

SPECIAL SESSION

April 28, 2025

The Council of the City of Chardon met in Special Session on Monday, April 28, 2025 at 6:00 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, Daniel Meleski, Heather Means.

Members of Council absent: David Lelko.

Others present: City Manager Randal Sharpe, Law Director Benjamin Chojnacki, Community Development Administrator Steve Yaney, Clerk of Council Amy Day, Public Service Director Paul Hornyak, Joyce Perrico, Michael Perrico, Anthony Perrico, Dante Perrico, Jaret Havanchak, Paul Mendolera, John Tomlinson, Peter Lenk, Melissa Ricco.

Regarding the reassignment of Council Committees, Mayor Grau noted that Councilman Lelko is unavailable for the next few months and the Law Director has confirmed that Council members may serve on 3 committees. He stated that Councilman Means has offered to serve on the Economic Development Committee and Councilman Blackley on the Service Committee.

Mayor Grau moved and Mr. Meleski seconded to accept the committee assignments as presented. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Regarding the proposed designated outdoor refreshment area, City Manager Randy Sharpe explained that a DORA is an area where persons of legal drinking age are permitted to possess and consume alcohol in a public area with certain restrictions. He stated that staff members and community members have been working cooperatively since 2022 to formulate a program for the City. He explained that the DORA laws are flexible to allow communities to establish parameters that work for them. A proposed pilot program is being requested.

Joyce Perrico spoke to explain that each DORA is customizable and is meant to increase foot traffic and sales, attract investors, and provide a vibrant atmosphere. They are proposing the City's DORA hours of operation include Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays from 4-9 PM in the areas from the north and east sides of the Square and the park. She explained that they are proposing the program be restricted to a small area that could start in July.

Ms. Means added that if there are events on the Square that do not want the DORA, they don't have to allow it.

Mr. Sharpe noted that because of the compact area of the DORA, it is anticipated that the current staffing levels of the public service and police departments would be sufficient to manage the public health and safety of the area.

Mrs. Chuha asked about the cups to be used in the DORA.

Ms. Perrico stated that the cup style has not yet been

determined, but it is anticipated that the cups will be made of durable plastic possibly with a lid. Chardon Eats is considering supplying the cups.

Mrs. Perrico noted that there would be posted signage identifying the boundaries of the DORA.

Mayor Grau noted that the Police Chief spoke with other communities who expressed that they have not had any issues with their DORA.

Mayor Grau noted that Council will be voting on the application on May 8, 2025 to allow time for the topic to be fully considered.

The timeline to implement the DORA was discussed.

Mr. Sharpe suggested that the pilot program go through 2026 since there won't be much time used in 2025.

Discussion occurred regarding expanding the DORA area.

Ms. Means stated that the idea was to try something small and expand it larger in future years.

Peter Lamandola, representing Cremona, stated that he would like to see the program start in 2025.

Jaret Havanchak, representing Square Bistro, spoke in support of a pilot program adding that the DORA program will help all businesses in some way.

Melissa Ricco, Director of Chardon Chamber of Commerce, described the DORA rules that would be listed on the cup.

Discussion occurred regarding the pilot program timeframe.

Mr. Sharpe suggested that a full year of data be obtained. He suggested May 2025-October 2026.

Discussion occurred regarding where to expand the proposed DORA.

Mr. Blackley suggested the DORA include everything in the C2 district.

Lt. Delisa added that the concerns conveyed from the City of Hudson's Police Department related to pedestrians crossing State routes.

Mr. Meleski asked if anyone can opt-out of being a part of the DORA.

Ms. Means stated that anyone can opt-out of the DORA.

Mr. Yaney noted that there are some residences on North Hambden Street in the C2 District.

Council concurred to remove the residences from the DORA.

Mrs. Perrico requested 109 Court Street remain in.

Staff concurred that they would make the changes to the map and the length of the pilot program and prepare the information for the May Council meeting.

RESOLUTION NO. 9-25

A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR THE GRANT REQUEST BY THE CITY OF CHARDON PUBLIC SERVICE DEPARTMENT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR 2026 TO THE INTERIOR SUBCOMMITTEE, COMMUNITY PROJECT FUNDING - ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY STATE AND TRIBAL ASSISTANCE GRANTS (STAG) AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY was read for the first time by title only.

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

Resolution No. 9-25 was then read for the second and third time by title only.

Mr. Blackely moved and Mrs. Chuha seconded for the adoption of Resolution No. 9-25.

Public Service Director Paul Hornyak stated that staff has applied for a grant to assist in funding the construction of a second clear well at the City's water treatment facility and would like Council to pass the Resolution supporting the grant request.

Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

Regarding a request for the temporary relocation of four parking stalls from E. Park Street to Main Street north of Short Court St. for County Court personnel, Mr. Hornyak explained that Infinity Construction needs to complete work in the area of the stone wall on E. Park Street as part of the courthouse renovation project. They are requesting the designated parking stalls used by the court personnel be temporarily moved to the west side of Main Street.

Mayor Grau reported that the City was notified that the County Commissioners were asking construction personnel to park at the former Chase Bank building or the library as a temporary measure. He noted that he has not seen this happen.

Mr. Hornyak stated that he will reiterate to Infinity Construction the importance of having available parking for Square businesses.

Mr. Blackley moved and Ms. Means seconded to set aside 4 parking spaces on Main Street for Geauga County court personnel. Upon roll call vote the motion passed unanimously.

EXECUTIVE SESSION – none.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Mayor Grau reported that the recruiting company for the City Manager's position has requested that a small group of Council members be formed to conduct pre-interviews. He asked if there was any interest by members of Council to serve in this capacity.

Mayor Grau, Mrs. Chuha and Mr. Blackley and Ms. Means offered to conduct pre-interviews.

Mayor Grau stated that initially he would include Mrs. Chuha and Mr. Blackley and himself in the group.

ADJOURN

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:08 p.m.

CHRISTOPHER GRAU, Mayor
President of Council

Attest:

AMY DAY
Clerk of Council