

NORTH COLLEGE HILL CITY COUNCIL

Minutes for NCH Council Meeting, Monday February 2, 2026, 7:00pm

PRAYER

President Wietlisbach led the prayer.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by President Wietlisbach.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

President Wietlisbach led the pledge of allegiance.

ROLL CALL

- Council Member Zorb: Present
- Council Member Gaston: Present
- Council Member Alexander: Present
- Council Member Cureton: Present
- Council Member Clear: Present
- Council Member Davis: 7:05 late
- Council Member Chichester: Present

Council Member Chichester made a motion to excuse Council Member Davis. Council Member Alexander seconded the motion.

There was no discussion.

Clerk of Council Gillian Clear called the roll.

Motion by Council Member Chichester, seconded by Council Member Alexander, to excuse Council Member Davis from the meeting. Motion passed 4-1-1. (Council Members Gaston, Alexander, Clear, and Chichester voting yes, Council Member Zorb voting no, Council Member Cureton abstaining due to no communication as to whether he would be in attendance or not)

At 7:05 President of Council invited Council Member Davis to the meeting.

AGENDA

Council reviewed the agenda.

Council Member Gason made a motion to accept the agenda. Council Member Clear seconded the motion.

No discussion.

Clerk of Council Gillian Clear called the roll.

Motion by Council Member Gaston, seconded by Council Member Clear, to accept the agenda. Motion pass 6-0.

MINUTES

Council Member Gaston made a motion to accept the minutes from the January 20, 2026 meeting.

Council Member Clear seconded the motion.

No discussion.

Clerk of Council Gillian Clear called the roll.

Motion by Council Member Gaston, seconded by Council Member Clear, to accept the minutes from the January 20, 2026 meeting. Motion passed 6-0.

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COMMUNICATION

- The document center files have been updated, 2025 council meeting agendas and minutes are uploaded.
- Working on updating the committee document center files
- The Finance Manager noted that the Council Rules needed to update the 'Finance Director' role to reflect 'Finance Manager'.

Mayor Nichols noted that it should match the Charter language.

Council Member Zorb made a motion to amend Council Rules to change the title 'Finance Director' to 'Finance Manager'. Council Member Gaston seconded.

There was no discussion.

Clerk of Council Gillian Clear called the roll.

Motion by Council Member Zorb, seconded by Council Member Gaston to amend Council Rules to change the title 'Finance Director' to 'Finance Manager'. Motion passed 6-0.

- Council name plates are being worked on, they found a vendor, and the Clerk will reach out and look over the policy for ordering things and learn about how to access the account to order the name plates.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No one signed in to speak during public comments.

GUEST SPEAKERS

There were no guest speakers.

COUNCIL COMMITTEES

City, Community Development and Recreation

Council Member Gaston reported that they have not met since the last council meeting. The next meeting is on February 9th at 7:00pm

- Planning on discussing a new event regarding the USA's 250th birthday

Budget and Finance

Council Member Zorb reported that they have not met since the last council meeting. The next meeting is on February 9th at 7:30pm

Rules and Public Policy

Council Member Clear reported that they have not met since the last council meeting. The next meeting is on February 9th at 6:00pm

Public Safety

Council Member Cureton reported that they have not met since the last council meeting. The next meeting is on February 9th at 6:30pm

Ad Hoc Reports

Council Member Cureton asked the Clerk to put the committees in order of the time that they occur. The Clerk confirmed that this would be done.

Council Member Gaston reported that the NCH school board has appointed a new member.

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Council Member Cureton asked Council Member Zorb about the meeting schedule for RITA. Council Member Zorb stated that she could look in her email to see where the communications came from, for meeting attendance, in the past.

Council Member Clear gave an update for OKI, they have some items on their calendar, she has also been signed up to be a member of the board.

Council Member Chichester reported:

- Her and Council Member Clear attended
- WeThrive has lead testing kits for anyone who needs them
- Discussing food boxes vs a food pantry
- Discussed a farmers' market with fresh fruits and vegetables
- There is a potential Resolution with a public health policy, they have not received the draft yet from Hamilton County
- Asked the Mayor what the deadline was for WeThrive to be in the newsletter

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

President Wietlisbach asked members to ask any questions for the administration in this section and to keep council member comments in the call of members section.

