CITY OF GROVE CITY, OHIO

COUNCIL MINUTES

July 21, 2025 Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of Council was called to order by President Houk at 5:30 p.m. in City Hall, 4035 Broadway.

Roll was called and the following members were present:

Jodi Burroughs, Melissa Anderson, Anthony Wilson, Christine Houk, Randy Holt, Rodney Dew

1. Ms. Houk explained that this is the third meeting whereby Council is reviewing the City Charter. They will begin tonight with Article VIII and their goal is to produce a draft document to turn over to the Director of Law to prepare next steps for Council.

Article VIII – Recall
8.01 – O.K.
8.02 – Ms. Anderson questioned the need for a Committee in this Section.

Mr. Berry stated that without a Committee, no one could be appointed to replace the candidate if something happened. Ms. Houk said it is something to ponder.

8.03 – O.K.
8.04 – O.K.

Article IX – General Provisions
9.01 – O.K.
9.02 – O.K.
9.03 – O.K.
9.04 – Ms. Burroughs feels the Review Committee may be too large. Council agreed to review this Section.
9.05 – O.K.

Article X – Transitional Provisions
10.01 – 10.07 – Repealed
10.08 – O.K.
10.09 – O.K.
10.10 – O.K.

Mr. David Frea, resident, asked if there was a typo in Section 10.09 because it says Boards & Commissions have a six year term rather than a four year term. It was explained to Mr. Frea that 10.09 is correct, as it is in the Transitional Provisions Section. He then asked if the Charter should say that Board and Commission members must take the Oath of Office. Council said they would revisit this later.

Council went back through and revisited some of the Sections previously read. Ms. Houk said the idea is to put together a draft of changes for Council to review. There was a question of timing for getting any amendments to the voters. Mr. Smith stated that it is best to hit a municipal election since we are already paying for a portion of the election. Issues could also go on a primary election, which would be less expensive than paying for a special election.

Ms. Houk asked Council Members what their feeling was for changing all areas to a City Manager form of government. *Mr. Wilson* said he feels they should move the Charter forward with the Charter Review Committee's recommendation. *Ms. Anderson* said she believes the majority of the Charter Review Committee recommended a change to City Manager and she has also heard this from outside conversations. She said the educational piece will be a challenge but feels adjusting the powers of the Mayor would also take some education. As the community grows and things change, she feels a city manager form of government, with Council appointing a Mayor is the best. *Ms. Houk* said they could request changes that they think are broken; ask voters about changing the form of government; or take the full package of changing the Charter over to a City Manager form of government to the voters and she believes the full package should be sent to the voters. *Mayor Stage* said he doesn't believe the majority of the Committee were in favor of changing to a City Manager form of government and they were not supportive of Mr. Frea's e-mail. He read e-mails from four (4) of the committee members supporting this opinion. He said he believes the majority was for a hybrid form of government. Ms. Houk said the Committee was very conscientious in reporting the full discussion. There was no vote. It was an expression of all member's opinions and Ms. Anderson read the preferences of each committee member.

Mr. Holt moved that a draft be created to change the Charter to reflect a City Manager form of government; seconded by Ms. Anderson.

Mr. Berry shared concerns with how Council is going down this road. He said Council has concerns that the residents do not. He said he is fine with asking voters what they want, but there are other issues that residents have that are not being addressed. He said many people don't understand why Council is even doing this.

Mr. Holt said the purpose for his motion is to get consensus on how to move forward so a draft can be created.

There being no further comments, the vote was called.

Ms. Burroughs	Yes
Ms. Anderson	Yes
Mr. Wilson	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Dew	Yes

Ms. Houk moved to recess until 7:00 p.m. Approved by unanimous consent.

Ms. Houk reconvened the meeting at 7:00 p.m.

