event supports local causes. In 2024, the City was able to present a check for \$6,960.00 to North Ridgeville Community Care. With the community's continued support, the City hopes to surpass that amount this year and make an even greater impact.

Moved by Mayor Corcoran and seconded by Winkel to appoint Andy McDowell to the Park and Recreation Commission.

Mayor Corcoran explained that Mr. McDowell has been a resident for 25 years, has been highly involved in the City in various ways, and is qualified for the Recreation Commission.

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried.
Yes – 7 No – 0

Moved by Mayor Corcoran and seconded by Swenk to go into an Executive Session to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, discipline, promotion, demotion, or compensation of a public employee or official, consider the purchase of property, and to conference with the body's attorney concerning pending or imminent court action.

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried.
Yes – 7 No – 0

Adjourned into Executive Session at 7:33 p.m.
Reconvened into the Regular City Council meeting at 7:55 p.m.

Moved by Swenk and seconded by Awig to adjourn from executive session and return to the regular City Council session.

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried.
Yes – 7 No – 0

This concludes the Mayor's report.

2. Engineer:

City Engineer Christina Eavenson provided the following projects:

- ODOT continues to work on the State Route 83 bridge over State Route 10, and the Center Ridge Road Bridge over Mills Creek, and both are running on schedule.
- The Cypress Avenue extension project is currently out to bid. For any contractors interested, a mandatory pre-bid meeting will take place this Wednesday, May 21, 2025, at 2:00 PM at City Hall.

- Reminded everyone that the westbound turnpike traffic will not be able to get off at Lorain Road in North Ridgeville due to the bridge rehabilitation work. The Eastbound Turnpike traffic can still get off in North Ridgeville
- All backflow testing is required to be submitted by June 15, 2025, and all non-residential water customers are required to submit their cross-connection surveys by July 31, 2025. For more information about the backflow program, please visit the engineering homepage.

City Engineer Christina Eavenson concluded her report.

3. Director of Finance:

April Wilkerson, the Finance Director, reported the following:

The finance department has provided the City Council with the financial reports for March and April 2025 for review. Those reports will be posted on the City's website under the Finance Department later this week.

A memorandum was provided to City Council addressing each piece of legislation on the agenda and recommending that the legislation be adopted with the emergency clause to ensure the Department of Finance has the necessary resources to meet its financial obligations.

- Ordinance No. 2025-80 - Amending 2025 Annual Appropriations—Includes items such as the replacement of a fire alarm system in City Hall and the Senior Center fire alarm, generator inspections at the new Police Station, the Lorain County auditor's Fees remittances to the North Ridge City Schools, and sidewalk inspection refunds.

Finance Director Wilkerson concluded her report.

4. Other Reports:

President Jacobs noted the following reports:

March 2025 Fire Department Report
April 2025 Water Distribution and EPA Report
April 2025 Fire Department Report

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT(S):

There were none.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani read the following Correspondence:

A correspondence from Tim Francis, Chris ' icecreamtreats, at 616 Golden Oak Parkway, Oakwood Village, Ohio 44146, requested that the City Council remove the rider requirement for ice cream truck permits, as it's unique to North Ridgeville and not enforced equally.

OLD BUSINESS:

There were none.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. New Liquor Permit Request: A request from the Lone Tree Tavern LLC for a new liquor permit at 33009 Lorain Road, Unit B & Patio.

Moved by Winkel and seconded by Abens to not request a hearing for the permit to be sent to the State for final disposition by June 6, 2025.

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was carried.

Yes – 7

No – 0

The North Ridgeville Planning Commission took action on the following items at their Regular Meeting of May 13, 2025:

1. PPZ2025-0337: Victory Park, 7777 Victory Lane, PPN 07-00-003-102-106
Owner: PMJ Park Holdings, 7777 Victory Lane, North Ridgeville, OH 44039. Proposal consists of lighting plan for sports park. Property is zoned I-2 Light Industrial District.

PC ACTION: Approved by a vote of 5-0 with the following condition:

1. **Submit a new photometric taking into account both proposed lighting and existing light sources.**

Moved by Abens and seconded by Winkel to approve the Planning Commission's approval for Victory Park.

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was carried.

Yes – 7

No – 0

2. PPZ2024-0299: Hampton Place Subdivision Phase 8, PPN 07-00-029-000-203, - 515

Owner: Valore Properties, 23550 Center Ridge Rd, #101, Westlake, OH 44145. Proposal consists of final development plan approval of Hampton Place Subdivision Phase 8. Property is zoned R-1 Residence District.

PC ACTION: Approved by a vote of 5-0 with the following conditions:

1. **Further investigation of the unclassified pipe on SR 83 and a resolution that is acceptable to Engineering.**
2. **Finish the construction of the concrete roadway.**
3. **A financial guarantee will be provided equal to the cost of all remaining items not constructed to the satisfaction of Engineering.**

NOTE: All conditions must be fulfilled before the plat is signed and executed.

