

CITY COUNCIL

June 23, 2025

The June 23, 2025 special City Council meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. in Council Chambers by Kate Niederkohr, President. A moment of silence was observed followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America. City Council members present were Tom Karcher, Aaron Korte, Julia Lemire, Scott Moore, Kate Niederkohr, John Walker, and Kenneth Wessler.

Others present included: Kyle McColly, Mayor; Ben Buckland, Law Director; Mike MaGinn, Fire Chief; Craig Swartz; Tom Martin; Bud Miller; Susan Bucher; Ann Brown; Steven Cook; Jim Stauffer; Brian Hemminger, Daily Chief Union; and Sarah Bennett, Clerk.

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the placement of an income tax increase measure on the November 4, 2025 General Election Ballot.

Mr. Craig Swartz stated that history needs to be made clear to the public and he encouraged a 1% income tax increase be pursued.

Mr. Tom Martin indicated that safety services have to be a priority in asking for an income tax increase followed by upgrading streets and alleys and he encouraged a 1% income tax increase be pursued.

Mr. Bud Miller expressed concern about citizens' freedom of movement with the temporary alley closure in the downtown between 116 and 120 North Sandusky Avenue and rumors of more possible alley closures in the downtown. Mr. Miller stated that it is hard to vote to give government more power to take away more freedoms.

Fire Chief MaGinn noted that people he spoke with in the spring of 2025 regarding the ½% income tax increase measure, that was defeated on the Primary Election Ballot, indicated to him that they would support an income tax increase for safety services but not for a new swimming pool.

Mayor McColly noted that there have been discussions regarding the different percentages, ½%, ¾%, and 1%, of possible income tax increases and the revenue it would generate. Mayor McColly expressed concern about earmarking every dollar that could be generated by an increase in income tax, and stated that the City needs flexibility to determine what is needed by the various City departments.

Mrs. Niederkohr expressed her disappointment that the ½% income tax increase measure on the 2025 Primary Election Ballot was voted down, and her disappointment in the new Safer grant terms. Mrs. Niederkohr indicated that she feels the swimming pool is important and the fire safety services matter, and she thinks the City should ask for at least a ¾% income tax increase.

Mr. Moore stated that a ½% income tax increase is not a long term answer and he thinks the City should ask for at least a ¾% income tax increase.

Mrs. Lemire noted that City Council is trying to look ahead and solve issues before they become issues and an income tax increase is a chance for Upper Sandusky to reinvest in the future, and she is leaning towards asking for a ¾% income tax increase.

Mr. Walker indicated that for the future of Upper Sandusky more funding is needed and he is in favor of a 1% income tax increase. Mr. Walker also noted that supporters need to go door-to-door.

Mr. Wessler noted that the City's previous Safer grants applications were not awarded and the terms of the next Safer grant have changed with a City match now required.

Mr. Korte noted that City Council makes decisions about what affects residents everyday and he thinks the City should ask for a 1% income tax increase to eliminate having to go to the voters very often for increases. Mr. Korte cited replacement of the safety services building, roadway improvements, and a new swimming pool as top priorities.

Mr. Karcher stated that his conversations with people about the possible placement of a ¾% or 1% income tax increase on the General Election Ballot was met with laughter, and he doesn't think a ¾% or 1% income tax increase will pass and he is in favor of asking for a ½% income tax increase. Mr. Karcher also noted that the City needs to be as transparent as possible.

Mayor McColly indicated that as united a front as possible is important including all of the City departments.

A motion was made by Mr. Korte, seconded by Mr. Moore, to place a ¾% income tax increase on the November 4, 2025 General Election Ballot. Upon Roll Call, all members voted as follows:

Mr. Karcher	-	No
Mr. Korte	-	Yes
Mrs. Lemire	-	Yes
Mr. Moore	-	Yes
Mrs. Niederkohr	-	Yes
Mr. Walker	-	No
Mr. Wessler	-	No

The President declared the motion carried by a 4-3 vote.

There being no further business, the President declared the meeting adjourned.

Sarah J. Bennett, Clerk

Kate Niederkohr, President