

REGULAR MEETING OF CELINA CITY COUNCIL – October 13, 2025

Attendees: Council President King; Council Members Baltzell, Buxton, Clausen, Fleck, Gray, Sanford, and Wolfe; Mayor Hazel; Safety Service Director Hitchcock; Law Director Moore; Police Chief Wale; Auditor Shinn

Start Time: Council 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:

2. Acceptance of Agenda:

- Agenda Approval: CM Wolfe made a motion to accept the Agenda, seconded by CM Buxton. Motion passed with a roll call vote 7-0 Aye.

3. Corrections and acceptance of the Regular Council Meeting Minutes:

- Minutes Approval:
 - Previous Meeting: September 22, 2025
- Outcome: CM Baltzell made a motion to accept the minutes, seconded by CM Clausen. Motion passed with a roll call vote 7-0 Aye.

4. Committee Reports:

- None

5. Communications:

- Celina Cares- A Local Nonprofit TNR Group for Celina:
 - Sara Kriegel Discussed:
 - In 2019 a Facebook page was started to address the local stray cat problem; as of 2025 the Facebook page has 3,900 members.
 - Tonight, sitting here are a lot of volunteers, trappers, and foster moms.
 - Humane Ohio out of Toledo has agreed to servicing this area although we are out of their service area since there are no humane society and no program that helps community cats in our county. Celina Cares has agreed to paying \$200 a month to allow for cats to be spayed or neutered. Once a month 36 cats are picked up from Sara's house and taken to the clinic to be fixed and then returned back to her house. The cost to fix an outside community cat is \$35 at their clinic and they also receive a rabies shot. To take a cat to a local vet would cost about \$150. The cats fixed at their clinic also receive an ear tip to their left ear to help show they have been fixed once released back into the community.
 - The group also foster neonatal kittens and adopts them out.
 - If a foster mom is willing to take a cat's kittens, they will take sick and or abandoned kittens that would otherwise not survive without their intervention.
 - All of the care is done at foster moms' homes who volunteer their time.
 - All the supplies, vet care, spays, and neuters, etc. are paid for by fundings they have received from fundraising and/or donations from the community and local businesses.

- In 6 years since this group has been started over 2,000 cats have been fixed and 600 cats have been fostered and adopted out.
- Financially the group spends a minimum of \$40,000 a year.
- This is a TNR group which stands for Trap, Neuter, Return which means any cat the group traps and fixes mean it will be returned to where it was trapped and not relocated. Removing cats from an area creates a vacuum effect inviting new un-fixed cats. TNR stabilizes population- fewer kittens, less noise/smell, and less fighting.
- Feeding ban is not a solution. Removal of food/shelter leads cats to seek garbage and other unintended areas.
- Animal cruelty laws in Ohio protect stray cats; illegal to dump/relocate them.
- Dr. Scott Siegel (licensed, semi-retired veterinarian who continues to do travel, veterinarian and relief work) Discussed:
 - Dr. Siegel asked if Council Members had any questions about what Sara presented.
 - CM Fleck asked if a person calls Celina Cares and wants the cat back, they will get the same cat back, right? Sara answered yes that is correct.
 - Explained the process that happens once a month for cats to be fixed. 36 cats arrive to Sara's house early in the morning in cat carriers to be transported to the clinic and that same day this is reversed when the cats come back from the clinic. All this work is done by volunteers.
 - Highlighted the consequences from communities lacking TNR: cruel mass euthanasia, poisoning, and unchecked cat population.
 - Shared stats from the American Veterinary Medical Association: Estimated that an unspayed female cat can be responsible for up to 400,000 kittens in her lifetime.
 - CM Baltzell asked if there is any advice for residents to keep unwanted cats off their properties? Dr. Siegel answered there are some powders you can get. It's a combination of different spices/peppers that can be sprinkled around to keep cats, possums, and raccoons away. Sara suggested something called scat mats, they are little plastic spikes, you can put in potted plants indoors to keep inside cats out of as well as putting them outdoors in landscaping. Sara emphasized that fixed cats will roam less and spray less.
 - CM Gray asked what happens to a cat that has been neutered and does not have an ear tipped if it were to get outside? Dr. Siegel answered this has happened a lot. Male cats are easier to tell but most females have to be opened to checked. Sara explained that they recommend all cats that are fixed to either have the ear tipped or have a tattoo on the belly to prevent them from having to have surgery again if already fixed.
 - CM Gray asked if the group has noticed the overpopulation of cats in the area decreasing since they started their efforts? Sara answered they have seen progress but challenges remain. The group works with the "community feeders" on private property but trapping efforts depend on the cooperation. We have to have permission to setup traps; we do not just set them up in random places.
 - CM Fleck asked how difficult it is to trap a feral cat? Sara explained the different trapping methods: use feeding routines, trap acclimatization, lures.
 - CM Clausen asked what the policy is for someone who traps a cat and does not want it back? Sara answered fixed cats are always returned to the place of origin unless a foster/volunteer accepts them; no relocations.
 - Mayor Hazel asked how many cats they have done TNR with in the last year or month? Sara answered we can take 36 cats a month to Toledo but we have additional out-of-area clinics that are used as needed (Ft. Wayne, Michigan, Paulding). Sara shared in 2024 they fixed 249 outside community cats.

