

**THE HONORABLE BODY**  
**Council Chambers**  
**Municipal Building**  
**North Tonawanda, New York 14120**  
**Tuesday, August 4, 2026**  
**5:00 P.M.**

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**REGULAR SESSION CALLED TO ORDER BY PRESIDENT RICHARDS**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

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**ROLL CALL**

**Present:**           **President Richards**  
                          **Alderman Schulmeister, Roe, Lavey, Murphy**

**Absent:**           **None**

**Also Present:**     **Mayor Austin J. Tylec**  
                          **City Attorney Edward Zebulske III**

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**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION-**

**Peter Chenier 1666 Eddy Drive-** Expressed his concern about the re-assessment, because of how it will affect the Seniors in our city, who are already on a fixed and limited income. Asked the council to think about their vote tonight.

**Mary Kanouff 1233 Sweeney Street-** Question the procedures on how the council is supposed to follow Section 2.045 of the charter, when changing the time for a regular scheduled meeting. The council should pass a resolution in a timely manner in order to change the time. She wanted clarification on this.

**Mike Bator 154 Homestead** -Concerned about the Re-Assessment, right now he is working two jobs just to make ends meet. The city should be looking at other means to save our taxpayers dollars. Example being, why are city employees working on the weekends, we are paying them overtime to do their jobs, that can be done during the week. You are spending our taxpayers' dollars. Very concerned for people on fixed incomes and getting ready to retire soon, if they are going to be able to afford this re-assessment.

**Geoffrey McClinsey North Tonawanda Resident-** Questioned the exact RFP date-the city only got one proposal, who exactly reviewed the bid?, GAR's involvement before the bid, Real maximum costs, Errors in the proposal, publication and notices, meaningful outreach, Time allowed to respond, Decision not to rebid?, Selection committee, Responsiveness review, Complete proposal-see attachment with all questions asked.

**Angela Clancy 539 Fairmont Ave** -She is in favor of the council to pass the resolution for the Full Veterans exemptions on taxes. This will affect both herself and her father who are both disabled. She thanks the council for their consideration.

**Jill Loly 148 Homestead Drive-**With the re-assessment that you are considering, you are going to force me out of my home. What is happening with all the businesses in the city that are all run down, this will affect us also. This will affect all homeowners, driving out Seniors that won't be able to afford it and new people, such as myself who is looking to retire soon.

**Sonia Dusza 123 Miller Street-**The city is considering a full property re-assessment. Sonia submitted a written comment. See the attachment of her statement.

**Jake Quinn 1474 Cambridge Avenue-** He states that he truly cares about our community, is concerned that people will not be able to afford to live in North Tonawanda anymore, with the taxes going up all the time. The city has money for everything else.

**Dennis Gauda 982 Pioneer Drive-Voicing his opinion on supporting the Veterans tax relief resolution that is on the agenda this evening.**

**Rob Walter 1195 Allen Street**-very passionate about keeping my kids here in the city he has lived in for 55 years. His kids are in school now and are going to move out of the city when they graduate. Can the city look into other ways of getting tax revenue? Example: Lowry School.

**Mark Polito 637 Fairmont Avenue- Why are our tax rates so high? What are the variables that determine the tax rate?**

**Jay Reese North Tonawanda Resident and Small Business owner-I** am a combat Veteran and thank you for considering passing the resolution for the veterans tonight. On the re-assessment-if this happens it will not just affect the residents in the city, it will also affect my small business that my wife and I came back to invest in the city. It will be hard to sustain my business.

**Kathy Holesko 61 Sherwood Ct.- She fully endorses the Re-Assessment that is being proposed.**

**Kurt Klepp 1295 Erie Avenue**-As a veteran, we have been waiting for the help that the resolution will bring to all disabled veterans, thank you for your consideration. On the re-assessment, as a landlord this is going to affect my, I don't want to raise anyone's rent.

**Mark Karough-1233 Sweeney Street-** He thinks the city is doing well, and the council should consider tabling the re-assessment tonight.

