

**NORTH RIDGEVILLE CITY COUNCIL
UTILITIES COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS - 6:15 p.m.
MONDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2025**

To Order:

Chairman Martin DeVries called the Utilities Committee meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance:

Members present were Councilman Bruce Abens and Chairman Martin DeVries.

Councilman Eric Shaffer was excused.

Also present: Mayor Kevin Corcoran, Planning and Development Director Kim Lieber, Finance Director April Wilkerson, Kit Nickel with TowerCO VI, LLC, Council President Jason Jacobs, Councilwoman Georgia Awig, Councilwoman Holly Swenk, Councilman Clifford Winkel, and Assistant Clerk of Council Fijabi Gallam.

Minutes:

Chairman DeVries asked for any corrections to the minutes of July 21, 2025. No discussion was offered. Minutes approved as presented.

New Business:

O 2024-147 An Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into a new ground lease agreement with TowerCo VI, LLC for the installation of a wireless communications facility at the Shady Drive Complex.

(Introduced by Mayor Corcoran; First Reading on 11-03-2025)

Chairman DeVries introduced the legislation and asked Mayor Corcoran to explain the proposed legislation.

Planning and Development Director Kim Lieber remarked that in 2016, City Council authorized then-Mayor David Gillock to enter into an agreement with TowerCo to install a cell tower at the Shady Drive Complex. Although the agreement was executed, the tower was never constructed, and the project stalled for reasons that remain unclear. Recently, TowerCo renewed its interest and

approached the City to revisit the proposal. After reviewing the 2016 agreement, the administration determined that renegotiating the terms would better serve the City's interests. The proposed agreement reduces the lease area from approximately 5,600 square feet to 2,400 square feet and extends the term from 25 years to 50 years, with an initial five-year term and nine renewal periods. Financial terms have also improved: the City will receive a \$2,500 signing bonus, \$1,500 monthly rent with a 1.5% annual increase after the first year, and an additional \$500 per major carrier added to the tower. This structure aligns with regional standards and significantly increases projected revenue, from over 25 years under the old agreement to more than \$1.8 million over 50 years. The tower's location will shift eastward within the complex to avoid potential future road alignments, and the site plan will require Planning Commission and Council approval. The tower height remains unchanged. Overall, the revised agreement represents a more favorable deal for North Ridgeville, and the administration recommends City Council's support in 2025, as it did in 2016.

Chairman DeVries asked if there were any questions or concerns from the committee.

Councilman Abens inquired about the start date of the project.

Kit Nickel from TowerCo., at 7560 Columbia Road in Olmsted Falls, has been with Tower Co. for over two years and has more than 28 years of experience in the wireless industry, building and remodeling cell sites. Regarding this project, TowerCo represents Verizon, a national wireless carrier with significant budget considerations and priorities. Back in 2015–2016, North Ridgeville was still a growing area, and the proposed tower may have been deprioritized for more pressing needs elsewhere. Today, with continued residential development and increased demand for reliable connectivity, the need for this tower has become critical. Mobile service is essential even for households with fiber connections, as many people work remotely and rely on wireless technology. Additionally, carriers like Verizon, T-Mobile, and AT&T are expanding fixed wireless internet services, which depend on new tower sites. These projects are not undertaken arbitrarily; carriers only invest when they can do so profitably or to meet regulatory coverage requirements. In short, the previous delay was likely due to budget prioritization, but with the area's growth and future development, this tower is now necessary.

Chairman DeVries asked if there were any questions or concerns from the remaining Councilmembers.

Councilman Winkel inquired about the acreage impact of the proposed site.

Director Lieber remarked that the acreage is approximately 2,400 square feet, forming a 40-by-60-foot compound with a small shelter.

Cocunilman Winkel wanted to know whether the City has access to the property around the tower for any issues.

Director Lieber noted that the agreement allows the City access to the lease area for health, safety, or maintenance purposes, though not inside equipment cabinets.

Mr. Nickel added that a buffer of five to six feet between the compound fence and the adjacent ball diamond was planned to allow grass cutting and fence repairs by both the City and TowerCo.

Councilman DeVries asked if the tower is engineered to collapse on itself.

Mr. Nickel explained that it will be a monopole structure, engineered to collapse on itself in the event of failure, rather than using wires, which are uncommon in this region.

Moved by Chairman DeVries and seconded by Abens to send Ordinance Number 2025-147 back to City Council for consideration.

A voice vote was taken, and the motion carried.

Yes – 2 No – 0

Adjournment:

Chairman DeVries adjourned the meeting at 6:26 p.m.

Date Approved:

Fijabi Gallam, MMC
Assistant Clerk of Council