Borough of Akron Council Meeting – October 5, 2026

Council Members Present: Nathan Imhoff, President; Justin Gehman, Vice President; Ryan Cochran; Tonya Haynes; Kleon Zimmerman; Paul Swangren, Jr. (Tracy Fisher absent)

Others Present: Mayor Susan Davidson; Sean Molchany, Borough Manager; Valerie Wagner, Director of Finance

Visitors:
John Taylor, 218 S 8th St Akron
Anthony Sheaffer, 110 Main St Akron
John McBeth, 410 Edgehill Dr Akron
Baybars Charkas, LNP

Roll Call
Tracy Fisher – absent
Tonya Haynes – present
Ryan Cochran – present
Paul Swangren, Jr. – present
Kleon Zimmerman – present
Justin Gehman, Vice President – absent
Nathan Imhoff, President – present
Mayor Susan Davidson – present

President Nathan Imhoff opened the meeting at 6:00pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Visitors/Comments from the Public - None

2027 Budget Discussion
Sean Molchany explained to Council and visitors that this meeting is to begin discussions about the 2027 budget, and the numbers presented tonight are nowhere near completed. The purpose of tonight is to get feedback from Council and begin working towards a balanced budget.

General Fund
Valerie Wagner shared that the largest source of General Fund revenue, property taxes, cannot be estimated for 2027 yet due to reassessment values not being available from Lancaster County. Since 2027 is a reassessment year, the County needs to determine the total assessed property value within Akron Borough and then the current millage rate will need to be adjusted downward so that property tax revenue is net-neutral as a result of the reassessment. If after the reassessment it is determined that property taxes need to be raised, Council may choose to increase the millage through a separate vote. Any increase is capped at 10% of the previous year's total tax revenue.

Wagner discussed the potential for additional revenue through levying a Local Services Tax: a $52 annual tax per person whose primary work location is with Akron Borough. There is an exemption for individuals earning less than $12,000 annually. Active-duty military, certain disabled veterans, and taxpayers who already paid the max $52 through a primary employer can claim exemptions. Lancaster County Tax Collection Bureau (LCTCB) would collect this tax; LCTCB is already the tax collector for the Earned Income

Tax (EIT) for Akron Borough. Projected revenue the first year the tax is levied is approx. $10,000. In subsequent years, an estimated $20,000-$25,000 of revenue is expected.

The first draft of the budget included updated donation requests from Ephrata Public Library and Ephrata Community Ambulance Association. Ephrata Recreation Center is expected to submit their donation request for 2027 at a future Council meeting.
Mayor Davidson suggested revisiting the park rental fees, proposing an increase. Sean Molchany agreed that staff could prepare a draft of a new fee schedule for Council's approval, separately from budget discussions. Ryan Cochran asked for staff to get quotes from other street sweepers.

Valerie Wagner shared that 3% was used as a placeholder for salary increases, pending review and approval from Personnel Committee. When asked about salary competitiveness, Sean Molchany indicated that while 3% was placed in the draft budget for the current year, surrounding municipalities typically ranged closer to 3.5%, and actual increases would be based on performance reviews rather than across-the-board adjustments. Health insurance renewal costs were not available but are expected to be received within the next week or two. A renewal increase of 18% was used based on an estimate provided by Benecon. Other insurance renewals such as worker's compensation insurance, life, short- and long-term disability insurance, property, liability and auto insurance were not available yet, so increases of 10% were used as an estimate. The first draft of the General Fund budget reflects a deficit of $44,490.