- Colin Charvat, 915 W. Walnut Street:
 - First time homeowner in Celina moved to Celina from Cleveland. He shared that he is experiencing a persistent “cat problem” with his neighbor. His neighbor has 9 cats that she is repeatedly feeding and sheltering. He has video that he has shared with some council members showing cats on his roof, landscaping, peeing/pooping on his property. He feels his neighbor would not want him to trap the cats to be fixed and is asking for help. Sara is willing to work with Collin to help with his problem.
- Cody Muhlenkamp- Over Street Arches:
 - Cody Muhlenkamp Discussed:
 - This project started about 2-3 years ago discussing if we could bring archways to Celina.
 - The cost of the archways in other communities, he realized, are very pricey.
 - Reached out to local businesses to get quotes; roadblock because he didn't have actual prints/plans so it was hard to get an accurate price.
 - Jerry Andrews Fund- portion of that was used to get initial prints to distribute to get a firm price.
 - Cody shared a picture of the archway and a map showing the 5 locations of the archways.
 - At this time, he believes he would be able to use local providers to design, fabricate, paint, and do electrical work to install these archways.
 - When discussing getting quotes Celina Rotary discussed the possibility of working on the archway project. A committee has been formed: Lindsey Borger & Braina Alber- RCS Construction; Aaron Moeller & Jenny Bryant- Celina Rotary; Sharon Green- Civic Foundation.
 - Progress as of right now: completed site plans and prints with the help of Garman Miller and Access Engineering; final print approvals from the state; ODOT approval just the other week.
 - RCS has volunteered to be the project manager.
 - Committee working on fundraising plan: plan to sell 100 large and 300 small engraved stones that will be in the columns of the archways. Donor could have name and/or logo engraved.
 - 5 Archway Locations Targeted: Main & Warren (Marathon gas station area); Main & Fulton (near the Library); Main & Lakeshore (entrance to Bryson Park); Market & Lakeshore (Bryson Park alternate entrance by The Bay); West Bank & 127 (Boardwalk area)
 - Each arch would be a metal structure with stone columns, backlit signage (district/destination names), and outlets for holiday decorations.
 - The archways would be 100% privately funded through the committee and the funding that is setup at the Civic Foundation.
 - The only maintenance the archways would need is light bulb changes and paint.
 - CM Fleck suggested getting with the Fairgrounds to see who they used for their arch and the cost. It is structured a little differently but would give a cost.
 - CM Gray asked about the locations that were selected, why Main Street? Cody answered the Main Street areas were picked as the entrance/exit for the downtown area. CM Gray also asked if there were any concerns with the heights of the archways? Cody answered the safety and road clearance was reviewed by ODOT and no issues. CM Gray shared his concerns about the maintenance down the road for the City if the group doesn't continue to maintain the archways. CM Gray also asked if other communities have been contacted to ask about the pros and cons of the archways? Have they caused any accident? Cody answered they have talked to a few towns and once they are up it would be like street lights it is just part of the infrastructure of Celina. I don't think there is any downside. CM

