

REGULAR SESSION

March 13, 2025

The Council of the City of Chardon met in Regular Session Thursday, March 13, 2025 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, David Lelko, Kyle Martin, Heather Means, Daniel Meleski.

Members of Council absent: none.

Others Present: City Manager Randy Sharpe, Finance Director Mark Iacofano, Clerk of Council Amy Day, Law Director Benjamin Chojnacki, Police Lieutenant Matt Delisa, City Engineer Doug Courtney, Community Development Administrator Steve Yaney, Public Service Director Paul Hornyak, Paul Johnston, Allison Wilson, Molly Nikkila, Paul Ovarik, Ken Ovarik, Jessy Harper, Ed Slusarski, Dave Johnson, Susan Parker, Elisabeth Giedt.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Blackley moved and Mrs. Chuha seconded to approve the minutes of the February 13, 2025 Regular Session as presented.

Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Mrs. Chuha moved and Mr. Blackley seconded to approve the minutes of the March 4, 2025 Special Session as presented.

Results of the roll call vote:

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

Motion passed.

MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Sharpe reported on the status of public works projects.

Mr. Meleski asked if the City is receiving a loss of use for the Geauga Theater.

Mr. Hornyak stated that he has mentioned this to the insurance company, but the City has not received a request for documentation.

PLANNING COMMISSION REPORT – none.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Economic Development Committee

Mr. Lelko reported that the Committee met and discussed Retail Strategies' activities and contract. After discussion, the Committee recommended the City enter into a 3-year contract with Retail Strategies with a 90-day exit clause. He asked if Council had any objections to renewing the contract with these terms.

Mrs. Chuha asked what benefits Retail Strategies provides.

Mr. Lelko stated that he believes that the City is at a point of major development and they can provide a lot of value as parcels develop.

Mr. Meleski stated that Retail Strategies is also able to provide and translate large amounts of data. They have helped the City with economic development; and without it, he believes there would be a void.

Steve Yaney, Community Development Administrator, stated that Retail Strategies provides expertise the City does not have.

Ms. Means stated that Retail Strategies can help direct what businesses come to the City and they keep the City's name in front of the desired retailers. She added that having the opt-out clause allows the City to get out of the contract on an annual basis.

Mr. Blackley stated that he would like Retail Strategies to provide feedback on the best use of particular properties.

Mr. Yaney stated that he has heard that some of the developers around the Meijer property have been contacted by Retail Strategies.

Mr. Lelko stated that the property near Meijer is going to develop and having Retail Strategies will help direct the retailers the City would like, rather than letting the property develop on its own.

HEARING OF PERSONS BEFORE COUNCIL

Those Persons on the Agenda – none.

Jessy Harper addressed Council to request permission to use the Square for a CryptidCon & Curios Event on October 11, 2025. She explained that their goal is to have a free, family-friendly event featuring mystical creatures with vendors.

Mr. Sharpe asked if her organization is for-profit.

Ms. Harper stated that her organization is for-profit.

Mr. Lelko asked if police personnel would be needed.

Mr. Hornyak stated that he did not anticipate needing additional police personnel.

Mayor Grau asked about the City's ability to move picnic tables in the Square in order to accommodate vendors at events.

Ms. Harper stated that they are flexible about where the vendors are placed.

Ms. Means moved and Mr. Martin seconded to allow the CryptidCon & Curios event on October 11, 2025. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

David Johnson, representing Chardon Rotary and Ed Slusarsky, representing Chardon Square Association, addressed Council to ask if they were interested in receiving a conversation set and an Adirondack swing for Chardon Square as gifts from the organizations.

Mr. Johnson explained that the organizations each received a \$3,500 Go Green Community Grant from the Geauga-Trumbull Solid Waste District.

Mr. Slusarsky stated that Chardon Square Association is proposing a conversation set for people to congregate and sit face-to-face and talk.

Mr. Johnson stated that Chardon Rotary is proposing an arbor with a swing and will pay for the concrete pads for them to be placed on.

Mayor Grau asked if the items would be up year-round.

Mr. Hornyak stated that he thought they would go in storage for the winter.

Discussion occurred regarding anchoring the items.

Mrs. Chuha expressed concern about removing green space in the park.

Ms. Means stated that there is space in the park that is not highly used.

Mr. Hornyak stated that the Bohl memorial is a possible location when the memorial is relocated.

Mr. Blackley stated that the table and chairs may be better suited by the Heritage House and a permeable surface may be better than concrete.

Mayor Grau asked if the items could be placed in the grass until a more permanent area is identified.

Mr. Lelko stated that he would like to see a timeline on the John Bohl memorial project.

Ms. Means moved and Mr. Grau seconded to accept the gifts from Chardon Rotary and the Chardon Square Association as presented. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

General Public – none.

OLD BUSINESS – none.

NEW BUSINESS – none.

LEGISLATION

ORDINANCE NO. 3305

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO ACCEPT NORTHEAST OHIO PUBLIC ENERGY COUNCIL (NOPEC) 2025 ENERGIZED COMMUNITY GRANT FUNDS AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read for the first time by title only.

Mr. Meleski moved and Ms. Means seconded the rules be suspended and the Ordinance be read for the second and third time by title only. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Ordinance No. 3305 was then read for the second and third time by title only.

Mr. Blackley moved and Mrs. Chuha seconded for the adoption of Ordinance No. 3305.

Paul Hornyak explained that the City received a NOPEC Energized Community grant for 2025 in the amount of \$12,832 which staff is recommending be used for auxiliary generators. The generators are to be used during power outages for temporary power for traffic signals, as well as other smaller facilities without full-time backup power sources.

Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

REVIEW OF EXPENDITURES

Mrs. Chuha reported that expenditures were in order.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Meleski moved and Mrs. Chuha seconded to adjourn to Executive Session at 7:16 p.m. to consider the appointment, employment, dismissal, promotion, demotion, discipline, or compensation of a public employee or official, and invite Amy Day, Benjamin Chojnacki, Mark Iacofano and Randy Sharpe 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 7:53 p.m.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

Ms. Means moved and Mayor Grau seconded to appoint Molly Nikkila to the Records Commission to fill the vacancy. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Means moved and Mrs. Chuha seconded to appoint Gail Rousey to the Housing Council. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE COUNCIL

Mr. Sharpe announced his intention to retire as City Manager, with his last day of employment anticipated to be July 11, 2025.

Mayor Grau thanked Mr. Sharpe for his dedication and service to the community.

ADJOURN

Mr. Lelko moved and Ms. Means seconded to adjourn. Upon voice vote the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Attest:

CHRISTOPHER GRAU, Mayor
President of Council

AMY DAY
Clerk of Council