

Ward 8 meeting

Documenter name: Melanie Mohler

Agency: Akron City Council

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[See more about this meeting at Documenters.org](#)

Summary

- [SiFi Networks](#), commonly referred to as SiFi, is a privately owned telecom company that funds, builds and operates open-access fiber internet networks across the United States. It is currently in the process of establishing a fiber network throughout Akron.
- The SiFi fiber network project will take three to four years to complete. Once complete, it will create competition and cheaper rates for internet service.
- Legislation may be brought to council to limit new vape shops.

Follow-Up Questions

- Why are there not more ward meetings held on weekends?
- Why should new vape shops be limited?

Notes

- Before the meeting started, those who had signed up to [receive a free Ring doorbell camera from the city](#) were able to pick them up.
- Ward 8 Council Member James Hardy started the meeting at 9:01 a.m. Approximately 20 people were in attendance.
- The meeting notice said that [Darren Rozenek, the city's chief technology manager](#), would present, but he was not in attendance.

SiFi Networks Citywide Broadband Access

- [Sean Vollman](#), deputy director of economic development, and [Chris Ludle](#), director of public service, spoke about the city's partnership with SiFi to create a citywide broadband alternative.
- SiFi would build the [fiber internet](#) infrastructure to make it available on every street for every house and business in Akron.
 - Three huts (a small brick building and a generator) will be built on city-owned land throughout Akron.

- Smaller boxes will then be placed on devil strips. They will wire into neighborhoods.
- Each home will have a small box that can be hooked up to SiFi. Residents can then pay to receive internet service from FairlawnGig, Spectrum, AT&T, Verizon, or other providers that may become available.
- Residents are not required to use the fiber internet hookup, but if they choose to do so, they can access more internet provider options at cheaper rates.
- The city will hire staff that SiFi will pay for to oversee SiFi network operations.
- The fiber network will also help the city with traffic lights and cameras and save the city money.
- The city currently has fiber networks through [FairlawnGig](#) in all city community centers and fire departments.
- SiFi recently implemented a [fiber network in Kenosha, Wisconsin](#), which Akron officials got to visit. They met with Kenosha city officials.
- SiFi will install the fiber network by digging trenches. It will be installed and covered in the same day. Roads will not be closed.
- The biggest complaint in Kenosha was lawn strips were torn up to install the fiber and the grass they planted wasn't growing.
- Vollman and Ludle then opened the floor for questions. Some of the questions that were asked:
 - How will SiFi make money from this?
 - SiFi has a 30-year contract with Akron that may be renewed another 50 years if needed. SiFi will maintain an office in Akron.
 - Do residents pay for fiber installation from the curb into their house?
 - No. Residents only pay for the internet service provided through the fiber network if they choose to do so.
 - How will residents be notified when the fiber is being installed in their neighborhood?
 - The city and SiFi will notify residents. SiFi also hosts lunch-and-learn events where they bring food trucks into neighborhoods and explain the program to residents.
 - What is the advantage of SiFi?
 - SiFi will allow for another internet service provider option in addition to AT&T, Spectrum and others.
 - Does Ohio not allow community-owned fiber programs?
 - Hardy explained that municipal-owned programs are not permitted; SiFi's network is not owned by the city, which makes this program legal. Vollman said that the only thing the city has agreed to do is to

quickly approve SiFi's permits. The city is doing this because SiFi will pay the city to implement the SiFi fiber network.

- What is the name of the company?
 - SiFi is the name of the parent company. Locally it will be Akron Fiber.
- Where will the box be located on a person's property?
 - One will be on the lawn strip, similar to the water system setup. If a person decides to utilize the SiFi fiber network, they will also receive a free box for inside their home.
- Will fiber be installed in the entire city in the three- to four-year period?
 - Yes. The three huts will first be built, then the network will spread from there. Once the huts are up, it will be about 10 months until they can begin to "light up" parts of Akron and people can sign up.

Public Service Updates

- Ludle provided updates on some current projects, including [lead water service replacement](#), resurfacing, sidewalks, and updates on the [Akron sewer project](#).
 - In 2023, all of the Ward 8 streets listed for resurfacing were completed
 - 2024 Ward 8 street resurfacing will probably begin in August
 - Some sidewalks in Ward 8 will be redone this year

Police updates

- Officer Aaron Brown, Ward 8 Community Engagement Team member, gave updates.
- Brown briefly discussed the [April 2024 Chief's Dashboard](#) (see below).