Moved by Abens and seconded by Winkel to approve the Planning Commission's approval for Hampton Place Subdivision Phase 8.

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was carried.

Yes – 6

No – 1 (Swenk)

3. PPZ2024-0308: Circle K, 34273 Lorain Rd, PPN 07-00-014-106-012

Applicant: Brett Lamb, Circle K Stores, 935 E. Tallmadge Ave, Akron, OH 44310. Owner: AGLR Investments, LLC, 36097 Westminister Ave, North Ridgeville, OH 44039. Proposal consists of a new Circle K gas station and retail store. Property zoned B-3 Highway Commercial District.

PC ACTION: Approved by a vote of 5-0.

Moved by Abens and seconded by Winkel to approve the Planning Commission's approval for Circle K.

Councilman Abens remarked that Circle K has met all the zoning and building codes required. Additionally, they have been very accommodating to any requests that the City has made, including adding more lanes. Regarding traffic, they're taking steps to alleviate the issue as much as possible. Traffic in that area is only going to increase, not because of Circle K, but due to the numerous buildings being constructed south of the city, primarily in Eaton. Furthermore, concerning trucks, when Circle K learned about their truck situation, they found that the only legal route to that particular location is from 480 west. They plan to control their drivers so that they will take that route. If they're caught on other routes, all the resident has to do is contact Circle K.

Law Director Moriarty explained that the property is appropriately zoned and that they have made several concessions requested by the city. There is no legal basis for denying this application.

Councilwoman Swenk shared the residents' concerns about traffic. She noted that she predicted issues when they built Sheetz, and is making another prediction for Circle K—it's going to be a nightmare. She believed there would be accidents. Promises were made, but she added that at the Planning Commission meeting, she had inquired about the ramifications if they did not decide to open another lane and fund it; however, she did not receive a response.

Councilman Shaffer wanted to know why Circle K couldn't relocate its construction to the abandoned gas station site that the City has to clean up on Center Ridge Road and State Route 83, instead of contaminating a new location.

President Jacobs stated that Circle K does not own the property on Center Ridge Road and State Route 83.

Councilman Abens explained that the specific property is not large enough for a gas station, and there is already one located at the corner of Center Ridge Road and State Route 83. The gas tanks are gone. The property is being proposed for plans for the City. Circle K purchased a property that is zoned for a gas station, and EPA has approved their plans. They are also installing detention basins to manage their water runoff, and the engineering department will conduct a closer examination. Councilman Abens understands that residents are not particularly in favor of a gas station at that corner, but it is zoned for that purpose.

Councilman Shaffer explained that he does not agree with the project because there are already two gas stations nearby, and it presents the same issue as the car washes. He believes there are more car washes than necessary. He does not think the city needs a new gas station, just a mile from two existing ones.

Councilman Abens remarked that it's actually a mile and a half. The car wash ordinance restricts the construction of another car wash within a one-mile radius of an existing car wash.

Councilwoman Swenk asked why City Council can't vote against the planning recommendation to disallow it, but City Council can't vote against this legally standing issue.

Law Director Moriarty explained that he is not aware of the circumstances surrounding Panda Express. He offered to retrieve an answer for Mrs. Swenk.

Mayor Corcoran remarked that City Council is not voting against the Planning Commission's decision; they are voting in favor of it. Planning Commission is the first step, and then the council votes on it afterward. To overturn the Planning Commission's decision, a supermajority is required. He reiterated that the Law Director indicated there is no legal reason for City Council to deny the applicant based on codified standards.

Councilwoman Swenk added that she was certain the reason they denied Panda Express was due to traffic concerns regarding access and sharing the driveway with Starbucks.

Councilman Abens explained that Panda Express did not provide an adequate highway traffic plan and refused to do any further work. On the other hand, Circle K has provided adequate traffic situations, plans, and studies. Additionally, Panda Express was not planning to add any specific lanes or features; however, Circle K has already agreed to add lanes to allow right turns only onto and off Root Road, thereby attempting to alleviate as many of the traffic issues as possible.

Mayor Corcoran believed it was also because Panda Express did not meet the code regarding driveway spacing requirements.

City Engineer Eavenson noted that several issues were raised during both the planning and engineering phases for the Panda Express project. Unlike Circle K, they were either unable or unwilling to accommodate the City's requests at this time.

Mayor Corcoran clarified to Mrs. Swenk that Panda Express did not meet the code and the City administration's request.

Councilman Winkel explained that the Planning Commission is the first step in the process. The Planning Commission will evaluate every project to determine whether it meets the applicable ordinances and codes, ensuring that all requirements are satisfied. As a council member, he will vote on whether he agrees or disagrees with the recommendation of whether the project meets these requirements. Mr. Winkel wanted to emphasize his concerns on this matter.

