

**NORTH RIDGEVILLE CITY COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
DECEMBER 1, 2025**

CALL TO ORDER:

President Jacobs called the Council meeting on Monday, December 1, 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, Bruce Abens, Clifford Winkel, Georgia Awig, and Martin DeVries.

Councilman Eric Shaffer was excused.

Others Present: Mayor Kevin Corcoran, Finance Director April Wilkerson, City Engineer Christina Eavenson, Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani, and Assistant Clerk of Council Fijabi Gallam.

MINUTES - Corrections (if any) and approval:

President Jacobs asked if there were any corrections to the Regular City Council Meeting Minutes dated November 17, 2025. No discussion was offered. The meeting minutes stand approved as submitted.

President Jacobs noted the following:

Parks and Recreation Commission Meeting Minutes dated October 22, 2025.
Board of Zoning and Building Appeals Special Meeting Minutes dated November 20, 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.

City of North Ridgeville Trust

Robert Baumgardner of 6327 Stoney Ridge Road noted that public service is not about convenience, political comfort, or protecting personal power, but about truth—even when that truth is uncomfortable. He stated that the city needs truth more than ever, referencing an internal workplace investigation conducted a few years ago that revealed a hostile and dysfunctional culture, leadership failures, lack of accountability, and declining morale within the department. Mr. Baumgardner stressed that first responders risk their lives daily and deserve leadership that addresses problems rather than conceals them.

Mr. Baumgardner expressed his concerns about a recent contract with American Structure Point, alleging that the Mayor pushed the contract under an emergency clause without recusal, thereby limiting public scrutiny and transparency. He believed that the City illegally denied a public records request on November 20, 2025, under the Ohio Revised Code 149.43, which requires assistance in narrowing overly broad requests, and referenced supporting case law.

Moved by Winkel and seconded by DeVries, an additional three minutes for Mr. Baumgardner to continue to speak.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion carried.

Yes - 6 No - 0

Mr. Baumgardner raised concerns about the Finance Director's salary, noting an increase from approximately \$80,000 in 2019 to about \$140,000 today—a raise of nearly \$60,000—during a period of financial strain and multiple tax increases. He questioned the qualifications and oversight behind this salary. He added that a government does not conceal records, bury workplace investigations, reward insiders, use emergency clauses to avoid oversight, and grant large raises. Mr. Baumgardner called for an independent forensic audit of all departments, engineering contracts, emergency clause usage, financial practices, police leadership, workplace culture, public records compliance, and spending patterns over the past five years.

Bradley Baker of 37801 Sugar Ridge Road noted that after reviewing the previous month's meeting minutes, he shared the same concerns expressed by prior speakers regarding transparency in City operations. He stated that a perceived lack of transparency contributes to a lack of trust in the Council, the administration, and the City government. Mr. Baker observed that emergency actions and the routine dispensing of second and third readings appear to occur more frequently than as exceptions.

Mr. Baker expressed interest in the Sugar Ridge rehabilitation project and requested clarification on the criteria for awarding the engineering study. The project's engineering costs appeared to increase by approximately \$200,000. He questioned the justification for this increase, stating that the explanation provided—that the investment was worthwhile—did not adequately address the reasons behind the cost escalation. Mr. Baker pleaded to City Council to exercise caution in using emergency authorizations and eliminating readings, as it does not build trust. He recommended adopting a transparent selection process for engineering firms that would help dismiss concerns about favoritism and improve public confidence in the City Government.