Mayor

Mayor Tracie Nichols reported:

- The deadline for the newsletter is February 18th, 2026
- The application for Tree City USA was submitted back in December and she is assuming that it was approved
- Thanked Public Works for all of the hard work
- Stated that she was concerned about the kids, since there is not much sidewalk for them. She asked drivers to be cautious, she has seen kids and adults walking in the streets.
- The newsletter is going out in March and if council wanted to collaborate on something for council's corner the deadline is the 18th and their part should be submitted to the City Administrator

Council Member Gaston offered to work with the City Administrator on council's corner

Council Member Clear asked if there was wiggle room on the submission deadline, noting that CIC and WeThrive meet the 19th and 20th. The Mayor stated that she did not know the hard deadline but it is usually right there. Council Member Clear suggested that they could create something before the meetings and the deadline to submit.

After some discussion about the process for council communication and collaboration on the councils' corner section of the newsletter, President Wietlisbach referred the matter to the CCDD committee.

- The new HR person started today
- On March 10th at 4pm they are taking a picture of the elected women in Hamilton County on the courthouse steps. They are being asked to wear purple and should have received an email with details

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- Black History month is in February, and she encouraged people to celebrate

City Administrator

City Administrator Arious DukesDean was absent and provided a written report.

- Council Member Cureton asked if the report could be emailed to council before the meeting, and suggested that the clerk add it to a shared folder for future reference. Council Member Clear noted that the shared folder conversation was in the Rules and Public Policy Committee for discussion.
- Council Member Clear asked if there was an Ordinance for sidewalks and snow removal. Council Member Zorb found an Ordinance that stated you must remove snow from your sidewalk within 24 hours, but it had been repealed in 2015.
- Council Member Zorb asked if there would be a section for recreation in future reports from the City Administrator. Mayor Nichols confirmed it would be added.
- Council Member Alexander asked how a snow removal Ordinance would work for sidewalks like the one on Hamilton Ave. Mayor Nichols noted that in most instances the city is responsible for sidewalks like that one. Council Member Chichester mentioned that some cities hire other companies to handle sidewalk snow removal. It was clarified that this topic probably did not need to go to the Rules and Public Policy Committee. The administration could come up with a plan, potentially use the \$75,000 emergency provision for costs, and could come back to council to report the plan and if they needed any legislation.
- Council Member Cureton asked for details about the code violations , fines, and abatement. Mayor Nichols confirmed that the violations were handed out and that the city hired companies to abate the property and the owners were fined. The number of violations was unknown and the violations were not all related to snow, they were also general violations that were noticed. The process for violations was also clarified.
- Council Member Cureton expressed interest in seeing a more detailed report that also included financials and relationships. Council Member Alexander asked if this would be for each report or for the next report just to have a general process. Council Member Cureton said that each department should be revenue generating and that she would like to know what that revenue process looked like and if there were ways that they could support residents and businesses.

Council Member Chichester asked to be excused, President Wietlisbach excused her for a few minutes

Council Member Gaston made a motion to take a 2-minute recess at 7:53pm. Council Member Zorb seconded the motion.

No discussion.

Clerk of Council Gillian Clear called the roll.

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Motion by Council Member Gaston, seconded by Council Member Zorb, to take a 2-minute recess at 7:53pm. Motion passed 6-0. (Council Member Chichester had left prior to the vote).

President of Council brought the meeting back to order at 7:56pm.

Law Director

Law Director Bill Deters reported:

- FOP negotiations tomorrow morning and legislation will eventually follow

Finance Manager

Finance Manager Sheva Stephens Knott was absent, no report was given.

CALL OF MEMBERS

Council Member Zorb

Council Member Zorb noted that today is Groundhog's Day, and that he saw his shadow, signaling 6 more weeks of winter. The Milan Winter Olympics start February 6th and end on the 22nd. The Patriots play the Seahawks in the Superbowl on February 8th. Valentine's Day is February 14th. February is also American Heart Month, to raise awareness and educate on risk factors and healthy habits. National Wear Red Day is February 6th. February is Black History Month, she noted that honoring this month means recognizing both past injustices and ongoing contributions and committing ourselves individually and as a community to fairness, dignity, and mutual respect.