1. Ms. Houk moved to approve the minutes of the previous meeting and approve as written; seconded by Ms. Burroughs.

Ms. Anderson	Yes
Mr. Wilson	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Dew	Yes
Ms. Burroughs	Yes

2. The Chair read the agenda items and they were approved by unanimous consent.

3. Ms. Houk moved to overturn the Mayor's veto of Ord. C-22-25; seconded by Ms. Anderson.

Mayor Stage said he sent an explanation to Council outlining his reasons for the veto. He said Section 1 of the ordinance is very stringent and does not allow staff to do anything with Brookpark. He said he has submitted a resolution for the next meeting to address some needs in the Parks Dept. He shared a video of the Kingston building and the Brookpark building to demonstrate the number and size of the classrooms at Kingston and what could be used at Brookpark. He said this would provide available space until a Community Center is built.

Police Lt. Stern also shared that they use the area for tactical team training. They fly drones through the halls and into the rooms for training.

Discussion took place about the use of Brookpark and any other available space, and how this all relates to whether the motion to overturn the veto should be approved or not.

Ms. Anderson commented that she does not believe C-22-25 handcuffs the Administration. It asked that Council be put in the loop and requires approval for expenditures over $10,000.00. She said Council needs a full plan for programs. She has many questions about that and having C-22-25 in place would bring those questions and issues to Council for review. *Mr. Smith*, Dir. of Law, commented that C-22-25 does handcuff the Administration. He has instructed the Mayor that Section prohibits the staff from doing anything, even preparing information, for the Brookpark property.

Mayor Stage said the overall plan is to continue programs and use all available space for the Parks & Recreation Dept. He said the City has only spent $5,000.00 on Brookpark and the videos show that the space at Brookpark is usable, while a community center is underway.

Ms. Houk said this discussion came to a head in August, 2024.when Council was reviewing the Capital Improvement Projects. She said Council has been trying to advance discussions since that time. In October, Council wanted to see a new agreement and new strategic, big picture, plan for Parks & Rec. programs and what can be done for staff space. She said Ord. C-22-25 was an effort to put guardrails in place and really encourage that discussion. The Mayor's draft resolution for the next agenda is right on point. She said the ordinance was for Council to have a voice.

There being no further discussion, the vote was called to override the veto:

Mr. Wilson	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	No
Mr. Dew	No
Ms. Burroughs	Yes
Ms. Anderson	Yes

The Chair recognized Ms. Burroughs, Chair of Lands, for discussion and voting under said Committee.

1. Ordinance C-25-25 (Approve a C-2 Zoning Classification for 0.87+ acres located at 2139 Sonora Drive upon its annexation to the City of Grove City) was given its second reading and public hearing.

Mr. Scott Hammond, petitioner, explained that he owns the lot next door and is trying to combine both lots in an effort to building a swim school.

There being no additional questions or comments, Ms. Burroughs moved it be approved; seconded by Mr. Holt.

Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Dew	Yes
Ms. Burroughs	Yes
Ms. Anderson	Yes
Mr. Wilson	Yes

2. Ordinance C-28-25 (Accept the Annexation of 0.831+ acres located at 2139 Sonora Drive) was given its first reading. Second reading and public hearing will be held on August 04, 2025.

3. Ordinance C-29-25 (Accept the Plat of Autumn Grove, Section 6, Phase 2) was given its first reading. Second reading and public hearing will be held on August 04, 2025.

4. Ordinance C-30-25 (Approve a Special Use Permit for an Antenna Tower for Parkway Centre Arcadia Tower located at 1620 Buckeye Place) was given its first reading. Second reading and public hearing will be held on August 04, 2025.

5. Ordinance C-31-25 (Amend Section 1135.09(b)(12)F9(c) of the Codified Ordinances titled Retail Dispensing of Medical and Recreational Marijuana was given its first reading. Second reading and public hearing will be held on August 04, 2025.

6. Resolution CR-27-25 (Approve a Development Plan for Ginn Drive Bungalows located at the northeast corner of Park Street and Ginn Drive within the Beulah Park Living Community) was given its reading and public hearing.

   Ms. Sarah Backowitz and Mr. Craig Murdick, representing petitioner, were present to answer any questions. Ms. Backowitz said they have been very intentional in the design of these units and its ability to blend the old with the new. Mr. Holt confirmed that this is a rental product.

