

## **REGULAR MEETING OF CELINA CITY COUNCIL – July 14, 2025**

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Attendees: Council President King; Council Members Baltzell, Buxton, Clausen, Fleck, Gray, Sanford, and Wolfe;  
Law Director Moore; Auditor Shinn

Start Time: President King called the regular meeting to order at 7:00 PM

### **1. Call to Order and Roll Call:**

- Council President King
- Council Members Present:
  - Baltzell
  - Buxton
  - Clausen
  - Fleck
  - Gray
  - Sanford
  - Wolfe
- Absent: Mayor Hazel; Safety Service Director Hitchcock

### **2. Acceptance of Agenda:**

- Agenda Approval: CM Baltzell made a motion to amend the Agenda to add and Executive Session as #3, seconded by CM Fleck. Motion passed with a roll call vote 7-0 Aye. CM Clausen made a motion to approve the amended Agenda, seconded by CM Buxton. Motion passed with a roll call vote 7-0 Aye.

### **3. Executive Session:**

- At 7:03 pm, CM Gray made a motion to go into executive session to hold conferences with an attorney for the public body concerning disputes involving the City that are the subject of pending or imminent court action, seconded by CM Baltzell. Motion passed with a roll call vote 7-0 Aye. Attendees of Executive Session: Law Director Moore; Auditor Shinn; Rec Director Craig McConkey; Council President King; Council Members: Baltzell, Buxton, Clausen, Fleck, Gray, Sanford, Wolfe. President King adjourned the executive session at 7:21 pm.

### **4. Corrections and acceptance of the Regular Council Meeting Minutes:**

- Minutes Approval:
  - Previous Meeting: June 23, 2025
- Outcome: CM Clausen made a motion to pass the minutes, seconded by CM Gray. Motion passed with a roll call vote 7-0 Aye.

### **5. Committee Reports:**

- President King stated a Committee of the Whole Meeting took place on June 23, 2025 in an Executive Session.

### **6. Communications:**

- Auditor Shinn presented the July budget for 2026 to Council. Every year we do this budget so that we can get this over to the County so they have the information they need to allocate funds to the City. This packet has the expenses, and on page 7 is where the revenues are off to the side. Throughout this packet the changes made are highlighted in orange. Most of the changes are payroll related. Starting next year Council will have increases and the Treasurer. A 2% increase was also added because it is also a negotiation year next year. There is no capital in here we like to keep the capital out of the budget until we discuss it. Typically, we bring the capital to Council meetings to discuss that way the public can come speak about those capital projects if they wish. On page 7 you can see how the revenue for the general fund is. The County typically looks to see if we are exceeding in our expenditures. We are showing need to the County there for our general fund. Then overall, page 20, the total estimated revenue is 50.1 million and total

estimated expenditures is 54 million so we are exceeding the revenue a little bit with this budget. We will need a verbal approval tonight from Council to get this over to the County by the 20<sup>th</sup>. CM Clausen asked Auditor Shinn if there are any big changes they should be aware of? Auditor Shinn answered she anticipated some increase with the increases in payroll numbers that affects all the retirements in PERS. CM Clausen stated the general government PERS was considerably higher than previous years. Auditor Shinn explained that is probably because all of Council is going to make \$6,000 instead of \$4,500 next year along with the Treasurer. We are also doing the 1.5 increase on elected officials like myself, the Mayor, and the Law Director and then the 2% increase for everybody's pay. CM Clausen stated that it looks to be 3 times the amount. Auditor Shinn stated it looks like I put the total amount not the split amounts. I will review the formulas and make necessary changes before submitting to the County. President King asked Council for a verbal acclamation to approve the July budget for 2026 to send to the County. Verbal acclamation passed 7-0 Aye. Auditor Shinn stated she will email Council an updated copy prior to taking to the County once she has the numbers updated.

#### **7. Audience Communication:**

- Chris Murdock, 303 S. Mill Street, asked Council if it would be possible to get a fence high enough to keep the basketball from going into the channel and keep the geese from pooping on the courts at the new basketball courts at Bryson Park. He also would like to have lights to allow more playing time in the Fall time when it gets dark earlier. President King stated we would pass this information on to the Safety Service Director.

#### **8. New Business:**

- a. **28-25-O:** An Ordinance authorizing the Safety Service Director to enter into an agreement with Jones & Henry Engineer, Ltd. for the Preliminary Design for the Wastewater Treatment Plant, appropriating funds, and declaring an emergency.

