

SPECIAL SESSION

June 18, 2026

The Council of the City of Chardon met in Special Session on Thursday, June 18, 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, Clerk of Council Amy Day, Steve Yaney, Cole Kornell, Matt Wasylyk, Allison Wilson.

Mayor Grau explained the interview process to fill the vacant Council position which would be conducted in open session followed by Council deliberation in Executive Session.

Matt Wasylyk and Steve Yaney left Council Chambers.

Cole Kornell, 193 Canfield Drive, gave his introductory remarks about why he applied for the Council vacancy.

Mr. Martin asked Mr. Kornell what City issues he has paid attention to over the last few years and why.

Mr. Kornell stated that the biggest issue he has been paying attention to is housing. He stated that housing projects are of interest to him because he is involved with real estate investing and having affordable, available housing is important to him as well as his family and friends.

Mr. Blackley asked Mr. Kornell what he believes Council's role is.

Mr. Kornell stated that he believes Council's role is to represent the City and serve its people well regardless of their backgrounds or ideologies, and to deliver results to them by putting the City of Chardon first.

Mr. Blackley asked if national partisan politics should remain outside of Council business.

Mr. Kornell stated that he does not think that national partisan politics has anything to do with City governance. Council's job is to represent residents in a non-partisan way, and success and results are what matter.

Mayor Grau asked Mr. Kornell what made him decide to take this opportunity to apply for the Council vacancy.

Mr. Kornell stated that he works in marketing and consulting for election campaigns and candidates and has been involved in local politics and elections since 2019. When this opportunity arose, he viewed it as a chance to give back to his community.

Ms. Means asked Mr. Kornell if he would run for the next Council term if he is not appointed to the vacancy.

Mr. Kornell stated that he would consider running in the next election if he is not appointed to the vacancy.

Mr. Meleski asked if Mr. Kornell would run for the next Council term if he is appointed to the vacancy.
Mr. Kornell stated that he would run in the next election if he is not appointed to the vacancy because it is important for the residents to have stability when it comes to that role.

Ms. Means asked how the appointment will work.

Mr. Young stated that the appointment will fill the vacancy of Councilman Lelko through 2027, but they would need to run in November 2027 General Election if they wanted to serve the last 2 years of the term.

Mrs. Chuha asked Mr. Kornell what he feels the biggest issue facing the City is.

Mr. Kornell stated that housing is the biggest issue facing the City, adding that that economic growth will be vital to generating the tax revenue required to maintain services for residents.

Mr. Blackley asked what type of housing Mr. Kornell prefers.

Mr. Kornell stated that he would like to see more affordable homeownership in the City.

Ms. Means asked what one thing he would want to change in the community.

Mr. Kornell stated that he would like to add more housing opportunities and build more public/private partnerships.

Mayor Grau asked Mr. Kornell how he handles adversity.

Mr. Kornell stated that he is a strong person that has overcome paralyses in recent years, and was able to return to good physical health after hard work. He added that he believes when Council members face adversity, they can calmly and respectfully approach any issue.

Mr. Kornell was excused.

Matt Wasylyk, 121 North Street, gave his introductory remarks about why he applied for the Council vacancy.

Mr. Martin asked Mr. Wasylyk what City issues he has paid attention to over the last few years and why.

Mr. Wasylyk stated that the main issue he has been paying attention to was the plan for the county courthouse because of the impact that it leaving the Square would have. More recently, he has paid attention to the parking changes on the Square and the effect it has had on businesses and individuals.

Mr. Blackley asked Mr. Wasylyk what he believes Council's role is.

Mr. Wasylyk stated that Council's role is to implement legislation, as objectively and impartially as possible.

Mr. Blackley asked Mr. Wasylyk if Council activities should be non-partisan.

Mr. Wasylyk stated that Council's activities should be 100% non-partisan because Council's decisions need to reflect a respect for everyone in the community.

Mayor Grau asked Mr. Wasylyk what his decision-making process was for applying for the Council vacancy.

Mr. Wasylyk stated that he first wanted to make sure that he could balance his current responsibilities and priorities with serving on Council. He then looked at what was involved in

serving as Councilman to make sure he could meet it. He feels that he could make a qualified contribution to the community, and has a desire to be a part of a culture that implements changes safely.

Mr. Meleski asked Mr. Wasylyk if he would run for the next Council term if he is appointed to the vacancy.

Mr. Wasylyk stated that he would run if he was appointed to fill the Council vacancy.

Mr. Meleski asked Mr. Wasylyk if he would run for the next Council term if he is not appointed to the vacancy.

