REGULAR SESSION

June 11, 2026

The Council of the City of Chardon met in Regular Session Thursday, June 11, 2026 at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers of the Chardon Municipal Center.

Christopher Grau, Mayor & President of Council presiding.

The meeting opened with the pledge of allegiance and roll call.

Members of Council present: Andrew Blackley, Deborah Chuha, Christopher Grau, Kyle Martin, Heather Means Daniel Meleski.

Members of Council absent: none.

Others Present: City Manager Benjamin Young, Finance Director Mark Iacofano, Clerk of Council Amy Day, Law Director Benjamin Chojnacki, Police Chief Scott Niehus, Community Development Administrator Jonathan Holody, Bill Hess, Steve Yaney, Mike Hannon, Ginger Hannon, Marci Mondello King, Emily Grambrel, Marilyn Muscenti, Michael Williams, Allison Williams, Kim Lloyd Marincic.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mrs. Chuha moved and Mr. Meleski seconded to approve the minutes of the May 14, 2026 Regular Session as presented.

Results of the roll call vote:

Blackley: Yes
Chuha: Yes
Grau: Yes
Martin: Yes
Means: Abstain
Meleski: Yes

Motion passed.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Young reported that the process to change residential trash service to Dumpster Bandit on June 1 has gone smoothly.

Mr. Young reported that the Policy Committee of the Geauga-Trumbull Solid Waste Management District voted to close the recycling drop-off site at the County Offices at 470 Center Street once the property is sold. He added that an alternate site in the City has not been located due to the investment that would be necessary to prepare a site.

Mr. Young reported that Requests for Proposals for the City Architect and Geauga Theater are open.

Mr. Young reported that the City's community survey went live and is available for completion by residents and visitors over 18 years old.

Mr. Young reported that the City has been notified it will receive an additional $5,500 in opioid settlement funds.

Mr. Young reported that the 2027 budget process has begun.

Mr. Young reported that the County intends to consider a property tax credit through HB 96, which would result in a $50,000 loss to the City.

Mr. Young reported on the status of Capital Projects.

Mr. Young reported that $5,300 in donations for the America 250 celebration has been offered, and asked Council to accept the donations.

Mayor Grau moved and Ms. Means seconded to accept the donations for America 250. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Young reported on enrollment and memberships for the summer recreational programs, noting that participation has been higher than 2025.

Mr. Young reported on upcoming community events.

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT

Mr. Blackley reported that Planning Commission approved the final development plan with a few small modifications for a medical office building at 220 Meadowlands Drive for Dr. Augustine Kellis.

Mr. Blackley reported that Planning Commission also informally discussed a proposed rezoning of 401 Park Drive from Industrial to R-3 Medium Density Residence District.

Jonathan Holody, Community Development Administrator, reported on recent activity in his department and reviewed commercial projects entering construction phases.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS – none.

HEARING OF PERSONS BEFORE COUNCIL

Those Persons on the Agenda – none.

General Public –

Marci Mondello-King addressed Council and spoke in support of legislation modifying the parking times around the Square. She explained that she has 16 independent contractors that work for her at Marci's Hair on the Square, and parking that is long enough for their customers has been an issue.

Kim Lloyd Marincic added that 2-hour parking is not long enough to service customers' needs at the salon.

Ginger Hannon, 9111 Cambridge Road, addressed Council and explained that she works at a business on the Square and would like to see no parking time limits on the northern portion of Main Street. She stated that there hasn't been parking enforcement during the courthouse construction and did not see any issue with people finding parking. She added that the proposed changes will not benefit her because she needs all day parking in front of the business she works at and is disappointed that there has not been consideration given for employees. She added that she pays the City's 2% income tax and doesn't receive any benefit from that and would like parking so she can go to work.

Marilyn Muscenti, 207 Downing Drive, expressed concern with the recent property transfer of a house on North Street to Lake Geauga Recovery Center because it is in a residential area near a school.

Ms. Means stated that the recovery house property purchase is a private transaction and she encouraged Ms. Muscenti to contact

Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers who would be able to address whatever concerns she has.

Ms. Muscenti asked if Lake-Geauga Recovery Centers was granted permission by the City to operate a recovery house.

Mr. Young stated that it is a permitted use in that district and no special permission from the City was granted.

Ms. Muscenti stated that she would like the City to install signs about regulations for e-bikes.

Police Chief Scott Niehus stated that e-bikes are not currently restricted; however, staff is in the process of reviewing and proposing potential regulations.

OLD BUSINESS – none.

NEW BUSINESS

A public hearing to provide the public an opportunity to comment regarding the 2027 tax budget was set for July 9, 2026 at 6:15 PM.

Regarding the acceptance of OCJS grant for hearing protection devices, Chief Niehus reported that the Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) has approved a grant request from the Police Department for hearing protection devices for department members. The department will receive 19 pairs of YouTuneHearing devices that will be used during range training and in other situations where hearing protection is necessary for officers.

Mr. Blackley moved and Mr. Meleski seconded to accept the OCJS grant for hearing protection devices. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

LEGISLATION

ORDINANCE NO. 3364

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 351, PARKING GENERALLY, SPECIFICALLY SECTION 351.24, SPECIFIED PARKING TIME LIMITS; PARKING BEYOND TIME LIMIT; PENALTY; MULTIPLE VIOLATIONS, OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF CHARDON TO DESIGNATE PARKING FOR COUNTY COURT USE, AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read for the first time by title only.