##### **Discussion:**

- President King stated Council has had several meetings regarding this. A Committee of the Whole meeting was at 6pm tonight with Kerry Duncan, Wastewater Treatment Plant Superintendent, to discuss and answer any questions. Is there and further discussion we need to have right now? We know we have an August 1<sup>st</sup> deadline.
  - CM Clausen stated the one important thing was if we have the opportunity to accept businesses coming here and they needed water, the ability to dispense back water we would have to tell them no. It could lead to businesses not coming to Celina because we are already at capacity and we don't have a reserve. That was the main thing I got from Kerry outside of the equipment is just outdated and we can't just band aid it anymore. If we get nice gentle rains and didn't stress the system, we wouldn't be having this discussion, but we know we can get some heavy rains and therefore it pushes the excess into the beaver.
  - President King stated additionally there are EPA mandates that we have to also be in compliance with so that is pushing some of this as well.
  - CM Fleck stated the first two whereas basically give a timeline of how things have been done and recently there hasn't been much of anything done and its time.
  - CM Gray stated that in the discussion tonight with Kerry he stated if we do not move forward with this by the August 1<sup>st</sup> deadline then it would move to a findings and assessment. I think it is very important to move forward with this tonight.
  - Outcome: CM Gray made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by CM Fleck. Motion passed with a roll call vote 7-0 Aye. CM Baltzell made a motion to pass the Ordinance, seconded by CM Buxton. Motion passed with a roll call vote 7-0 Aye.
- b. **29-25-O:** An Ordinance authorizing supplemental appropriations for expenditures in the City of Celina, including but not limited to Civica Software cost allocations, Capital Improvements to the CMU

Administration Building, general Insurance increases, Ohio Urban & Community Forestry Grant participation, and Final Trail Fund disbursement; and declaring an emergency.

Discussion:

- Auditor Shinn explained the Civic Software. At the beginning of the year, we did a supplemental for courts to have the funds to switch to a different software system. We are no longer sharing the cost for the CIVICA Software. The support and the server fees that we use to split with both the Court and with the HR Coordinator we are no longer doing that because they are on a different system now and we brought payroll down to our department. We are not going to make the Safety Service Director's Department pay for something that we are now doing down in our department. So this just appropriates that additional money that had to come out of our account lines. The Administration Building, we just didn't appropriate enough money with the original budget to cover some things that have come up. Before we had the elevator fixed we did have it looked at and there was a bill from that that probably should have been included with that Ordinance to replace it. The customer accounts, they sealed in their area. I don't have all the details on why we all sealed that off, but I think there were heating concerns and then just having more of a secure area. The cost of doing that and then the doors locks have not been working well this year so we have had some unanticipated costs with that. The City's general Insurance, that is something we usually have to supplement each year just with the reassessing of the assets and the coverage needed. The Ohio Urban & Community Forestry Grant, we are appropriating that money so we can spend the \$50,000. We get that money back because it is a reimbursement grant. So we will appropriate it to spend, but then we will submit to get that money reimbursed to us. The Miller Woods Trail fund, there was \$18 left in that fund available to spend so the Safety Service Director went ahead and spent the \$18 on something that would qualify. Now we can have that account down to zero but we didn't include it in the original budget to spend.
- CM Buxton asked if the totals and the funds should match?
- Auditor Shinn stated they should match and she will review and make corrections.
- CM Clausen asked about the software, if the number of computers that are using it was reduced was there a reduction in the cost?
- Auditor Shinn answered it does not go based on the number of people using it anymore. They used to, but with the software being upgraded we just pay the flat fee and we can have as many users as we want. We have been able to add some Supervisors that didn't previously have the ability to enter requisitions.
- CM Clausen asked if the insurance adjustment was just the structures the City owns?
- Auditor Shinn answered it would be any insurable asset.
- CM Clausen stated so like cars, building and equipment? Was it just the value that went up or did we add something that made that \$20,000 be needed?
- Auditor Shinn stated she does not have all the specifics. Since we have some discrepancies in the amounts being added we do not have to suspend and pass tonight. We can pass to second reading and get all the details.
- Outcome: CM Gray made a motion to pass to second reading, seconded by CM Fleck. Motion passed with a roll call vote 7-0 Aye.

#### **9. Old Business (3<sup>rd</sup> Reading):**

- a. **25-25-O:** An Ordinance authorizing a lease agreement between the City of Celina and the Greater Celina Area Soccer Boosters (GCASB) for the lease of the Westview Park.

Discussion:

- Outcome: CM Clausen made a motion to pass the Ordinance, seconded by CM Gray. Motion passed with a roll call vote 7-0 Aye.