Council Member Gaston

Council Member Gaston welcomes the new HR Manager Mr. Porter. Gave a shout out to Council Member Zorb, Donna Bruner, the Galato family, Edward Beverly and all of the teens that came with their families. They all got together and helped neighbors shovel snow. She noted that it is Black History Month. She mentioned that the NCH Talk Facebook group and that her goal is for people to see black history information that's unique to NCH. She thanked Public Works for all of their hard work.

It was noted that President Wietlisbach was also shoveling.

Council Member Alexander

Council Member Alexander thanked everyone who assisted anyone in anyway and for putting the best face out there for NCH. She noted that NCH City Schools are going to be open on Mondays now, until sometime in March, in the past they did not go into school on Monday. This is to make up snow days. Wished City Administrator Arious DukesDean a Happy Birthday.

Council Member Cureton

Council Member Cureton thanked the council, president, administration, clerk, and to audience for being here. She is grateful for Public Works and the work that they did. She is also grateful for the work that was done by Council Member Zorb, Council Member Gaston, President of Council Weitlisbach, and everyone who helped out. She gave a shout out to the NCH School's athletic department, noting that the coach is new to the district but has brought 12 different colleges or universities to NCH and highlighting the importance of education. She stated that February is about love and about connecting with each other. February is also Black History Month and it's a time

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dedicated to honoring achievements, history, contributions of those who are in the black community. She highlighted the importance of February being American Heart Month, and encouraged people, especially women to put themselves first. She also gave condolences to the Schaefer family.

Council Member Clear

Council Member Clear thanked Public Works for their hard work. She noted that it is Black History Month and American Heart Month. She highlighted her enthusiasm for public health and the importance of taking care of yourself. She noted that this is why she pushes so hard for the parks, so that people can have fun while taking care of themselves. She also noted the Council Rules allow for everyone to speak once and looking back through some of the minutes, not everyone was given time to speak before a vote was held. She asked that members to give each other some space to allow everyone to speak so they can all share thoughts and opinions.

Council Member Davis

Council Member Davis thanked Public Works for their help and sacrifice. He thanked the community, noting the collective understanding of the situation that everyone is trying to get together. He said it is Black History Month and wants to celebrate and recognize black history. He plans on recognizing Black History. He noted that NCH has won 3 state championships that he remembers. He noted that all of those years the team had the same coach, who now teaches. He also gave that coach a shout out. Motion NCH is also going to be happening soon.

Council Member Chichester

Council Member Chichester expressed condolences to the Uptown Bengals family. Thanked Public Works, Police, and Fire Department. She wished City Administrator DukesDean a happy birthday. She also thanked a citizen for donating to the Senior Center, she asked council members for help unloading those donations from her car. She gave a shout out to NCH for hosting a resource fair, highlighting how much it can help parents with getting resources to help transition students to adulthood. She also encouraged everyone to go to their yearly physical appointments with their doctor and to be vigilant of symptoms of cardiac events and disease.

FURTHER REMARKS FROM THE AUDIENCE

There were no further remarks from the audience.

LEGISLATION

SECOND READING RES. 01-2026 A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING FORMAL CENSURE REGARDING CERTAIN STATEMENTS AND CONDUCT BY A MEMBER OF CITY COUNCIL DURING AN OFFICIAL MEETING

This was a second reading and no action was taken.

FIRST READING ORD. 01-2026 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND AND ESTABLISH SALARIES AND STAFFING LEVELS FOR CITY EMPLOYEES PURSUANT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF SECTION 3.06 OF THE CITY OF NORTH COLLEGE HILL CHARTER

Council Member Zorb made a motion to amend Ordinance 01-2026. Council Member Gaston seconded.

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It was stated that since the HR person started today that the 2nd and 3rd readings be suspended to get it initiated right away.

