

DOWNTOWN COMMITTEE

August 11, 2025

The August 11, 2025 Downtown Committee meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. in Council Chambers by Tom Karcher, Chairperson. Downtown Committee members present were Tom Karcher, Marc Mays, Scott Moore, Zach Morral, Nicole Morris, Kate Niederkohr, and Graham Treadway.

Others present included: Kyle McColly, Mayor; Ethan Korte, Administrative Assistant; Brittney Walton, Wyandot County Chamber of Commerce Director; Kelsey Stief; Melissa Summit; Jennifer Banta; Janice Woods; Colleen Clark; Heidi Moore; Lonnie McMillan, Daily Chief Union; and Sarah Bennett, Clerk.

The minutes of the July 14, 2025 Downtown Committee meeting, having been mailed to each Downtown Committee member, were approved as received.

Mrs. Brittney Walton, Wyandot County Chamber of Commerce Director, addressed the Downtown Committee stating that there has been a hindrance in communication in the placement of food trucks in alternate locations in the downtown area during the Chamber's 1st Thursday events. Mrs. Walton indicated that Exhibit B contained in Ordinance No. 233-13, which outlines the permitted locations for food trucks in the downtown area, has these locations very heavy in the south part of the downtown area and while there are waivers available for other locations she wants to have the ability, at her discretion, to move food trucks as necessary to other locations that are not outlined as permitted locations. Mrs. Walton noted that the regulations set forth in Ordinance No. 233-13 make it impossible to move food trucks at the last minute if needed. Mr. Karcher indicated that approval from the Downtown Committee is required for the placement of food trucks in alternate locations not permitted under Exhibit B of Ordinance No. 233-13.

Mrs. Heidi Moore stated that her business experiences a 35% decrease in sales during 1st Thursdays by not having a food truck located in front of her business.

The closure of streets in the downtown area during the September and October 1st Thursday events was discussed.

A motion was made by Mr. Treadway, seconded by Mrs. Niederkohr, to approve the closure of Sandusky Avenue from Johnson Street to Walker Street, and Wyandot Avenue from Seventh Street to Fifth Street during the September 4, 2025 and October 2, 2025 1st Thursday events. Upon Voice Vote, all members voted Yes. The Chairperson declared the motion carried.

The possibility of Domino's Pizza, 128 East Wyandot Avenue, and the Post Office, 122 West Wyandot Avenue, being negatively impacted by the closure of Wyandot Avenue from Seventh Street to Fifth Street was recognized.

A motion was made by Mr. Mays, seconded by Mr. Moore, to amend the previous motion regarding the closure of Wyandot Avenue to instead approve the closure of Wyandot Avenue for a half block to the east and west from the intersection of Sandusky Avenue for the 1st Thursday events in September and October 2025, with the street closures to begin at 2:00 p.m. Upon Voice Vote, all members voted Yes. The Chairperson declared the motion carried.

Downtown Committee members requested Mrs. Walton present her design suggestion of the layout/map of food truck placements in the downtown area for review by the Downtown Committee and potential amendment to Exhibit B of Ordinance No. 233-13.

Mrs. Walton also addressed the recently adopted regulations for public sidewalks and rights-of-way as contained in Ordinance No. 23-14. Mrs. Walton stated that she believes that the \$50.00 fee to be charged is not appropriate for our demographic area. She indicated that an application and fines, if needed, are appropriate, but she suggested no charge for the use of the public areas.

Mr. Ethan Korte inquired as to where the fees being collected for food trucks and the potential fees for the use of public areas are going. Mr. Karcher stated that the fees go to the Downtown Committee to be invested back into the downtown, as outlined in the Ordinances for food trucks and use of public sidewalks and rights-of-way.

Mrs. Heidi Moore noted that a \$50.00 fee is significant for some small businesses and she thinks the City is nickel and diming businesses and it's really poor optics.

Several visitors agreed that the \$50.00 application charge set for the use of public sidewalks and rights-of-way is excessive.

Mrs. Jennifer Banta inquired about the free art boxes that are located in the downtown area that she is worked to provide, and who would be responsible for the fee(s) for those boxes noting they were put in place by a nonprofit organization instead of the 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

Mr. Karcher explained the origin of Ordinance No. 23-14 noting that the Ordinance was modeled after similar Ordinances from other communities and the \$50.00 fee set was much lower than the fees charged by other communities.

Mr. Ethan Korte questioned the addition of new regulations that would have to be enforced when there are other existing regulations in the downtown area that aren't enforced (i.e. the maximum length of vehicles permitted to park in the downtown).

Downtown Committee members agreed to suggest to City Council to eliminate the application fee for use of public sidewalks and rights-of-way or suspend the effective date of Ordinance No. 23-14 until January 1, 2026 to allow time to revise the Ordinance and address additional issues including exceptions for charity organizations. Mr. Ben Buckland, Law Director, should be consulted for the best course of action.

A motion was made by Mr. Mays, seconded by Mr. Moore, to refer any actions/revisions pertaining to Ordinance No. 23-14 to Mr. Ben Buckland, Law Director. Upon Voice Vote, all members voted Yes. The Chairperson declared the motion carried.

Mrs. Heidi Moore stated that better communication is needed as she has spoken with other downtown business owners and found that people are unaware that the Downtown Committee exists as there has been no outreach from the Downtown Committee members. Mr. Ethan Korte indicated that he could draft a letter of explanation to be sent to all of the downtown businesses.

Mrs. Heidi Moore also suggested the wayfinding signs be illuminated.

The possibility of changing the one-year term of a food truck license, as contained in Section 727.01 Licensed Required, of Chapter 727 Mobile Food Vendor License, and instead make the license obtained valid for a specific calendar year was again discussed. Mr. Ethan Korte noted that the City of Findlay does annual licensing of food trucks. It was noted that food trucks that set up on private property are responsible for obtaining a food truck license from the City, and the businesses that frequently have food trucks set up on their properties should be contacted. Downtown Committee members agreed to wait for any additional changes to the food truck regulations and make all of the changes at the same time.

Mayor McColly indicated that other cities have been sending food trucks to the Upper Sandusky Fire Department to inspect their propane hoses and this requirement could also be added to the food truck regulations. Mr. Karcher stated that he would like to hear from Fire Chief Mike MaGinn about the Fire Department conducting these inspections. Mr. Ethan Korte noted that Eyeroll Software tracks food truck inspections.

Mr. Ethan Korte inquired about the possibility of allowing food trucks to operate in the designated locations year round as there is a local food truck vendor who asked about this possibility. It was noted that this is another change that could be added to the food truck regulations.

Mr. Ethan Korte requested a definition of “downtown”, as the new regulations for sidewalks and rights-of-way cover the entire City. Mr. Mays stated that the Downtown Committee is currently waiting on a legal opinion regarding this issue.

Mr. Morral inquired about the possibility of the City placing trash cans in the closed alley located between 116 and 120 North Sandusky Avenue. Mayor McColly will check with the supervisors on the availability of trash cans for this alley.

Mr. Moore reported that he was contacted by Mr. Kip Wentling, Richardson’s Flowers, located at 116 North Sandusky Avenue adjacent to the closed alley, who indicated that since the alley has been closed people have been going up the stairway located in the alley to the apartments and knocking on the door. Downtown Committee members suggested a “No Trespassing” sign be placed on the stairs and the Police Department be called if necessary.

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

Sarah J. Bennett, Clerk

Tom Karcher, Chairperson