- b. **2-25-R:** A Resolution to adopt the Solid Waste Management Plan for the Mercer County Solid Waste Management District and declaring an emergency.

Discussion:

- Outcome: CM Wolfe made a motion to pass the Resolution, seconded by CM Buxton. Motion passed with a roll call vote 7-0 Aye.

**10. Administrative Reports:**

- A. President King pointed out that the Assistant Police Chief Exam will be August 25<sup>th</sup>. Also Brian Davis took the Fire Chief Exam and has accepted the Fire Chief position effective appointment date is July 26<sup>th</sup>.

**11. For the Good of the Order:**

- A. CM Wolfe stated the Joint Township Ambulance District had a meeting last week and we need to have an alternative representative if I am not available to attend. CM Fleck stated he would volunteer. President King asked Council for a verbal acclamation to approve CM Fleck volunteering to attend the Joint Township Ambulance District meetings to substitute CM Wolfe in case he cannot attend. Verbal acclamation passed 7-0 Aye.
- B. CM Fleck asked Auditor Shinn if the liability part of the insurance caused the increase since it is a complete package. Auditor Shinn stated she will get all the details.
- C. CM Fleck stated he was out to Eastview Pond and he has received a lot of compliments but it may need some more sand and it definitely needs raked because there is vegetation growing up.
- D. CM Gray congratulated Brian Davis on accepting the Fire Chief position and congratulated Matt Kremer on joining the Police Department.
- E. Police Chief Wale stated Matt graduated the basic police academy of highway patrol on July 3<sup>rd</sup> and was sworn in this morning as our newest full time patrolman. CM Gray asked if he will be going through his field training? Police Chief Wale answered he started his field training today for approximately 12 weeks. CM Gray stated he noticed Patrolman Connor Burr and Patrolman Isaac Daniel have completed their field training? Police Chief Wale stated they are both full time working the road, full authority, independent, and doing well. CM Gray asked about the 2 in pre-employment/background stage. Police Chief Wale stated we have one that has secured a position and he will be going to the academy here in a couple weeks and there are two more I will speak with tomorrow. They have completed their background checks so now we will speak with them about conditional offers and potential contracts to send them the academy as well. Granted they are students not officers but that will fill our positions. CM Gray asked If those 2 offers are accepted and once they get through their field training, will we be fully staffed? Police Chief Wale answered that is correct. CM Gray asked how long has it been since we have been fully staffed? Police Chief Wale answered if no one retires or finds other employment by this time next year we should be in the position of being fully staffed with officers on the road. It would have been when Mark Burgoon retired, we were fully staffed for three days. Over the last 15-20 years, it seems like we have always been maybe one short. Then we kind of hit a crisis over the last couple of years, which we are definitely seeing the light at the end of the tunnel and those numbers are coming up. It's good for the community and you can see and definitely feel the morale in the department. CM Gray stated it is one thing that from sitting on this side, I would like to thank the officers that have stuck with us through the trying times and the firefighters that have stuck through the staffing shortages as well. Hopefully we are over that hump and we are moving towards that side. Police Chief Wale stated absolutely, we have a good bunch of officers that stayed and worked through the hard times. Things are looking much better. CM Gray stated they have done a fantastic job and please tell them that for us.
- F. CM Buxton asked about the Admin Report, under the construction of the Admin Building, the brick repair was supposed to be done in Spring, it said on their schedule, but no change has been made. I know no one can answer that tonight when that is going to happen but hopefully soon it is the middle of July. Another item can we put a sign where the kayak ramp is located? The kayak ramp is located in the back of the Pullman Bay area along the side of the basketball courts at the Bryson Park.

- G. CM Sanford stated Celina has great recreation programs, football and soccer is getting ready to start. Get out to the parks and enjoy the weather.
- H. CM Wolfe shared that Lake Festival will be here in 2 weeks. Thank you to all the employees that work a lot of hours to make this event happen. Hopefully it is not 90 degrees, I know the police department and the public works guys struggle when it's in the 90's. Let's pray for some cooler weather and a big crowd.
- I. CM Clausen stated the Taste of Celina was last Friday and it looked like it was well attended and the results were good.

**12. Adjournment:**

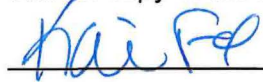
- Time: 8:02 PM



Kari R. Fox, Council Clerk

  
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Jason D. King, Council President

I, Kari R. Fox, Clerk of Council of the City of Celina, Ohio, hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of 7/14/2025, and were approved by Council 7/28/2025.



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Council Clerk