

Middletown Port Authority (MPA) Agenda

March 4, 2026 - 1:30 - 3:30 PM

City of Middletown's Conference Room 2C

Virtual Attendance Option - Join Google Meets:

<https://meet.google.com/fgk-bdvp-cfy>

Or dial: (US) +1 321-312-0958 PIN: 413 597 312#

More phone numbers: <https://tel.meet/fgk-bdvp-cfy?pin=3971422060665>

1. Call Meeting to Order (1:30PM)

Meeting called to order at **1:34 PM** by Mr. Jacob Schulte on behalf of Chairman Kleingers.

2. Roll Call

Chairman Jim Kleingers - **present**

Vice Chairman Greg Martin - **present**

Secretary Mike Stautberg - **present**

Treasurer Benjamin Woo - **present virtually, arrived at 1:41 PM**

Executive Director Ashley Combs - **present**

Director Mayor Elizabeth Slamka - **present**

Director Ken Cohen - **present**

Jacob Schulte - **present**

Joshua Smith - **present**

Donnie Warner, Esq. - **present**

Samantha Zimmerman - **present virtually**

Guests Present

Jim Cohen

Luke Modesto

Michalla Perkins

Abby Haverkos

Bethany Schwan

3. Approval of Minutes

- a. July 28th, 2025;
- b. December 15th, 2025;
- c. February 2nd, 2026;

Discussion:

Chairman Jim Kleingers asked the Board if there were any additions, revisions, or corrections necessary? Nothing was discussed or noted.

Motion made by Director Ken Cohen, seconded by Director Mayor Elizabeth Slamka.

Voice Vote - **6** in favor; 0 opposed; 0 present. Director Benjamin Woo was not yet present for this vote.

Motion Passes (6 to 0).

4. Financial Report

Discussion:

Mr. Jacob Schulte briefly read the financial breakdown, mentioning the audit fees, and the Cincy Magazine invoice amount.

The conversation continued with the banking option research. Noting that both banks, First Financial and Valley Central, have similar account structures yet Valley Central currently has a higher interest rate of around 3.5%.

Chairman Jim Kleingers opened the floor for discussion. Vice Chairman Greg Martin mentioned that he has had experience with Valley Central and had a good experience.

As this new banking set up is established, the financial report should start reflecting interest on the balance sheet as a revenue.

Motion made by **Secretary Mike Stautberg**, seconded by **Director Mayor Elizabeth Slamka** to **establish an account at Valley Central Bank.**

Voice Vote - 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 present. Director Benjamin Woo was present for this vote.

Motion Passes (7 to 0).

5. Old Business

Discussion:

Mr. Donnie Warner, legal representation from Frost Brown Todd Gibbons, and Mr. Jacob Schulte discussed the sales tax exemption deals conducted by the MPA:

The City currently has an outstanding agreement awaiting execution by El Ceramics for a sales tax exemption on the ~\$15M remodeling project at the former AK Research Building at 705 Curtis St. We attempted to execute a sales tax exemption with Midwest Ammunition; however the project did not come to fruition. Finally, an executed sales tax exemption on Echo Ridge is in the books with an annual rent payment expected of \$5,000 per year.

6. New Business

Discussion:

Cincy Magazine Update

Abby Haverkos discussed an update on the Cincy Magazine project. Mentioning that it was well underway. Mr. Joshua Smith, jumped in and mentioned that this is a great tool to reposition Middletown enhancing regional visibility and reframing Middletown's image. Content development is underway to highlight key redevelopment sites, including the Moorman space. Early feedback on marketing materials has been positive, with emphasis on supporting downtown activation through dining and placemaking.

Development & Redevelopment Updates

The City continues to advance planning efforts for key sites -

Chairman Jim Kleingers mentioned that the City purchased point cloud scans a while ago and these could be helpful to support redevelopment analysis for the First National Bank building (and they also maintain scans on the Sorg Opera House).

Paperboard Phase II received 10 competitive bids, indicating strong market interest.

A proposed aerospace manufacturing project on Hook Drive (approximately 3 acres) is moving forward. Director Mayor Elizabeth Slamka asked about job growth. Mr. Jacob Schulte mentioned that the anticipated wages are between \$50,000–\$90,000.

Secretary Mike Stautberg asked about a recent fire. Mr. Jacob Schulte reported significant structural damage to an apartment building on Central Avenue following a fire; evaluation is ongoing.

Parks & Conservancy Discussion

The City is continuing conversations about the revitalization of the Park.

Mr. Joshua A. Smith stated that, due to the scope of responsibilities within Middletown Public Works, the City may benefit from evaluating the creation of, or partnership with, a parks conservancy or 501(c)(3) to manage park operations while maintaining City ownership. He referenced the model utilized in Hamilton, Ohio, noting benefits including increased fundraising capacity, improved maintenance, and reduced operational burden.

Mr. Smith further noted that Scott (Middletown Public Works) expressed concerns regarding operation of a proposed ice rink. He suggested consideration of a structured enterprise model allowing community partners, such as Avinne Kaiser, to operate select amenities while the City retains ownership.

Mr. Smith added that Mr. Steve Timmer (Hamilton Parks) is willing to assist Middletown in establishing a similar framework.

Secretary Mike Stautberg referenced his experience with Great Parks of Hamilton County, noting that joint partnership models, such as Fernbank Park, have resulted in improved park outcomes.

7. Executive Session:

To discuss financial and proprietary information, including trade secrets, submitted by or on behalf of an employer to the Finance Authority in connection with the relocation, location, expansion, improvement, or preservation of the business of that employer; To consider the purchase of real property for public purposes if disclosure of the information would give a competitive advantage pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22(G)(2); and conferences with an attorney for the public body concerning disputes involving the public body that are the subject of pending or imminent court action pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 121.22(G)(3).

Motion made by **Director Mayor Elizabeth Slamka** seconded by **Secretary Mike Stautberg**.

Voice Vote - 7 in favor; 0 opposed; 0 present.

Motion Passes (7 to 0).

8. Adjournment

The meeting was reconvened from Executive Session and Chairman Jim Kleingers adjourned the meeting at **3:14 PM**.