Gray asked if the City has any issues with the archways? SSD Hitchcock stated the city departments have reviewed and made sure utilities are out of the way and ODOT approved. This project has been going on for a couple years now and overall; it looks like a nice project. Any project that has long term maintenance will need acceptance from council to accept the donation and if you are willing to do it. Cody wants to know if council is willing to accept so he can go get donors for the archways.

- CM Clausen stated he appreciates everything Cody has done and asked about the archways being in the way for any festivals/boat races using cranes in the area of Lakeshore.
- CM Buxton asked for clarification that they are not asking the City for any money. Cody stated the committee would do all the fundraising. Mayor Hazel clarified the Jerry Andrews fund was transferred to use for the design of the archways, roughly \$70,000 but was not tax money. CM Buxton asked if the archways would be built in pairs or have all the money at once? Cody stated ideally if they could get a certain amount raised, he would like to build in pairs. CM Buxton suggested possible renaming of the archways to avoid business specific names.
- CM Sanford suggested that the donors name needs to be engraved to last as long as possible and recommended to consider improved pedestrian crosswalks at the archway's locations.
- President King asked if he had which archways would be constructed first? Cody answered nothing is set in stone but ideally the Main Street ones would have a large impact.

6. Audience Communication:

1. Tim Homan, 7658 Celina Mendon Road, has concerns with flock cameras.
 - Concerned about the expansion of flock vehicle surveillance cameras (already in use by the county), based on privacy and constitutional issues (specially the Fourth Amendment concerns).
 - Noted fears of mass surveillance, data bundling/selling, and private company involvement.
 - Suggest further research, discussion, and possible presentation to findings.
- Police Chief Wale explained:
 - Flock cameras photograph vehicles (rear/license plates), not people or faces.
 - Data stores for 30 days, used for law enforcement; not for traffic violations or facial recognition.
 - Not tied to traffic ticketing or automated speed enforcement.
 - System beneficial in solving crimes and Amber Alerts; recovered missing children and stolen property.
 - Flock is a private company; not a government project.
 - Acknowledged the general reality of widespread surveillance (phones, TVs, etc.)
 - System not yet adopted by the City; grant pending.
2. Rick Cox, 646 W. Anthony Street, concerns about city codes.
 - Ongoing issue with neighbor (325 N. Brandon Avenue) turning property into a junk/scrap yard.
 - The Engineer Department has issued a 10-day notice, but once cleaned up case closed and 2 days later the junk is back. Another notice is issued and the problem just drags on and on with no resolution.
 - Concerned about negative property value impact.
 - Frustrated with citation he received for his dogs walking on the sidewalk on his property after complaining about neighbor's junkyard.
 - Has a pretrial tomorrow for his citation for his dogs walking on his property. 2 days after first court hearing he filed a motion for discovery and a week later still hasn't received anything.

President King Response:

- Acknowledged that enforcement is “complaint driven” and subject to due process (10-day notice, right to correct)
- The “cat and mouse” cycle of abatement and re-offense.
- Process applied equally, not always satisfying for neighbors.
- Understands frustration, but must abide by constitutional and statutory requirements.
- Others have acknowledged similar problems across town, not limited to single neighborhoods.
- Advised resident to continue filing formal complaints, document ongoing violations, and follow-up as needed.

Law Director Response:

- Under the City’s Codified Ordinances “Junk” 521.12 it states:
For any violation of the accumulations prohibited that no person violating that shall within 10 days fail to remove it. If they don’t then the city will go in, they will remove it at \$500 per hour and if they work 61 minutes, that person is charged for 2 hours because they are billed in 1-hour increments. Under Section d: the person guilty of a minor misdemeanor for a first offense is a max fine of \$150, possibility of jail for a second or subsequent offense. Such person is guilty of a misdemeanor of the third degree that carries up to a \$500 fine and or 60 days in jail. A separate offense shall be deemed committed each day during or on which a violation occurs or continues.
- Clarified discovery procedures regarding legal cases; timelines; not always available by first pretrial.