It was confirmed that the 'The following salaries and staffing levels are set as listed below, effective as of ___' statement would include the dated that the legislation passed.

It was also confirmed that there was not a Public Works Supervisor, and they did have a seasonal worker.

Amendments included:

- Law Director's salary be corrected to \$56,160
- There should be 1 police administrative assistant not 2
- Add Code Enforcer position and salary to the Public Works section. There is 1 full time Code Enforcer and the salary is \$62,500
- Change the Public Works Supervisor salary to TBD
- Change the Recreational Director salary to TBD

Clerk of Council Gillian Clear called the roll.

Motion by Council Member Zorb, seconded by Council Member Gaston, to amend Ordinance 01-2026. Motion passed 7-0.

Council Member Zorb made a motion to suspend 2nd and 3rd readings. Council Member Clear seconded the motion.

There was no discussion.

Clerk of Council Gillian Clear called the roll.

Motion by Council Member Zorb, seconded by Council Member Clear, to suspend 2nd and 3rd readings. Motion passed 7-0.

Council Member Zorb made a motion to adopt Ordinance 01-2026 as amended. Council Member Gaston seconded.

There was no discussion.

Clerk of Council Gillian Clear called the roll.

Motion by Council Member Zorb, seconded by Council Member Gaston, to adopt Ordinance 01-2026 as amended. Motion passed 7-0.

OLD BUSINESS

Council Member Gaston asked for an update on the memorial street sign. Mayor Nichols stated that it had been a few weeks since Public Works was asked to order it, she had not heard that it has arrived yet. Council Member Gaston asked for the City Administrator to provide an updated during the CCDR meeting. Council Member Chichester stated that there was a delay due to the weather and that when the sign came in, someone would reach out to Ms. Starr to plan a ceremony. Council Member Zorb reminded everyone that the tree board still has a vacancy, they meet on the third Wednesday of the month. Council Member Chichester asked if they would be willing to change the meeting dates. President Wietlisbch suggested that they reach out to see if they would be willing to change their meeting date.

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Council Member Clear gave an update on Veteran's Park, stating that the previously discussed knowledge transfer did take place. City Administrator DukesDean and Finance Manager Sheva Stephens Knott were in attendance. They have all of the paperwork and documentation that they need, and the full application packet that was originally submitted for the grant.

Council Member Gaston request update on recreation commission. Mayor Nichols stated that she would be meeting with Mr. Blalock for his appointees and she was still working on her appointees.

NEW BUSINESS

Council Member Zorb made a motion to appoint Council Member Zorb to the City Community Development and Recreation Committee and the Public Safety Committee. Council Member Chichester seconded the motion.

It was confirmed that there were currently 5 members on the CCDR Committee and Council Member Zorb would be a 6th member. Council Member Clear noted concerns with a majority of council on one committee and stated she may consider stepping down, to avoid that. Council Member Zorb stated that she wanted to support the ideas and she also agreed that the committee shouldn't be that heavy.

It was noted that she could still help out and support the committee without being a member. Council Member Zorb amended her motion to remove the CCDR and keep the Public Safety. Clerk of Council Gillian Clear called the roll.

Motion by Council Member Zorb, seconded by Council Member Chichester, to appoint Council Member Zorb to the Public Safety Committee. Motion passed 7-0.

Council Member Chichester requested that the new version of the Committees list get sent out. President Wietlisbach referred the sergeant-at-arms discussion from the last meeting to the Public Safety committee so they could discuss details and what they would need going forward, if they need to go with someone else other than the chief of police or the interim chief of police.

ADJOURNMENT

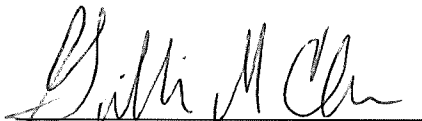
Council Member Gaston made a motion to adjourn. Council Member Chichester seconded the motion.

There was no discussion.

Clerk of Council Gillian Clear called the roll.

Motion by Council Member Gaston, seconded by Council Member Chichester to adjourn the meeting at 8:40pm. Motion passed 7-0.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40pm.



Gillian Clear, Clerk of Council



Suzie Wietlisbach, President of Council