Water Fund

Valerie Wagner opened the discussion to the Water Fund budget, noting that not much had been changed in this draft from the 2026 budget except for estimations on salaries and insurance costs. No changes to metered water rates were proposed. An increase in revenue in interest earnings is expected due to the water reserves being allocated as part of the operating budget. A loan for the water system will be paid off in January of 2027, representing a decrease in that expenditure compared to 2026. Discussion was had regarding the purpose and amount of inter-fund transfers from Water and Sewer to the General Fund. Many costs such as insurance, salaries and electric can be split between the appropriate funds, while other costs such as postage, telephone bills, and software fees are not as easily split and are taken out of General Fund costs. The inter-fund transfer is in place to alleviate some of that burden on the General Fund. The amount of the transfer per year had been set by Council in years' past and can be adjusted if the current Council chooses to do so. Wagner highlighted that many of the budget figures are currently overbudget in 2026 and should be discussed further in future budget discussions. Other expenditures are below budget and may need to be adjusted, also. The first draft of the Water Fund budget allows for a revenue surplus of $15,721 to be added to the Water reserves.

Sewer Fund

Valerie Wagner presented the first draft of the Sewer Fund budget. As with the Water Fund, few things have been projected in this draft other than salaries and insurance. No changes to metered sewer rates were proposed. An increase in revenue in interest earnings is expected due to the sewer reserves being allocated as part of the operating budget. Wagner noted that an increase in pump and equipment maintenance costs had been added based on staff's recommendation to have the generators at each sewer lift station maintained via a service contract. Treatment costs and loan payment figures have not been provided by Ephrata Borough yet. Council asked that $20,000 be allocated to emergency sewer repairs. The first draft of the Sewer Fund budget allows for a revenue surplus of $27,223 to be added to the Sewer reserves.

Liquid Fuels

Valerie Wagner presented a balanced budget draft and discussed upcoming Liquid Fuels projects including thermoplastic crosswalk markings, storm pipe work on Bomberger Road, and Colonial and Edge Hill stormwater projects. Wagner added that state aid amounts for Liquid Fuels had not been received yet, but would likely remain similar to previous years. Paul Swangren, Jr. asked if any roadway projects were planned for 2027, Sean Molchany answered that other than the thermoplastic crosswalk markings, the only projects planned for 2027 would be storm water related. Paul Swangren, Jr. also suggested that line-item categories be updated to reflect storm water projects rather than highway construction. Ryan Cochran pointed out that if no road reconstruction projects are planned for 2027, it would be the year to include engineering costs to bid out a project. Sean Molchany agreed and noted that a project would need to be identified. Paul Swangren, Jr. said he remembered that two streets had been identified for reconstruction previously, and Diamond Street had been chosen for 2026. Sean Molchany replied that if his memory was correct, New Street had been identified as a project also. Because of the work that had been done on Tenth Street, it was decided to let that settle and proceed ahead with Diamond Street. If New Street is the other street that was previously identified as a project, it would not incur additional engineering costs. Molchany will check on this. Paul Swangren, Jr. asked that an amount be placed in engineering.

Capital Projects

Sean Molchany reviewed capital equipment needs, including replacing a 2005 F-350 stake body truck and purchasing a trench box for worker safety. Molchany noted that this draft only includes projects identified and suggested by staff, adding that Council may request for other projects to be added. A contingency fund for unexpected expenses of $10,000 is included as in previous years. $10,000 was included in Water Capital for standpipe engineering. Sewer Capital expenses include $30,000 for sewer line camera work, $100,000 is allocated for relining sewer lines, and $30,000 is budgeted for a replacement control panel at the Nissley sewer lift station. General Capital expenses included $14,000 for a replacement roof on the pavilion at Broad Street Park. This cost is a placeholder for a metal roof to match the existing roofs on the pavilions at Roland Park. Council asked Sean Molchany to obtain other quotes from roofing contractors.

Tonya Haynes spoke regarding a pickleball court at Broad Street Park, the Park House and the potential to rehabilitate the property, as well as the Akron Lions Club and their commitment to assist the Borough in park projects such as park benches. There was discussion at length concerning the Park House. Some Council members suggested addressing the property in phases, providing that it would not violate any rules regarding municipal projects. Other Council members expressed concern about making incremental improvements to piecemeal the project together without a comprehensive plan in place.

Miscellaneous Discussion

Adjournment

Paul Swangren, Jr. moved to adjourn the meeting at 8:00 pm; second by Ryan Cochran, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Sean Molchany
Borough Manager/Secretary
SM/vw