Mr. Wasylyk stated that now that he has considered the position, he would consider running if he was not appointed to the vacancy, adding that he would consider other open positions as well.

Mrs. Chuha asked Mr. Wasylyk what the biggest issue facing the City is.

Mr. Wasylyk stated that based on his observations, school districts are facing difficult decisions in response to the initiative to eliminate property taxes.

Ms. Means asked what one thing he would want to change in the community.

Mr. Wasylyk stated that he would like to see an improvement in civic involvement, but does not wish to see anything drastically change in the community. He added that he would like to see the City hold the line of a wonderful town life against currents of change that may be disruptive, such as data centers.

Mr. Wasylyk was excused.

Steven Yaney, 912 Lost Pond Pkwy., gave his introductory remarks about why he applied for the Council vacancy.

Mr. Marin asked Mr. Yaney what City issues he has paid attention to over the last few years and why.

Mr. Yaney stated that he has been paying attention to almost all issues because of his past experience, but the area he mainly has followed is the development aspect and how the City has been following its Comprehensive Plan so that the community grows, but grows in an intentional way. He added that another issue he has paid attention to is keeping the County in the City and retaining the courthouse and keeping the Square vibrant.

Mr. Blackley asked Mr. Yaney what he believes Council's role is.

Mr. Yaney stated that City Council is the elected body for the people and sets the budget, parameters and guidelines for staff to follow, adding that it is the City Manager's job to execute Council's plans in the best way they see fit.

Mr. Blackley asked Mr. Yaney if Council activities should be non-partisan.

Mr. Yaney stated that partisan politics does not lend itself to local government, adding that there does not need to be divisiveness; instead, Council's focus should be on quality of life issues for the community.

Mayor Grau asked Mr. Yaney what made him decide to take this opportunity to apply for the Council vacancy.

Mr. Yaney stated that he thought the ideal Council candidate would not run for politically motivated reasons, but would run to make Chardon better and keep the momentum of previous

Councils going. He added that he has the experience and expertise, and thought this would be an opportunity to give back to the City and would like to make Chardon a better place for current residents and for those in the future.

Ms. Means asked Mr. Yaney how he would handle issues that may arise and go against things he may have been part of creating.

Mr. Yaney stated that having worked for the City for many years, he has the historical knowledge of why things were done a certain way; however, it doesn't mean that they should continue to be done in the same way going forward. His mission is not to keep things the same, and is aware that sometimes things need to change.

Mr. Meleski asked if Mr. Yaney would run for the next Council term if he is appointed to the vacancy.

Mr. Yaney stated that he would run for the next Council term if he is appointed to the vacancy.

Mr. Meleski asked if Mr. Yaney would run for the next Council term if he is not appointed to the vacancy.

Mr. Yaney stated that he believes he would run for the next Council term if he is not appointed to the vacancy.

Mrs. Chuha asked Mr. Yaney what the biggest issue facing the City is.

Mr. Yaney stated that the biggest issue facing the City is continuing to provide a high level of services to the community with an entirely new staff.

Ms. Means asked what one thing he would want to change in the community.

Mr. Yaney stated that he would like to see a more concerted effort to expand parks and recreation in the community.

Mr. Yaney was excused.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Blackley moved and Mr. Meleski seconded to adjourn to Executive Session at 7:32 PM to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, promotion, demotion, discipline or compensation of a public employee or official, and invite Benjamin Young into the session. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Discussion occurred regarding the appointment, employment, dismissal, promotion, demotion, discipline or compensation of a public employee or official.

Meeting reconvened at 8:02 PM.

APPOINTMENT TO FILL COUNCIL VACANCY

Mayor Grau thanked the 3 residents who applied for the Council vacancy. He stated that all were qualified in a variety of ways and Council appreciates their interest. He added that there are other avenues to Council seats for those who aren't selected and hopes that they look for other opportunities to serve the community.

Mr. Blackley concurred with the Mayor's comments, adding that he feels the strongest candidate is Steven Yaney.

Mr. Blackley moved and Ms. Means seconded to appoint Steven Yaney to fill the Council vacancy of David Lelko through December 31, 2027. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Blackley encouraged the candidates not selected, to run for future Council seats and get involved in the City in other ways.

Ms. Means expressed her appreciation to the candidates for their willingness to step forward.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS - none.

ADJOURN

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:05 P.M.

Attest:

CHRISTOPHER GRAU, Mayor
President of Council

AMY DAY
Clerk of Council