Police Chief Wale Response:

- Explanation of city organizational structures and separations.
- City government is divided into 3 branches: Executive, Legislative, and Judicial
- The executive branch (Mayor/Police) enforce the laws
- The legislative branch (Council) creates local laws (Ordinances)
- The judicial branch (Courts) interprets the laws and handles cases

3. Charlie & Ashley, Deford Street, new residents of Celina needing help with disposing previous owner’s junk.
 - Recommendations from Administration, Law Director, and Council:
 - City offers once a year trash/bulk item pickup in April
 - Limited bulk item tags for certain items available through the Utility Department
 - Suggestions made for scrap/metal removal via Facebook, Facebook Marketplace/local haulers

7. New Business:

- a. **38-25-O:** An Ordinance authorizing a Lease Agreement between the City of Celina and James Hiles for the lease of the Bryson Park District and declaring an emergency.

Discussion:

- James Hiles explained he would like to see something like this happen yearly. Different types of Christian groups. He would like to see it move through different genres of Christian music. About a month ago was when the Amphitheater was reserved for this event.
- CM Fleck asked if this event is being put on as entertainment rather than a fundraiser? James Hiles responded yes this is a free event we are providing hot dogs and chips for free but decided some people may want more than that to eat so we decided to add food trucks.
- CM Buxton asked if this is supported by Churches? St John Lutheran Church was contacted to be backup and New Start is involved. Flyers have been hung up in about every Church in town.
- CM Gray asked if the concert is this Thursday? James Hiles explained yes that is correct the Amphitheater was reserved about a month ago for the event then while planning we decided to add vendors and was told that would need council approval.
- Outcome: CM Clausen made a motion to suspend the rules, seconded by CM Gray. Motion passed with a roll call vote 7-0 Aye. CM Fleck made a motion to pass the Ordinance, seconded by CM

Buxton. Motion passed with a roll call vote 7-0 Aye.

b. **39-25-O:** An Ordinance authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with the Mercer County Commissioners for Indigent Defense Services in Municipal Court.

Discussion:

- CM Fleck asked if there are any changes in the reimbursement? Law Director Moore stated this appears to be identical to last years but 2-3 years ago we did have slight modifications of this language based upon the public defender's office now being opened here. The verbiage would not be noticeable to most people and it does not matter for our purposes here.
- Outcome: CM Buxton made a motion to amend the Ordinance to add the year to the title, seconded CM Clausen. Motion passed with a roll call vote 7-0 Aye. CM Buxton made a motion to pass to second reading, seconded by CM Baltzell. Motion passed with a roll call vote 7-0 Aye.

8. Administrative Reports:

A. Mayor Hazel Discussed:

- Celina Elementary School (K-6 grades) had a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony on October 10th.
- Bryson Pool: 36-foot slide has been installed, pending final testing, to be operational in the Spring of 2026.
- October 26th the Lions Club Parade will now be down at the Amphitheater area beginning at 2pm and the community Trick or Treating will be from 4pm-6pm.

9. For the Good of the Order:

- A. CM Gray pointed out in the Administrative Report that Lieutenant Chris Cline is retiring after 25 years of service.
- B. CM Buxton shared that the City of St. Mary's is considering passing an Ordinance requiring helmets for those under 18 on e-bikes/scooters; suggestion to monitor or consider similar legislation.
- C. Personnel & Finance Committee Meeting scheduled for October 27th at 6:00pm to discuss the 2026 budget.

10. Adjournment:

- Time: 8:56 PM



Jason D. King, Council President



Kari R. Fox, Council Clerk

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 10/13/2025, and were approved by Council 10/27/2025.



Kari R. Fox, Council Clerk