



February 13, 2026

TO: Mayor/Commissioners

FROM: Anna Kessler, Legislative Aide

SUBJECT: Draft Minutes of the February 11, 2026, Dayton City Commission Meeting

CITY COMMISSION MEETING

On Wednesday, February 11, 2026, at 8:33 a.m., the Dayton City Commission met in regular session in the Commission Chambers of City Hall.

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Turner-Sloss called the meeting to order.

INVOCATION

Commissioner Beckham led the invocation.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Turner-Sloss led the public in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Roll call was taken, Mayor Turner-Sloss and Commissioners Joseph, Shaw, Fairchild, and Beckham were present. Commission Aide, Mr. Marion Pope, Clerk of Commission, Ms. Regina Blackshear, and City Manager, Ms. Shelley Dickstein, were also present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Shaw made a motion to approve the minutes from the meeting held on February 4, 2026. Commissioner Fairchild seconded the motion. The previous meeting minutes were unanimously approved.

COMMUNICATIONS AND PETITIONS

There were none.

PRESENTATION AND SPECIAL AWARDS

Mediation Response Unit 2024-2025 Evaluation Report

Dr. Jeannie Zimmer presented the findings of a year-long evaluation of the City's Mediation Response Unit (MRU), reporting overwhelmingly positive results based on a mixed-methods approach that included both qualitative and quantitative data. Feedback from community members, neighborhood groups, businesses, internal and external partners, police, and dispatch was consistently favorable. She highlighted the City's commitment to transparency through the MRU's public dashboard, which provides detailed information on program activity, case types, response times, and geographic distribution, demonstrating that the entire city is being served.

The most common call types include neighbor disputes, juvenile conflicts, noise complaints, roommate disputes, and animal-related issues, reflecting the MRU's focus on interpersonal conflict resolution. Since the unit reached full staffing and expanded its hours, both case volume and follow-up activities have increased substantially, including a significant rise in landlord-tenant cases.

Dr. Zimmer identified several key contributors to the MRU's success, including the Mediation Center's nearly four decades of experience and its grounding in transformative mediation principles, its unique co-location within municipal government while maintaining operational independence, and its strong integration with police and dispatch systems. She emphasized that the quality, training, and approach of MRU staff are central to the program's impact, with participant feedback consistently highlighting their professionalism, kindness, and respect in de-escalating conflicts and empowering residents to resolve disputes constructively. Although the evaluation does not yet show statistically significant reductions in use-of-force incidents or arrests, each MRU response represents a potential diversion from enforcement-based outcomes. Dr. Zimmer concluded that the program has successfully progressed from launch to stability and expansion, and that cities across the country are looking to Dayton's model as an innovative example of alternative response programming.

Commissioner Beckham offered congratulations on the program's success, expressed appreciation that it is progressing well and serving as a model for others, and shared that he looks forward to seeing its continued positive impact.

Commissioner Fairchild thanked City leadership, police, and MRU staff for their work and investment in the program and asked whether MRU is diverting calls from police, responding to low-priority calls, or generating new calls as awareness grows. Dr. Zimmer responded that MRU is handling non-emergency calls, redirecting some from police, and seeing more direct calls to the center. He also asked what outcomes should be evaluated, including use of force, and whether the evaluation could identify social service gaps. Dr. Zimmer said research on use of force is ongoing and that while MRU cannot solve systemic shortages like housing or treatment, it can document gaps and connect people to available resources.

Commissioner Shaw praised the MRU for evolving from a concept into a fully developed program that benefits the community and strengthens police-community interactions and asked if there are any gaps or areas where the program could improve. Ms. Michelle Zaremba responded that longer-term case management support is still needed to help individuals navigate complex situations. She also highlighted that the relationship between MRU and police has become very positive, with officers now requesting MRU assistance and appreciating the program's support. Commissioner Shaw also acknowledged his initial concerns about how the program would fit with police operations but emphasized that MRU has become a valuable resource, and he expressed interest in continued updates on the program's progress.

Commissioner Joseph praised Commissioner Shaw and his co-chair for their leadership in creating the MRU, noting the time, community involvement, and city resources required to build a nationally recognized program. He thanked Dr. Zimmer for the evaluation, which confirmed the program is meeting its goals, and emphasized that its success depends on the dedication and

integrity of MRU staff. He also commended the City Manager for supporting implementation, noted that other cities are looking to Dayton's model, and expressed enthusiasm for continued innovation and improvements.

Mayor Turner-Sloss recognized the MRU team for their dedication and service, then asked about the evaluation's duration, to which Ms. Zaremba explained it is a two-year grant-funded project with plans for ongoing assessment. Mayor Turner-Sloss also asked about service gaps, particularly in mental health and substance abuse, and ways to expand support for vulnerable populations. Ms. Zaremba noted the importance of partnerships, such as with the County mental health response unit, while emphasizing that MRU cannot take on all social services. Mayor Turner-Sloss asked about staffing, team structure, and MRU's role in landlord-tenant cases, and Ms. Zaremba explained the six responders, citywide coverage, and mediation support for evictions and disputes. Mayor Turner-Sloss concluded by asking about the team's coordination with broader programs, including the Northwest eviction pilot program, and commended the MRU's impact and collaboration.