**Steve Summers 1069 Sweeney Street-If anyone wants to do better for the city, then they should run for office. Asked about our Sewer/Water rates?**

**Nancy Klepp 1295 Erie Avenue-I don't agree with the re-assessment-a lot of people won't be able to afford to stay in their houses.**

**Scott Gatto 1451 Payne Avenue-I don't want to leave the city that I grew up in-we love it here. We don't want to get pushed out-this whole re-assessment is a Math Problem.**

**President Richards read an email comment from resident Donald Witcop.**

## APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES OF THE REGULAR SESSION JULY 21, 2026

**MOVED by Alderman Roe**

**SECONDED by Alderman Lavey**

**That the minutes of the regular session held July 21, 2026, be approved as circulated and filed in the Office of the City Clerk.**

**Ayes: Alderman Schulmeister, Roe, Lavey, Murphy, Richards**

(5)

**Nays: None**

(0)

CARRIED.

**PROOF OF PUBLICATION PUBLISHED 7/11/2026**

- 1) Legal Notice – Public Hearing to adopt Local Law #3-2026 to pass the 458-A Veterans Exemption for 100% Disable and 100% Unemployable Veterans for City Taxes – City Clerk-Treasurer**

- ## **2.) Legal Notice – Request for Proposals for the Fire Department Strategic Plan – Fire Chief**

**CARRIED.**

**CARRIED.**

## I.2 Mayor

**July 17, 2026**

**North Tonawanda Common Council**  
**216 Payne Avenue (City Hall)**  
**North Tonawanda, NY 14120**

**Re: Request Purchase of 1852 Sweeney St**

**Dear Honorable Body,**

**I am requesting the Common Council's approval to purchase a vacant parcel located at 1852 Sweeney Street for a purchase price of \$50,000.**

**The property is approximately 58 feet by 423 feet and located directly adjacent to the existing parking area serving Deerwood Golf Course.**

**Acquiring this property provides the City with a valuable opportunity to expand parking capacity as operations and activity at Deerwood Golf Course continue to grow. Additional parking will help accommodate golfers, restaurant patrons, special events and other visitors while also giving the City greater flexibility when planning future improvement at the facility**

**Because land immediately adjacent to an existing municipal facility is rarely available, I believe this is a practical and strategic investment that will support both the current and future needs of Deerwood Golf Course.**

**I respectfully request that the Common Council authorize the purchase, subject to final legal review, title clearance and completion of the customary investigation and due diligence process outlined in the purchase agreement.**

**Respectfully,  
Austin Tylec  
Mayor**

**MOVED by Alderman Richards                      SECONDED by Alderman Roe**

**That the Common Council hereby approves the purchase of a vacant parcel located at 1852 Sweeney Street for a purchase price of \$50,000.**

**Ayes: Alderman Schulmeister, Roe, Lavey, Murphy, Richards                      (5)**

**Nays: None                      (0)**

**CARRIED.**

## II. Attorney

**July 21, 2026**

**Hon. Mayor & Common Council**  
**City Hall, 216 Payne Avenue**  
**North Tonawanda, NY 14120**

**Re: Boat House Transfer**

**Dear Honorable Body:**

**Recently my office has had a request to transfer the lease regarding the boat house property located on Weatherbest Lot 23/24, from the Estate of Mark Varisco to Susan E. Varisco and Garrett Varisco. Pursuant to the current lease, transfer of the lease between family members requires Common Council approval and the payment of a transfer fee in the amount of \$950.00.**

A Certificate of Insurance covering the leased Weatherbest premises in the amount of \$100,000 to \$300,000, with the City of North Tonawanda named as an additional insured on the Certificate must also be provided.

If your Honorable Body finds it appropriate, please pass a resolution to approve the requested transfer. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,  
Edward A. Zebulske, III  
City Attorney

**MOVED** by Alderman Richards                      **SECONDED** by Alderman Lavey  
That the Common Council hereby approves the lease transfer regarding the boat house property located on Weatherbest Lot 23/24, from Mark Varisco to Susan E. Varisco and Garrett Varisco, for a transfer fee of \$950.00.  
Ayes: Alderman Schulmeister, Roe, Lavey, Murphy, Richards (5)  
Nays: None (0)  
**CARRIED.**

**VII. Accountant**

July 30, 2026

Honorable Austin J. Tylec, Mayor  
and Common Council  
City Hall, 216 Payne Avenue  
North Tonawanda NY 14120

Dear Honorable Body:

In accordance with Article V, Division 1, Section 5.002 and 5.003 of the City Charter, an Abstract Sheet, comprised of a Warrant of Claims, has been submitted by this office for your review and approval.

Accordingly, please authorize for payment the current Warrant of Claims for Common Council audit, dated August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026, and further authorize the Mayor and City Clerk-Treasurer to respectively sign and countersign said Warrant.