ADMINISTRATORS REPORTS:

1. Mayor:

Mayor Corcoran remarked the following:

- The Lear Nagel and Lorain intersection pedestrian improvements—the City contacted outside traffic engineers who had worked on the Gateway North Ridgeville project. They are familiar with that intersection. They recently returned with a proposal outlining the scope of services. The City is looking to add a couple of crosswalks and install pedestrian walk signals tied to the existing signals at current crosswalks. The City is also considering adding a crosswalk from the car wash corner to Starbucks and creating another from the opposite side to BP. Sidewalks with appropriate ramps will also be added. The planning and design phase is expected to take a few months, with construction planned to start around March 1, 2026. The City may implement the crosswalks and signals earlier than the sidewalks.
- Sandy Ridge West—An update from the Lorain County Metro Parks—The new walking trails at Sandy Ridge West, located off Case Road, are now open. This land was acquired to create a new section of the reservation, with long-term plans to connect it to the main Sandy Ridge area. The project expands recreation opportunities and continues the partnership between the City and Metro Parks.
- Magic of Lights Wonderland Walk—Victory Park is hosting Magic of Lights Wonderland Walk. It kicked off on Thanksgiving Day and runs through January 3, 2026. For hours and ticket information, visit Victory Park's website at victoryparkohio.com.
- Holiday on the Ridge—The 25th annual Holiday on the Ridge, sponsored by the North Ridgeville Visitors Bureau, is scheduled for Saturday, December 6, 2025. Celebrate the holiday season by traveling around North Ridgeville and visiting 28 locations — starting at the North Ridgeville Academic Center with the Kiwanis-

sponsored pancake breakfast, shopping at various craft shows, and exploring the open houses at local businesses.

- On Saturday, December 6, 2025, the annual Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony will take place at South Central Park. The event will begin at 5:00 p.m. and conclude at 7:00 p.m. Highlights include Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony, caroling – Sing with the North Ridgeville High School choir, Bonfire & S'mores – Cozy up around the fire and roast marshmallows to make delicious s'mores, Hayrides – Enjoy a festive ride through a winter wonderland, and Hot Cocoa & Treats – Warm up with seasonal goodies and drinks.
- The Holiday on the Ridge brochure is available at City Hall, or anyone can download a copy from the Chamber's website or the City's website at nridgeville.org.

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; the preparation for, conducting, and reviewing collective bargaining strategy; and also, to discuss matters to be kept confidential by federal law, federal rules, or state statutes.

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

Yes – 6 No – 0

Adjourned into Executive Session at 7:20 p.m.

Reconvened into the Regular City Council meeting at 7:47 p.m.

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

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

Yes – 6 No – 0

Mayor Corcoran concluded his report.

2. Engineer:

City Engineer Christina Eavenson provided the following:

City Engineer Eavenson clarified concerns about the Sugar Ridge Road rehabilitation and roundabout projects, which were in second reading. Both projects were originally scoped in 2023 when the City was pursuing funding. At that time, engineering estimated professional design services for funding applications based on other similar-sized projects like the Peanut Roundabout and the alternative State Route 83 roundabout. Additionally, a common

industry guideline is to allocate about 10% of the estimated construction costs, which the City followed. These estimates were used in funding applications and also in the annual capital improvement budgets for 2024 and 2025. They were also the basis for legislation brought before City Council in May 2025 for design services, which was subsequently approved.

City Engineer Eavenson explained that they decided to submit that legislation at that time because the approved schedule that ODOT had set only allowed 30 days between signing the ODOT contract and securing the design consultant contract. Obviously, 30 days do not give enough time for three readings and the following 30 days, so the plan was to get ahead of it using our engineering estimates. After receiving approval, the City then advertised letters of interest on ODOT's website, which is the required procurement process through ODOT. Three members of the Engineering team scored each of the ODOT pre-certified consultants' letters of interest and their qualifications according to ODOT scoring criteria, and the consultant with the highest score was chosen as the most qualified team. Once selected, the consultant is required to use ODOT's templates for estimating design, surveying, and environmental costs and then submit their cost proposals to the City. The City is not allowed to make the scoping fee as part of the selection decision.

The Engineering team realized at this point that they had underestimated the engineering costs. As mentioned at the last council meeting, much of the additional expenses can be explained by the extra requirements that ODOT has, including their environmental reviews, utility relocation plans, and increased public engagement. Additionally, ODOT explained that they are seeing higher labor costs, so the City can expect design costs to be closer to 25% or 30% of the construction expenses. That is why the Sugar Ridge Road rehab project's cost grew from the estimated \$150,000 to the actual \$370,000, and the roundabout design costs increased from \$190,000 to \$430,000. In the future, the Engineering Division plans to wait until they have the final design estimates before bringing legislation to City Council.