Mr. Young stated that the City's parking enforcement was re-instituted April 1, 2026 after a hiatus of a number of years. Warnings were issued for one month and ticketing began May 1, 2026. After walking the Square and observing the parking situation, he believes that the parking times are not accomplishing the goals they were intended for. Regular turnover on Main Street is desired so that patrons can find parking; however, not so much that it is vacant. He reviewed the data that shows that the municipal lot at 106 Water Street is housing lot of parking needs, and explained that he has a proposal that will strike a better balance of meeting the needs of all of the businesses.

Mr. Young reviewed his parking proposal which would include: changing the parking times on the park side of Main Street to 3 hours, all-day parking on Center Street, designating 19 parking spaces for County use, and shifting Municipal Center overflow to the municipal gravel lot.

Mrs. Chuha asked if the County spaces would be temporary and if the City could push to get the County's gravel pit improved on East Park Street.

Mr. Young stated that drivers will use whatever available parking is closest, and the gravel pit will remain fairly unused because of the walking distance to County offices.

Ms. Means stated that the City has been receiving feedback from business owners for years, asking for the City's assistance with parking because there is not enough parking for patrons.

Mayor Grau asked when the parking changes will occur.

Mr. Young stated that the parking will take effect July 1 to give the City time to update signage.

Ms. Means asked the Police Chief's thoughts.

Chief Niehus stated that the proposed solution will solve most parking issues on the Square that have been identified, adding that the parking enforcement will address those that violate the time limits.

Mr. Blackley asked about what the County spots can be used for.

Mr. Young stated that the signs will read "County Business Only" and can be used for jurors or those who have business at the courts or county offices on the Square.

Mike Hannon, 9111 Cambridge Road, suggested that a traffic study could provide more accurate information.

Mayor Grau stated that the City Manager has tracked this information on a daily basis and has a firm grasp on what is happening on the Square, and the plan he has presented provides much relief from the numerous parking issues that the City has heard about for many years.

Mr. Young added that because ODOT has done traffic studies on the state routes, the City has data that shows that 4,000 fewer cars travel through Main Street than when the ordinance was put in place. The volume of the problem has decreased at the moment, which is why he is comfortable with less restrictive parking.

Mrs. Mondello King requested the City distribute letters to business owners requesting they park in the all-day parking spots rather than on Main Street.

Mr. Meleski suggested that Section 2c of the Ordinance be changed to reflect that the time limits be Monday – Friday.

Ms. Means suggested that Sections 1a and 2c be amended to reflect the times of 7 AM – 5 PM.

Mr. Meleski moved and Ms. Means seconded to amend the Ordinance to change Sections 1 and 2 to reflect the times to be 7 AM – 5 PM Monday through Friday. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Blackley moved and Mr. Meleski seconded to suspend the rules requiring 3 readings of Ordinance No. 3364. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Mayor Grau moved and Mr. Meleski seconded for the adoption of Ordinance No. 3364. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 16-26
A RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT FOR A STATUTORY AMENDMENT TO GRANT JOINT FIRE DISTRICTS THE SAME INCOME TAX AUTHORITY AS JOINT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read for the first time by title only.

Mr. Young stated that he has proposed a potential funding concept for the Chardon Fire Department as an alternative revenue model that offers greater stability and potentially reduces the burden on residents. Preliminary estimates indicate that a 0.25% income tax, applied jointly by the City of Chardon, Chardon Township, and Claridon Township, could fully fund the Fire Department's current operations. Enabling such a structure would require a request for a statutory amendment from the Ohio General Assembly. Specifically, ORC 505.371 would need to be modified to grant joint Fire Districts the same income-taxing authority that currently exists for JEDD districts. If this authority were established, the three jurisdictions could form a joint district and levy a dedicated income tax exclusively for fire and EMS services. He added that based on early calculations, this model could significantly reduce costs for residents when compared with a traditional operating levy. An additional benefit of this model is that most retirement income is exempt from local income tax.

Mr. Young stated that the legislation before Council is a Resolution in support of him beginning the process of lobbying State legislators for the change as well as formally reaching out to townships.

Mrs. Chuha moved and Ms. Means seconded to suspend the rules requiring 3 readings of Resolution No. 16-26. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Chuha moved and Mr. Blackley seconded for the adoption of Resolution No. 16-26. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

RESOLUTION NO. 17-26
A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO ALL AGREEMENTS NECESSARY TO OBTAIN FEE SIMPLE OWNERSHIP IN THE FLAGPOLE PORTION OF THE REAL PROPERTY LOCATED AT 105 WATER STREET (GEAUGA COUNTY PARCEL NO. 10-021400) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read for the first time by title only.

Mr. Young stated that the legislation would authorize the City Manager to take final steps to complete the purchase of a portion of 105 Water Street to be used for the City's South Street parking lot project.

Mr. Martin moved and Mr. Blackley seconded to suspend the rules requiring 3 readings of Resolution No. 17-26. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Chuha moved and Mr. Meleski seconded for the adoption of Resolution No. 17-26. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

REVIEW OF EXPENDITURES

Mr. Meleski reported that expenditures were in order.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Meleski moved and Mrs. Chuha seconded to adjourn to Executive Session at 7:50 p.m. to consider the purchase of public property for a public purpose or the sale of public property at competitive bidding and invite Mark Iacofano, Ben Chojnacki, Ben Young, and Amy Day into the session. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion occurred regarding the purchase of public property for a public purpose or the sale of public property at competitive bidding.

Meeting reconvened at 8:42 p.m.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE COUNCIL

Mr. Blackley inquired about the process to fill the vacant Council seat.

Mayor Grau stated that the vacancy has been advertised and a Special Session of Council will be held on June 18, 2026 to interview the applicants.

ADJOURN

Mr. Meleski moved and Mayor Grau seconded to adjourn. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

Attest:

____
CHRISTOPHER GRAU, Mayor
President of Council

____
AMY DAY
Clerk of Council