Warm regards,  
Jeffrey R. Zellner  
City Accountant

**MOVED** by Alderman Roe                                      **SECONDED** by Alderman Schulmeister  
That the Common Council hereby authorizes for payment the current Abstract of Claims for Common Council Audit dated August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026, and further authorizes the Mayor and City Clerk-Treasurer to respectively sign and countersign said Warrant:

|    |                      |                     |
|----|----------------------|---------------------|
| 01 | General Fund         | \$806,282.53        |
| 02 | Water Fund           | \$36,794.79         |
| 04 | Sewer Fund           | \$52,348.99         |
| 06 | Capital Project Fund | \$629,741.27        |
| 07 | Trust & Agency Fund  | \$ <u>12,408.82</u> |
| 00 | Final Total          | \$1,537,576.40      |

Ayes: Alderman Schulmeister, Roe, Lavey, Murphy, Richards (5)  
Nays: None (0)  
**CARRIED.**

## VIII.1 Assessor

**July 7, 2026**

**Honorable Mayor and Common Council  
North Tonawanda City Hall  
216 Payne Avenue  
North Tonawanda, NY 14120**

**Re: Award the Request for Proposal to perform an Equity Improvement Program**

**Dear Honorable Body:**

**An RFP was advertised in the newspaper and due by June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2026 at 11:00am GAR Associates was the only firm to submit the RFP.**

**I strongly recommend we accept GAR Associates to perform our Equity Improvement Program.**

**Sincerely,  
Barbara W. Klenke  
City Assessor**

**MOVED by Alderman Richards**

**SECONDED by Alderman Roe**

**That the Common Council hereby approves the enclosed proposal from GAR Associates to perform our Equity Improvement Program.**

**Ayes:** Alderman Schulmeister, Roe, Murphy, Richards (4)

**Nays:** Alderman Lavey (1)

**CARRIED.**

## VIII.2 Assessor

**June 5, 2026**

**Honorable Mayor and Common Council  
North Tonawanda City Hall  
216 Payne Avenue  
North Tonawanda, NY 14120**

**Re: Approval of Local Law #3-2026 for the 458-A Exemption for  
100% Disabled Veterans and 100% Unemployable for City Taxes**

**Dear Honorable Body:**

**There has been a revision to the NYS Real Property Tax Law tax exemption. Disabled Veterans receiving 100% Disability rating from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs and 100% Unemployable. Each City/Town, County and School will have to adopt the Veterans Exemption. This is no longer a state mandated program.**

**Sincerely,  
Barbara W. Klenke  
City Assessor**

**MOVED by Alderman Roe                      SECONDED by Alderman Lavey**  
That the Common Council at a regular session meeting, held at City Hall, 216 Payne Avenue, North Tonawanda, New York at 5:00 PM on August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2026, approved Local Law #3- 2026 for the 458-A Exemption for 100% Disabled Veterans and 100% Unemployable for City Taxes and it reads as follows:

Under this language negotiated by the Senate, the Assembly, and the State government’s executive branch, the Real Property Tax Law is revised as follows:

- (1) Local governments gain the option to provide a full property tax exemption for Veterans within that locality who have a 100% permanent and total disability compensation rating from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This is not a statewide mandate. Each local government has to decide for itself whether they can afford to offer this exemption to Veterans with a 100% permanent and total disability rating.
- (2) There is no longer any requirement for a Veteran to receive a VA housing grant to qualify for this exemption.
- (3) There is no longer any requirement for a Veteran to have a Total Disability based on Individual Unemployability (TDIU) designation to qualify.
- (4) Veterans who have a 100% rating that is not designated as permanent and total by the VA will not qualify for the total exemption.
- (5) None of these provisions have any adverse impact whatsoever on any Veterans Real Property Tax Exemption held presently by any Veteran or any surviving spouse of a Veteran. (For instance, if a Veteran has a 100% rating that is not permanent and total, that Veteran will still be able to receive the same partial exemption on their property taxes for which they already qualify. There will be no reduction or adverse income to that exemption).
- (6) None of these provisions apply to the school tax exemption. They apply solely to the property tax exemption on a Veteran’s primary residence in the State of New York. As before, the school tax exemption for Veterans is not a statewide mandate. Rather, the school tax exemption for Veterans is determined by each individual school district, based on that district’s assessment of their financial abilities to offer such an exemption (and, if yes, how much of an exemption they can afford to offer).