Councilman Shaffer noted that he agrees with the concerns about a law governing the serving of liquor near a church. He wanted to know if that ordinance or rule had been personally investigated.

Councilman Abens noted that liquor service near a church was discussed in the Planning Commission. Circle K's alcohol is sold for off-premises consumption, in compliance with the Ohio liquor code. They can operate within 500 feet since it's not served on-site. There's no reason to deny based on this issue; A bar wouldn't be allowed, but a retail store would.

Councilwoman Awig remarked that she did not want something like a Circle K in the proposed location, but she believed the City is legally bound to have it there because it has met all the requirements that have been asked of it.

Councilman Abens noted that Circle K is donating land for the future expansion of that particular intersection at no cost to the city. If the City widens Root Road, it will take from the Circle K property, not from the church's property. Furthermore, he agrees with Councilwoman Awig that he would have preferred something other than a gas station there; however, they met all zoning and building codes, and they also fulfilled EPA requirements. Therefore, the City has no legal reason to deny them. If Circle K takes the city to court, the city would lose.

Mayor Corcoran noted that over the years, the City has spoken to several different businesses interested in that property, but for various reasons, those discussions did not lead to any outcomes. The optimal use of that property would be an office building housing doctors, generating \$6 million annually, which is preferable from the city's financial perspective. However, when businesses meet the code, it creates challenges.

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion was carried.

Yes – 5

No – 2 (Swenk and Shaffer)

RECESS:

Moved by Winkel and seconded by Awig to dispense with recess.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion was carried.

Yes – 7

No – 0

Ordinance and Resolution submittal(s)

FIRST READINGS:

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

R 2025-78 A Resolution amending Resolution No. 1579-2022 which authorized the appropriation of Permanent Parcel #04-000-121-03-102 which is necessary for the development and construction of a traffic roundabout.

(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran)

Moved by Mayor Corcoran and seconded by Awig to dispense with the second and third readings for 2025-78.

Councilman Shaffer inquired whether a physical address should be included in the title of the ordinance.

Mayor Corcoran explained that it is unnecessary because the parcel is indicated in the title ordinance.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion carried.

Yes – 7 No – 0

Moved by Mayor Corcoran and seconded by Awig to add the emergency clause to complete the court case in a timely manner.

A voice vote was taken on the emergency clause, and the motion was carried.

Yes – 7 No – 0

Moved by Mayor Corcoran and seconded by Awig to adopt 2025-78 with the emergency clause.

A roll call vote was taken on the adoption, with the emergency, and the motion carried for
Ordinance Number 2025-78.

Yes – 7 No – 0

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

O 2025-79 An Ordinance amending the Zoning Map of the City of North Ridgeville such that Permanent Parcel Number 07-00-024-101-101 located at 35544 Lorain Road that is currently zoned I-2 Light Industrial District and the portion of Permanent Parcel Number 07-00-024-101-109 located at 35600 Lorain Road that is currently zoned I-2 Light Industrial District be rezoned to R-1 Residence District.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran)

This Ordinance was moved to Second Reading and referred to the Planning Commission for further review and recommendation.

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

O 2025-80 An Ordinance amending Ordinance Number 2024-139 of the City of North Ridgeville, Ohio, providing appropriations for the period commencing January 1, 2025, and ending December 31, 2025.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran)

Moved by DeVries and seconded by Awig to dispense with the second and third readings for 2025-80.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion carried.

Yes – 7 No – 0

Moved by DeVries and seconded by Awig to add the emergency clause to ensure the Department of Finance has the necessary resources to meet its financial obligations.

A voice vote was taken on the emergency clause, and the motion was carried.

Yes – 7 No – 0

Moved by DeVries and seconded by Awig to adopt 2025-80 with the emergency clause.

A roll call vote was taken on the adoption, with the emergency, and the motion carried for
Ordinance Number 2025-80.

Yes – 7 No – 0

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

O 2025-81 An Ordinance amending Ordinance 2025-61 Exhibit “A” and Exhibit “B” creating the positions of Human Resource Coordinator and Administrative Law Clerk.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran)

This Ordinance was moved to Second Reading.

SECOND READINGS:

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

R 2025-62 A Resolution terminating the Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) tax abatement agreement between the City of North Ridgeville and Isomer Group, Inc.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; First Reading on 05-05-2025)

This Resolution was referred to the Committee of the Whole for further review and discussion.

THIRD READINGS:

There were none.

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS:

President Jacobs noted the following:

1. The next Regular City Council meeting will be on Monday, June 2, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT:

President Jacobs adjourned the meeting at 8:23 p.m.

Approval of minutes on June 2, 2025:



Jason Jacobs
PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL



Nicholas Ciofani
CLERK OF COUNCIL