Mayor
Shammas Malik

Akron Police Department
April 2024



Chief
Brian J. Harding

Murders					
Year	2022	2023	2024	# Change	% Change
Month					
January	5	1		0	-100%
February	2	3	2	-1	-33%
March		4	3	-1	-25%
April	4	3	2	-1	-33%
Total	11	11	7	-4	-36%

Overdose Deaths					
Year	2022	2023	2024	# Change	% Change
Month					
January	26	16	9	-7	-43.75%
February	11	14	6	-8	-57.14%
March	6	9	13	4	44.44%
April	13	19	3	-16	-84.21%
Total	56	58	31	-27	-46.55%

Reported Crimes					
Year	2022	2023	2024	# Change	% Change
Offenses					
Robbery	62	81	77	-4	-5%
Felony Assault	104	115	126	11	10%
Rape	81	98	84	-14	-14%
Burglary	233	182	163	-19	-10%
Breaking and Entering	203	177	176	-1	-1%
Auto Theft	505	269	309	40	15%

Calls For Service					
Year	2022	2023	2024	# Change	% Change
Month					
January	11382	10702	10378	-324	-3%
February	10249	9988	10837	849	9%
March	12055	10555	11707	1152	11%
April	11961	10664	11535	841	8%
Total	45547	41939	44457	2518	6%

Park & Walk CFS					
Year	2022	2023	2024	# Change	% Change
Month					
January	587	628	2156	1528	243%

Firearms-related Offenses					
Year	2022	2023	2024	# Change	% Change
Month					
January	186	204	169	-35	-17%

Firearms Recovered					
Year	2022	2023	2024	# Change	% Change
Month					
January	361	236	369	133	56%

Shootings and Shots Fired CFS					
Year	2022	2023	2024	# Change	% Change
Month					
January	658	783	490	-293	-37%

Shootings into a Habitation					
Year	2022	2023	2024	# Change	% Change
Month					
January	58	75	49	-26	-35%

Shooting Victims by Adult/Juvenile					
Year	Adult Fatal	Adult Non-Fatal	Juvenile Fatal	Juvenile Non-Fatal	Total
2022	11	28	1		5
2023	10	40			5
2024	8	32			2

Reported Use of Force Statistics					
Use of Force Statistics	2023	2024	# Change	% Change	
Reported Use of Force Incidents	64	108	44	69%	
Total Assaults on Officer Incidents	12	10	-2	-17%	
Juveniles	8	22	14	175%	
Officers Injured in UOF	7	8	1	14%	

Complaints					
Month	2023	2024	# Change	% Change	
Jan	1	3	2	200%	
Feb	2	9	7	350%	
Mar	1	3	2	200%	
Apr	1	2	1	100%	
Total	5	17	12	240%	

There is a use of force incident roughly once every 412 ALL Calls (44,457 CFS) in 2024. (108 Uses of Force) There is a complaint roughly once every 2,615 ALL Calls in 2024. (17 complaints)

Source: Tyler RMS SQL for most data points. UOF and Complaints data from Patrol Ops. Date Ran: 5/16/2024

- Chief Brian Harding will be sworn in on May 28.
- There was a shooting on May 5 at Thurmont Road and Hawkins Avenue.
- Nine people are retiring from the police department, which is still hiring.

Ward 8 updates

- Aldi Grocery Stores submitted permit applications for the former Pat Catan's building at 1886 W. Market St. in Wallhaven
- [A building on Frank Boulevard](#) in Fairlawn Heights that was half demolished is now being repaired. The security fence that was erected is currently down to allow for construction.
- Several people have heard that the former site of [Pavona's Pizza Joint](#) in Northwest Akron will become another pizza shop.
- The building that formerly housed Larry's Main Entrance at 1964 W. Market St. in Fairlawn Heights has been bought, but no one was certain who purchased it. (Editor's note: According to the Summit County Fiscal office, [the property](#) was

purchased in March by Michaels Family Investments for \$200,000.)

- A new restaurant, Stirling, will open in [Liberty Commons](#) in Merriman Valley.
- A resident mentioned issues with a smoke shop in Wallhaven. Hardy said that he has spoken with a building owner nearby and is working on the issue.
- Hardy is working to bring legislation to council that would limit new vape shops. Vollman noted this could be similar to the [moratorium the city enacted on dollar stores](#) or could involve changing zoning code to restrict new vape shops.
- Another resident mentioned safety concerns about the White Pond development with power lines and easements. The railroad and FirstEnergy have not signed off on easements yet according to city officials.
- Another resident was concerned about traffic at the intersection of Interstate 77 and White Pond Drive.
 - Hardy also expressed concern. Ludle said the city has asked the Ohio Department of Transportation to examine the intersection, but it has not done so yet.
- Another resident noted the Starbucks drive-through traffic that spills onto West Market Street. at busy times.
- The meeting ended at 10:11 a.m.

Notes to reader: Unless quotation marks are used, all text is paraphrased. If you believe anything in these notes is inaccurate, please email us at documenters@signalakron.org with "Correction Request" in the subject line.