   Mr. Kyle Rauch, Dir. of Dev., provided an overview of the three-family structure. He said the Zoning Text provides for a 15 foot side yard setback and all other setbacks shall be determined by Council thru this process. He said this was designed by the road and is zoned for multi-family. He said Staff recommended that the Zoning Text be upheld but Planning Commission recommended approval without that stipulation.

   Ms. Julie Ward, neighbor, said she is very upset about this development. She said her home was built over 130 years ago and is upset how close this will be to her property line. It appears to be about three feet. She said the proposed Beulah Plan has nothing labeled, color coded, or shown for this particular property and if it had, she would have been involved earlier. She said she does not believe it is in keeping with the character of the neighborhood. If nothing else can be done, she requested a brick wall be installed along her adjoining property line.

   Mr. Berry asked what the setback would be, next to Ms. Ward's home. Mr. Rauch said there would be a 20 foot setback with the patio's encroaching within that setback. He said the lots are narrow in that area. Mr. Berry said his primary concern is for the existing residents and building right on top of someone is an issue. He said this is trying to maximize the number of units.

Ms. Burroughs explained that Planning Commission originally approved this with a stipulation that said: no more than 70% of the exterior elevation, fronting a public way, shall be finished in vinyl siding, as required in the zoning text; and then changed it to remove the stipulation and approved it "as submitted". She said she is getting hung up on the bungalow aspect. Her research does not agree with this proposal being a bungalow design. She believes that the addition of brick would provide a better visual effect.

Ms. Anderson asked if we knew how many other multi-family units were in the area. Mr. Rauch said there are a couple of other buildings and explained that this site is a transition between the older neighborhood and the new Beulah neighborhood. He feels this is a matter of density.

There being no additional questions or comments, Ms. Burroughs moved it be approved; seconded by Mr. Holt.

Mr. Holt	No
Mr. Berry	No
Mr. Dew	No
Ms. Burroughs	No
Ms. Anderson	No
Mr. Wilson	No
Ms. Houk	No

The Chair recognized Ms. Anderson, Chair of Safety, for discussion and voting under said Committee.

1. Ordinance C-32-25 (Amend Section 331.44 of the Codified Ordinances titled Texting While Driving Prohibited) was given its first reading. Second reading and public hearing will be held on August 04, 2025.

2. Resolution CR-28-25 (Waive the provisions of Section 903.28(a) of the Codified Ordinances for the Bourbon & Spirits Festival on August 09, 2025) was given its reading and public hearing and Ms. Anderson moved it be approved; seconded by Ms. Burroughs.

Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Dew	Yes
Ms. Burroughs	Yes
Ms. Anderson	Yes
Mr. Wilson	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes

The Chair recognized Mr. Dew, Chair of Service, for discussion and voting under said Committee.

1. Resolution CR-29-25 (Declaring the necessity of constructing certain Sidewalks on Balsam Ave., Basswood Ave., Cypress Ave., Demorest Rd., Dogwood Ct., Holly St., Juniper St., Magnolia St., Sassafras Ct., and Sequoia Ave., and requiring that abutting property owners construct same) was given its reading and public hearing.

Mr. Smith, Dir. of Law, explained that this is the second step in the Annual Sidewalk Program.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Dew moved it be approved; seconded by Ms. Houk.

Mr. Dew	Yes
Ms. Burroughs	Yes
Ms. Anderson	Yes
Mr. Wilson	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes

The Chair recognized Mr. Holt, Chair of Finance, for discussion and voting under said Committee.

1. Ordinance C-26-25 (Appropriate $250,000.00 from the Workers Compensation Fund for the Current Expense of Workers Compensation Claims) was given its second reading and public hearing and Mr. Holt moved it be approved; seconded by Mr. Wilson.

Ms. Burroughs	Yes
Ms. Anderson	Yes
Mr. Wilson	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Dew	Yes

2. Ordinance C-27-25 (Grant an Exceptional Circumstance for 3909 – 3911 Broadway to increase the maximum award under the Town Center Commercial Revitalization Grant Program) was given its second reading and public hearing.

Mr. Smith, Dir. of Law, explained that this was originally introduced without an appropriation. The Administration is asking for a $60,000.00 appropriation so that there is enough money to accommodate other applications in the program.