City Engineer Eavenson noted that if additional engineering costs are necessary when ODOT is administering the funds, it is still advantageous to receive the construction dollars that were awarded to the City. Namely, the City received \$2.23 million for the roundabout and \$2 million for the rehab project. This represents 80% of the construction costs. Otherwise, if the City had not received these funds, the City would likely not be able to afford these projects.

City Engineer Eavenson concluded her report.

3. Director of Finance:

Finance Director April Wilkerson remarked that before City Council tonight is Ordinance Number 2025-161, an Ordinance amending annual appropriations. This legislation includes additional budget items such as compensatory time payouts, property taxes payable to the North Ridgeville Library, and street opening deposit refunds. Prior to this meeting, Director

Wilkerson sent a memorandum to City Council detailing each item included in this amendment. She requested that City Council consider adopting this legislation this evening with the emergency clause to ensure the Department of Finance has the resources necessary to meet its financial obligations.

Director Wilkerson noted that, regarding the Sugar Ridge road projects, the two pieces of legislation passed in May do have requisitions submitted against them. City Council appropriated a budget for 2025 to cover engineering services.

Finance Director Wilkerson concluded her report.

President Jacobs noted the following:

October 2025 Financial Report

4. Other Reports:

President Jacobs noted the following.:

October 2025 Parks and Recreation Division Report

October 2025 Police Department Report

October 2025 Building Division Report

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORT(S):

There were none.

CORRESPONDENCE:

CORRESPONDENCE FROM ELECTED OFFICIAL: Ward 1 Councilwoman Holly Swenk is accepting the elected At-Large position on the North Ridgeville City Council for the 2026-2029 term and will resign her Ward 1 seat, effective at the close of business on December 31, 2025.

OLD BUSINESS:

There were none.

NEW BUSINESS:

There were none.

RECESS:

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

A voice vote was taken, and the motion carried.

Yes – 6 No – 0

Ordinance and Resolution submittal(s)

FIRST READINGS:

Moved by President Jacobs and seconded by Swenk to strike Ordinance Number 2025-114 from tonight's agenda.

President Jacobs stated that the income tax ordinance was on the ballot during the election. Since the election results have been certified and the measure failed, City Council will remove it from tonight's agenda.

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

Yes – 6 No – 0

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

O 2025-160 An Ordinance authorizing the Mayor of the City of North Ridgeville, Ohio, to enter into a contract with the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran)

Ordinance Number 2025-160 moved to Second Reading.

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

O 2025-161 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 Winkel and seconded by Abens to dispense with the second and third readings for 2025-161.

Councilman Winkel stated that the legislation accomplishes several things. It will enable the City to obtain funds to compensate the Police Department and some staff for compensatory time. Additionally, funds collected by the City to support the library and schools are included in this legislation to be allocated to them. He explained that, in order to send these funds by the end of the year, City Council plans to dispense with the second and third readings, and he will be requesting an emergency clause.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion carried.

Yes – 6

No – 0

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

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

Yes – 6

No – 0

Moved by Winkel and seconded by Abens to adopt 2025-161 with the emergency clause.

A roll call vote was taken on the adoption, with the emergency, and the motion carried for **Ordinance Number 2025-161.**

Yes – 6

No – 0

SECOND READINGS:

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

O 2025-145 An Ordinance providing for the renaming of Thibo Trail to Orchard Park Drive.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; First Reading on 11-03-2025; Planning Commission on 11-12-2025; Public Hearing on 12-15-2025)

Ordinance Number 2025-145 moved to Third Readings.

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

O 2025-151 An Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with Fishbeck, a professional consulting firm specializing in engineering, environmental sciences, architecture, and construction management, to provide engineering services for the Sugar Ridge Road and Bender Road Roundabout in an amount not to exceed \$429,807.00.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; First Reading on 11-17-2025)

Ordinance Number 2025-151 moved to Third Readings.