Ayes: Alderman Schulmeister, Roe, Lavey, Murphy, Richards (5)  
Nays: None (0)  
**CARRIED.**

**XI. Fire Chief**

**July 21, 2026**

**Honorable Mayor Austin Tylec  
Common Council Members  
216 Payne Avenue  
North Tonawanda, NY 14120**

**Honorable Body,**

**In accordance with the City Charter of the City of North Tonawanda, and pursuant to the authority vested in me by §3.002.e thereof, I make the following appointment:**

**Allison Hubert has been appointed as a Firefighter in the North Tonawanda Fire Department and will be assigned badge #107**

**Firefighter Hubert is a lateral transfer from the Batavia Fire Department and has been approved by the Niagara County Civil Service Commission. A brief ceremony will be held in the Council Chambers on August 3, 2026, beginning at 10:00 am, and everyone is welcome to attend.**

**Respectfully submitted,  
Douglas D. Orlowski  
Fire Chief**

## A. Jennifer MacNeil

**Honorable Mayor  
And Common Council, City Hall  
216 Payne Avenue  
North Tonawanda, NY 14120**

**Dear Honorable Body:**

**I would like to close Wurlitzer Court on Saturday, August 29, 2026, from 1pm to 8pm for a block party.**

## Jennifer MacNeil

**MOVED by Alderman Roe** **SECONDED by Alderman Lavey**  
**That the Common Council hereby grants permission to close Wurlitzer Court on Saturday, August 29<sup>th</sup> from 1pm to 8pm for a block party and directs the DPW to provide barricades for said event.**  
**Ayes: Alderman Schulmeister, Roe, Lavey, Murphy, Richards** **(5)**  
**Nays: None** **(0)**  
**CARRIED.**

## B.

**Gary Bolles**

**July 20, 2026**

**Honorable Mayor  
And Common Council, City Hall  
216 Payne Avenue  
North Tonawanda, NY 14120**

**Dear Honorable Body:**

**I would like to close Oliver Street between Robinson and Keil, on Sunday, August 16, 2026 from 12pm to 6pm for Porch Fest.**

## Gary Bolles

**MOVED by Alderman Roe** **SECONDED by Alderman Lavey**  
**That the Common Council hereby grants permission to close Oliver Street between Robinson and Keil, Sunday, August 16<sup>th</sup> from 12pm to 6pm for Porch Fest and directs the DPW to provide barricades for said event.**  
**Ayes: Alderman Schulmeister, Roe, Lavey, Murphy, Richards** **(5)**  
**Nays: None** **(0)**  
**CARRIED.**

## **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

**Jake Quinn 1474 Cambridge Ave.-** Question Campaign donations to the council.

**Anne Marie Rab-Pendelton Resident** – I don't think that you listened to the residents' concerns. You didn't educate the public on the re-assessment. There are pros & cons on both sides. You are not explaining this to the residents.

**Mike Bator 154 Homestead-** Was not here to listen to Walmart and their lawyer.

**Joe Midura 115<sup>th</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> Avenue-** I don't understand the re-assessment process. Also wanted to have an explanation on the Lumberjacks restaurant situation.

**Sonia Dusza 123 Miller Street-**Liked what Alderman Lavey said about taking a pause on the re-assessment. We don't have any businesses in North Tonawanda anymore. We are a small community...we need to stay grounded as a city.

**Joe Mittiga 316 Bryant Street-** suggested that people educate themselves on the re-assessment.

**Joe Stringaro 112 North Marion-** Instead of investing in the Downtown area (which is great), need to invest in Oliver Street it is a Dump. The weeds on Carruthers is out of Control. Also stated he would look into the re-assessment and educate himself and he will be back with questions.

**\*\*\*Two statements were handed into the record, Minutes #2 document Also, the full recording of the meeting is on our website. [northtonawanda.gov](http://northtonawanda.gov)**

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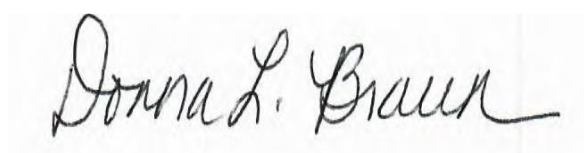
## **ADJOURNMENT**

**MOVED** by Alderman Roe                      **SECONDED** by Alderman Lavey  
**That this regular session of the Common Council be and hereby is adjourned.**  
**CARRIED.**

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**Time of Adjournment: 6:58 P.M.**

**Respectfully submitted**



**Donna L. Braun**  
**City Clerk-Treasurer**