Ms. Houk moved to amend the Title to add: and Appropriate $60,000.00 for Same; and add a new Section that reads: There is hereby appropriated $60,000.00 from the unappropriated monies in the General Fund to Account #100310.559000 for the current expense of the Town Center Commercial Revitalization Grant Program; seconded by Mr. Holt.

Ms. Anderson	Yes
Mr. Wilson	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Dew	Yes
Ms. Burroughs	Yes

Mr. Rauch, Dir. of Dev., explained that the property owner is proposing $325,000.00 in improvements to the building to bring a restaurant and enhance the Town Center; promote the Plan; add vitality to the area; and leveraging economic development. He said we have done nine (9) exceptional circumstances over the years, and based on those projects - $60,000.00 was the cap and they wanted to be consistent with other exemptions.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Holt moved it be approved; seconded by Mr. Dew.

Mr. Wilson	Yes
Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Dew	Yes
Ms. Burroughs	Yes
Ms. Anderson	Yes

3. Resolution CR-30-25 (Authorizing the City Administrator to apply for and accept funds through the ODNR Division of Forestry, Urban Forestry Grant, to restore the urban canopy in the disadvantaged areas of the City) was given its reading and public hearing.

Ms. Lowe, Urban Forester, explained that ODNR created a map of disadvantaged areas and Grove City had three (3). She has picked one to start with, which only has 33 street trees. It will require 170 trees to bring the area up to Code. An estimated cost of $72,000.00 has been determined and this is what they will request from the reimbursement grant.

There being no additional questions or comments, Mr. Holt moved it be approved; seconded by Ms. Houk.

Ms. Houk	Yes
Mr. Holt	Yes
Mr. Berry	Yes
Mr. Dew	Yes
Ms. Burroughs	Yes
Ms. Anderson	Yes
Mr. Wilson	Yes

The Chair asked that any new business to be brought before the attention of Council be done so at this time.

1. Mr. Brian Parks, resident, stated that at a prior Council meeting, it was said that the most vehicle collisions in the city happen on Stringtown, between I-71 and Gantz Road. He requested that the City prohibit left turns on or off of Stringtown Road between I-71 and Gantz Rd. He shared options to accommodate this change and realizes that signage would not be enough. He believes it would improve overall traffic flow.

Mr. Berry commented that there was an effort to get a feeder street behind the north businesses, but not sure about the south side of Stringtown. He said they are aware of this area.

Ms. Anderson said it may be time for a data driven approach to address this.

Mr. Smith explained that the Director of Safety has the ability to make changes, but they must be supported by a Traffic Study or some type of applicable engineering.

2. Ms. Kenny Huffman, resident, stated that he uses COTA+ all the time, but it is not available on

Saturday or Sunday. He requested that weekend days be included.

Ms. Houk said the City has gradually expanded the COTA+ program and will be looking at it again for weekends.

The Chair recognized members of Administration and Council for closing comments.

1. Mayor Stage reported that this weekend is the Alumni Softball Weekend and reviewed the upcoming events surrounding it. He noted that at 5:45 p.m. on Friday, the first pitch will be thrown by a 1954 graduate and will be pitching to a 98 year old graduate. He also noted that the Community Survey will be starting soon.

2. After closing comments from Council and Administrative staff members, a motion to adjourn was approved by unanimous consent.

Adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Tami K. Kelly

Tami K. Kelly, MMC
Clerk of Council

Christine Houk
President of Council

CITY OF GROVE CITY, OHIO
COUNCIL CAUCUS NOTES

July 21, 2025

Council met at 6:30 p.m. in City Hall, 4035 Broadway.

Council Members reviewed the Agenda items.

Mayor Stage submitted Resolution to permit the use of staff time and classrooms for programs at Brookpark. He said they could add it tonight or entertain it at the next meeting. Council determined it would be best to wait until the next meeting.

Council retired to the Chambers to begin the Regular meeting.

Tami K. Kelly

Tami K. Kelly, MMC
Clerk of Council

Christine Houk
President of Council