



Boards and Commission Interviews

Kathy has scheduled interviews for board and commission vacancies at 6:45 pm.

Public Hearing

Kathy has scheduled a public hearing at 7 pm to receive public comment on the City's proposed 2026 County Tax budget.

Committee of the Whole

1. Staff Updates (Bridget, Dom, Jamie, Joan)

Four Department Heads have requested a few minutes at the start of the Committee meeting to share brief comments about noteworthy topics in their departments.

Administration Recommendation

Receive the staff reports, no action is needed.

Council Actions

Receive the staff report, no action is necessary.

Community Development Committee

1. Amendments to Outdoor Seating Program Guidelines (Bridget/Eric)

Bridget and Eric have asked for Committee time to present a recommendation to amend the language in the outdoor seating program guidelines. Outdoor seating has proven very popular, and the staff have identified a few areas within the guidelines that they believe should be updated to ensure the continued success of the program. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Outdoor seating has been popular with customers and businesses, and there have not been any adverse consequences on public safety, but there are a few areas that the staff and I believe could be modified to minimize problems and optimize the outdoor experience. I recommend Council's approval of the proposed amendments to the outdoor seating guidelines.

Council Actions

Approve the proposed amendments to the outdoor seating program guidelines as presented, with the emergency clause.

2. Renewal of Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (Eric)

Eric has requested Committee time for Council's consideration of the renewal of the Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (DORA). Ohio Revised Code requires the City to renew or eliminate the DORA after 5 years of operation by Ordinance. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

The DORA has been popular with customers and businesses, and there have not been any adverse consequences on public safety, so the staff and I urge Council's renewal of the DORA.

Council Actions

Renew the authorization of the DORA as presented, with the emergency clause.

UPDATE





Finance Committee

1. Staff Report on 2026 Budget: Item 1. Street Repair (Melanie)

Melanie has requested Committee time to provide an update on the 2025 street repair program and to present an option to increase the amount of street repair work that Central Maintenance is able to complete. The City has increased the capital funding for major street repairs from \$350,000/year to \$1.2 million a year but the smaller street repair operations provided by Central Maintenance crews have not been increased in decades yet those crews have seen their shared responsibilities for maintaining streets, landscaping, sewers, water lines, stormwater, downtown, etc., expanding due to unfunded mandates, rising service expectations, aging infrastructure, etc. -- all of which contributes to less time available to devote to street maintenance. Melanie is proposing to create a dedicated street maintenance crew that would be able to work on street maintenance year-round. The estimated cost for the 3 new positions (Operator, Service Worker, Laborer) and materials is \$450,000. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

There are cost efficiencies and performance gains that can be achieved with a dedicated street maintenance crew that are not possible within the constraints of current staffing levels. I believe Melanie and her staff have put together a good business case for adding the new staff in the 2026 Operating budget.

Council Action

Receive the staff report and provide staff direction on next steps.

2. Proposed 2026 County Tax Budget (Rhonda)

Rhonda has prepared the draft 2026 Tax Budget for Council's approval. This budget document is required by the County for notification of any changes to the tax rate in the next budget. Our draft County Tax Budget proposes no changes to the tax rates in the City. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

With no proposed changes to the tax rates, approval of the County tax budget is primarily procedural and I encourage Council's authorization of the tax budget. We will get into our annual City budget deliberations in greater detail in October.

Council Action

Authorize submission of the City's 2026 Tax Budget to the County, with the emergency clause.



Health & Public Safety Committee

1. SAFER Fire Department Staffing Grant Request (Jamie)

Jamie has asked for Committee time to ask for Council's approval to apply for the Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response (SAFER) grant that is available through the Department of Homeland Security and FEMA. The grant application requests funding for 3 new firefighter/paramedic positions for a period of 3 years. The City's cost share would be \$25,000 for years 1 and 2, and \$65,000 for year 3. The City would be responsible for full costs after the 3-year grant period expires. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

We recognize the need to expand staffing in the Fire Department and this grant funding would provide a financially manageable option, providing 3 years of funding for the new positions. I recommend Council's support.

Council Action

Authorize the staff to submit for the SAFER grant funding for 3 new firefighter/paramedic positions as presented, and if awarded, authorize the acceptance and allocation of those funds with the emergency clause.



Streets, Sidewalks & Utilities Committee

1. North Mantua Street Project, OPWC Funding Application (Jim)



Jim has requested Committee time to ask for Council's approval to submit a funding application, and if approved, to execute the subsequent agreements with the Ohio Public Works Commission (OPWC) for the North Mantua Street project. The proposed project includes the construction of a new roundabout, boulevard, pedestrian facilities, and a section of the Lake Rockwell hike and bike trail on North Mantua Street in the area around Roosevelt High School, the Davey Tree campus, and the Riverbend neighborhood. The funding application includes \$850,000 in grant funds and \$150,000 in no interest loans from OPWC. The total cost of the project is \$7,180,000 with construction tentatively scheduled for the fall of 2026. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

The staff have worked closely with our partners with Kent City School, Davey Tree, and the adjacent neighbors to develop a project that offers significant traffic safety and aesthetic improvements, and I urge Council's support for the grant and loan funds.

Council Actions

Authorize the submission of the OPWC grant request, and if approved, authorize the allocation of the funds, execution of the funding agreement, and pass a Resolution of Intent with the OPWC as presented, with the emergency clause.

2. New Event Permit: The Longest Table Event (Dom/Eric)



Eric and Dom have requested Committee time for Council's consideration of a new street closure in support of a new community dinner event, "The Longest Table" on August 3, 2025. Longest Table events are focused on bringing people together to build community over a meal and conversation, and they have been held in over 100 communities worldwide. Main Street Kent is partnering with the City to host the new event, and they have requested Council's approval to close Main Street between River Street and North Water Street on Sunday August 3rd, from 3 pm to 8:30 pm. The table would be set up on the Main Street bridge. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Staff have reviewed the request, and we recommend Council's approval of the new special event street closure request as presented.

Council Action

Authorize the new special event street closure request for The Longest Table event on August 3, 2025 as presented, with the emergency clause.

3. Revised Special Event Permit Request, Grill for Good (Eric)



Eric has requested Committee time to present a request to modify the footprint of the annual Grill for Good fundraising event. The Kent Jaycees have turned over the sponsorship of Grill for Good to AxessPoint Community Services. AxessPoint has selected September 13, 2025 (from 8 am to 9 pm) for the event date and they have requested to reconfigure the event footprint to reduce traffic impacts by no longer closing East Main Street as part of the event. (attachment)

Administration Recommendation

Staff have reviewed the request, and we recommend Council's approval of the revised special event street closure request for Grill for Good as presented.

Council Action

Authorize the revised special event permit request for Grill for Good and corresponding street closure request as presented, with the emergency clause.

Special Regular Council Session

Rhonda has requested Council hold a special regular Council session to approve the proposed 2026 County Tax budget as it must be approved by Council no later than July 15th, but our Council meeting would be on July 16th.

Information Items

1. Kent Police Statistics

Chief Shearer has provided a copy of the police statistics report for May 2025. The MTD calls for service are down 9.2 % (by 162 calls); traffic citations are down 20.3% (by 26 tickets); accident incidents are down by 2% (by 1 incident) for the month and serious crimes are down by 7 calls, at 5 incidents when compared to May of 2024. (attachment)