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

O 2025-152 An Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a contract with American Structurepoint Inc., a national full-service architecture and engineering firm, to provide engineering services for the Sugar Ridge Road Rehabilitation Project in an amount not to exceed \$370,410.00.

(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; First Reading on 11-17-2025)

Ordinance Number 2025-152 moved to Third Readings.

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

- O 2025-154 An Ordinance suspending by-right cluster subdivisions in the R-1 Residence District and amending Chapters 1250, 1280, and 1282 of the North Ridgeville Zoning Code.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; First Reading on 11-17-2025; Planning Commission on 12-09-2025; Public Hearing on 12-15-2025)

Ordinance Number 2025-154 moved to Third Readings.

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

- O 2025-155 An Ordinance amending Ordinance No. 5311-2016 adopted by Council on January 4, 2016, to remove certain parcels.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; First Reading on 11-17-2025)

Ordinance Number 2025-155 moved to Third Readings.

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

- O 2025-157 An Ordinance amending Chapter 1226 Design Standards of the North Ridgeville Subdivision Regulations.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; First Reading on 11-17-2025; Planning Commission on 12-09-2025; Public Hearing on 12-15-2025)

Ordinance Number 2025-157 moved to Third Readings.

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

- O 2025-158 An Ordinance providing appropriations for current expenses and other expenditures of the City of North Ridgeville, Ohio, for the period commencing January 1, 2026, and ending December 31, 2026.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; First Reading on 11-17-2025)

Ordinance Number 2025-158 moved to Third Readings.

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

O 2025-159 An Ordinance vacating a portion of Aspen Street.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; First Reading on 11-17-2025; Planning Commission on 12-09-2025; Public Hearing on 12-15-2025)

Ordinance Number 2025-159 moved to Third Readings.

THIRD READINGS:

~~O 2025-114 An Ordinance amending Sections 878.01, 878.03, 878.04 and 878.06 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of North Ridgeville, Ohio, to provide for the levy of an additional seventy five one hundredths percent (0.75%) income tax, beginning January 1, 2026, and to provide for a credit up to one percent (1.0%) for income paid to other municipalities.
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; Finance Committee Meeting on 07-16-2025; First Reading on 07-21-2025; Second Reading on 08-04-2025)~~

Ordinance Number 2025-114 has been removed from the agenda.

Clerk of Council Nicholas Ciofani:

O 2025-146 An Ordinance adopting the City of North Ridgeville Cybersecurity Program in accordance with Ohio Revised Code Section 9.64(C).
(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; First Reading on 11-03-2025; Second Reading on 11-17-2025)

Moved by Swenk and seconded by Winkel to adopt 2025-146.

A roll call vote was taken on the adoption, and the motion carried for **Ordinance Number 2025-146.**

Yes – 6 No – 0

MEETING ANNOUNCEMENTS:

President Jacobs noted the following:

1. A Public Hearing will be held on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers to discuss ORD. NO. 2025-145, the renaming of Tibo Trail to Orchard Park Drive.
2. A Public Hearing will be held on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 6:35 p.m. in Council Chambers to discuss ORD. NO. 2025-110, 2025-154, and 2025-157.
3. A Public Hearing will be held on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 6:45 p.m. in Council Chambers to discuss ORD. NO. 2025-159.

4. The next Regular City Council meeting will be held on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers.

Councilman Winkel mentioned that one reason he is on City Council is that, years ago, he struggled to get information, which was frustrating. He understands that calling, emailing, or reaching out can be intimidating. He encouraged residents to talk to him because many issues can easily be misunderstood.

President Jacobs seconded Councilman Winkel's remarks. President Jacobs reiterated that Councilwoman Swenk has accepted the Council At-Large position to which she was elected. City Council is accepting applications for a Ward 1 representative. They are due by December 11, 2025. Applications can be emailed to the Assistant Clerk of Council at councilclerks@nridgeville.org or dropped off here at the Council's Office.

ADJOURNMENT:

President Jacobs adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Approval of minutes on December 15, 2025:



Jason Jacobs
PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

Nicholas Ciofani
CLERK OF COUNCIL