Ms. Dickstein praised Michelle Zaremba's leadership in guiding the MRU through its early, transformative years, noting how her team filled gaps and ensured the program's success. She highlighted the program's innovation, use of best practices, and sustainability through the transformative mediation model, as well as the creative evaluation efforts involving Sinclair partners. She also recognized Erin Ritter and the MRU staff for their collaboration with police and consultants, emphasizing that the team's work is widely valued, and thanked the commissioners for supporting the program.

ADDITIONS AND DELETIONS TO THE CALENDAR

There were none.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS ON CALENDAR ITEMS

Ms. Dickstein had no changes to the morning's calendar but highlighted two items. First, a contract modification with L.J. DeWeese Company for Residence Park amenity upgrades, including a playground, basketball court, parking lot, a sanitary line for the proposed restroom, and curb replacement, funded by Issue 6 and CDBG. Second, Item D4, a development agreement with the law firm Hornstein, Nicholson, and Blumenthal, which retains 47 high-salary jobs, creates 10 new jobs, and utilizes the city's performance-based economic incentive program, supporting downtown economic growth.

Mayor Turner-Sloss noted that Item D4 was pulled from the calendar.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS ON CALENDAR ITEMS

There were no citizens registered to speak.

COMMISSIONERS' COMMENTS ON CALENDAR ITEMS

Commissioner Fairchild

Commissioner Fairchild asked for more context on development agreements, including how many are done, how much is spent on the development fund, and projections for the full year, noting that this information would help the community understand the work being done. Ms.

Dickstein responded that the highlighted agreement is a 10-year lease generating \$50 million in payroll with a \$1.5 million organizational commitment, and that all such projects are included in regular development updates showing jobs created and investments made.

Commissioner Shaw

Commissioner Shaw emphasized the importance of early discussion on development issues to avoid unintended consequences. He asked whether current strategies are effectively addressing downtown vacancy, noted the impact of COVID on past efforts, and raised questions about adapting strategies for work-from-home trends while encouraging employees to return to offices to support safety, retail, and neighborhood investment.

APPROVAL OF CITY MANAGER'S REPORTS

Commissioner Shaw made the motion to approve the City Manager's Reports. Commissioner Fairchild seconded the motion. The City Manager's Reports were unanimously approved.

LEGISLATION

Ordinance – Second Reading

No. 32176-26- Amending the Official Zoning Map to Establish Planned Development-194 and Change the Underlying Zoning from Light Industrial (I-1) to Eclectic Single-Family (ER-4) for 1.48 acres at 1508 Valley Street.

A roll call vote was taken, resulting in a 5-0 vote. Voting in the affirmative were Mayor Turner-Sloss, Commissioners Joseph, Shaw, Fairchild, and Beckham. The Ordinance was adopted.

CITIZENS' COMMENTS

There was one citizen registered to speak

1. **Lawrence Lindsey, 1014 Merrywood Dr (Englewood)-** Spoke about a proposal for a modular computer lab.

COMMENTS BY THE CITY MANAGER

There were none.

COMMENTS BY THE CLERK OF COMMISSION

There were none.

COMMENTS BY THE CITY COMMISSION

Commissioner Beckham

Commissioner Beckham thanked Mr. Lindsey for his comments, expressed interest in learning more about the project, and appreciated his service.

Commissioner Fairchild

Commissioner Fairchild highlighted his recent community involvement and cultural experiences in Dayton. He spoke about participating in a Civic Leadership Program panel, praised the Neighborhood Leadership Institute (NLI), and encouraged residents to apply before February 20th. He also attended Heroes and Hardship and saw *Les Misérables* at the Schuster Center.

Commissioner Fairchild highlighted upcoming events, including a Black History Month presentation on Dayton Funk music at the Dayton Metro Library on February 13, a family art studio at the Dayton Art Institute on Valentine's Day, and a sustainability learning circle at the Lohrey Recreation Center on February 17.

Commissioner Fairchild also reflected on the power of music and performance to convey emotion, sharing insights from opera and Bad Bunny's Super Bowl halftime show, connecting these experiences to themes of love, inclusion, and social justice.

Commissioner Joseph

Commissioner Joseph congratulated the City's Department of Water, Division of Environmental Management, for receiving the National Environmental Achievement Award for its work supporting urban agriculture, green space, biodiversity, and food security. He also highlighted the fifth annual Social Justice Speaker Series at the Dayton Metro Library on February 19th, featuring Karen Gray Houston discussing her family's role in the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott.

Mayor Turner-Sloss

Mayor Turner-Sloss congratulated the Water Department and the Mediation Center for their dedication and achievements. She highlighted several upcoming community events, including the Black Women's Health Initiative "Know Your Rights" townhall at Mount Moriah Baptist Church on February 12, the WYSO fundraiser on February 13, and the Go Red Valentine's Day lunch at the Presidential Banquet Center on February 14. She also highlighted the work of Ms. Kiana Daniels and her Sinclair Community College social policy class. Mayor Turner-Sloss also highlighted the Dayton Art Institute's Jazz and Beyond concert series, which begins February 12, and encouraged residents to attend "Valentine's Under the Stars" at the Boonshoft Museum of Discovery, a weekend event celebrating creative programming in Dayton.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:24 a.m.