

**Monroe Council Minutes  
Regular Meeting of Council  
July 28, 2020 – 6:30 p.m.**

**This meeting was held electronically (remotely) pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section  
121.221**

***Pledge of Allegiance***

Mayor Frentzel opened the regular meeting of Council with the Pledge of Allegiance at 6:30 p.m.

***Roll Call***

Council members present – Tom Callahan, Jason Frentzel, Keith Funk, Todd Hickman, Christina McElfresh, and Robert Routson.

Mr. Funk moved to excuse Mrs. Hale; seconded by Mr. Routson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

***Approval of the Minutes***

Mr. Funk moved to approve the Council Minutes of June 23, 2020 and July 14, 2020; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Voice vote. Motion carried.

***Visitors***

The Clerk of Council read the following letters into the record.

“Initially, my email specifically was to be addressed to Tom Callahan for a quote attributed to him in today's Middletown Journal but since an email address does not appear for him I will address this to the entire council. Now then, I first accept that what appears in the Journal may be out of context and perhaps even inaccurate but Mr. Callahan's statement "he has yet to wear a mask and has never felt threaten to do so" is concerning. It is my understanding that the wearing of a mask does not protect the wearer so much as it protects those who may come in contact with the wearer who knowingly or unknowingly is carrying the virus. I hope all those who come in contact with Mr. Callahan wear masks so he does not become the spreader of the virus.

If the Health Department chooses not to enforce a mandate, is it the council's position that it is then acceptable to ignore the mandate?

I thought the whole point of Council was to lead. Instead, it seems you are advocating to leave leadership up to individuals and businesses. Why is there even a need to have a Council if personal choice rules. From Roger Enchelmeyer.”

“To the Monroe City Council Members,  
I appreciate the concerns you have for our wonderful city and your discussion regarding the proposed facial covering mandate. There were certainly multiple factors to be considered when making your individual decisions on how to vote. And as Mrs. McElfresh mentioned during the July 14 meeting, you will never be able to please all residents and business owners when the topic is this divisive.

However, the main reason for this email is to express my deepest disappointment and concern with Council Member Tom Callahan’s statement, “I disagree with telling people to wear masks. The next thing you do, you’ll be wearing scarves around your head.” Mr. Tom Callahan, whether intended, this sounds like a disrespectful way of saying that you do not like people from cultures and religions who wear head scarves. You were entirely inappropriate to make this statement while conducting business as a City Council Member. I believe in freedom of speech. However, as a Council Member of our City, you have the responsibility of representing this City. Monroe is a wonderful city that includes persons of all races and religions. You are expected to represent them all, not denigrate any segment of the population. What you say in private is your business. However, what you say as an elected City Council Member who represents the City, its residents, and its businesses must be appropriate and respectful.

Sincerely,  
Lora Stillman  
Monroe Resident and  
Former Monroe City Council Member”

“Members of Council:

I am at a loss to understand the four votes against this much needed ordinance. The council's primary duty is to protect the citizens of the city. If some of those citizens fail to take personal responsibility for protecting others by the simple act of wearing a mask, then council members are obliged to protect the rest of the city's citizens from the failure of a few.

Several of you argued that businesses would be punished because people failed to take personal responsibility. That argument is specious and without merit. How many of you have seen the signs in many businesses, "no shirt, no shoes, no service." The proposed ordinance would have bound businesses to a similar message, "no mask, no service." Since businesses voluntarily enforce the former message, they should have no problem enforcing the latter.

I commend council members Hickman and McElfrish for their understanding of the need for this legislation and casting their votes for it. Councilman Callahan's statement, "The next thing you do, you'll be telling people to wear scarves around

their head.", is a barely veiled, racist remark toward Muslims, Sikhs, and any other ethnic group that wears a wrapped head covering as a matter of faith. You should sincerely apologize for that remark. If you choose not to do so, then resign!

Monroe's City Council still has an opportunity for redemption. It can re-introduce this legislation and then pass it. I urge all of you to do so.

I trust my response to the vote on this ordinance will be entered into the minutes of the next council meeting.

Emili D. Spinosa  
Monroe, OH"

Mr. Routson did not recall reading the request that these letters be read into the record and noted that there were other emails received by Council that were against the ordinance and should be read into the record as well.

Law Director Callahan advised that if the Clerk of Council had not read the others into the record it is because the author of these emails did not make such a request. However, that does not prohibit a member of Council from reading an email received into the record.

### ***Committee Reports***

None.

### ***Old Business***

**Resolution No. 49-2020.** A Resolution amending Resolution No. 06-2020 approving blanket purchase orders as recommended by the Director of Finance and the City Manager. (Second Reading)

Mr. Brock requested that Resolution No. 49-2020 be adopted as an emergency on the second reading to avoid submitting Then-and-Now Certificates for upcoming invoices related to negotiations with the Police Department. Mrs. McElfresh questioned Mr. Brock if the additional \$50,000 would be needed for negotiations and he indicated it would.

Mr. Funk moved to suspend the rule requiring the reading of Resolution No. 49-2020 on two separate days, authorize its adoption on the second reading, and have it read by title only; seconded by Mr. Routson. Voice vote. Motion carried

The Clerk of Council read Resolution No. 49-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Resolution No. 49-2020; seconded by Mr. Routson. Roll call vote: four ayes; two nays (Hickman and McElfresh). Motion carried (effective in 30 days).

*New Business*

**Resolution No. 50-2020.** A Resolution adopting a Fund Balance Reserve Policy.

Mrs. Ervin advised that the Finance Committee has already reviewed the policy. It will make sure that it the City has sufficient funds and will help with the bond rating. Mrs. Ervin explained the policy will have a range as a minimum of a four month carryover and a maximum six month carryover. The policy allows Council to approve a temporary reduction in the General Fund carryover balance in the event of an emergency such as, the pandemic we are experiencing. The public safety funds will have a minimum of a three month carryover. The debt funds will have a six month balance that is due over the next twelve months. The enterprise funds are not in the policy as there is more work needed on these funds. Anytime there is an excess amount in the reserves it can be transferred to general fund expenses, capital improvements, or debt.

Mr. Funk moved to consider this the first reading of Resolution No. 50-2020 and have it read by title only; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Mr. Funk moved to approve the first reading of Resolution No. 50-2020; seconded by Mr. Hickman. Roll call vote: six ayes. Motion carried.

**Emergency Resolution No. 51-2020.** A Resolution authorizing the submission of a multi-jurisdictional final application and participation thereof by the City of Monroe, Ohio in the Ohio Public Works Program for PY35/2021 for the South Union Road Construction Project and declaring an emergency.

Mr. Brock reported this authorizes a grant application for South Union Road from Park North to Nickel Road. We are asking for \$2.9 million with a local match of approximately \$1,435,000 for the project.

Mayor Frentzel asked about the portion from Exploration Drive to State Route 63. Mr. Brock replied that it has been discussed a lot and the focus would be to direct the traffic to the intersection of Gateway Boulevard.

Mr. Funk moved to suspend the rule requiring the reading of Emergency Resolution No. 51-2020 on two separate days, authorize its adoption on the first reading, and have it read by title only; seconded by Mr. Routson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Emergency Resolution No. 51-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to adopt Emergency Resolution No. 51-2020; seconded by Mr. Routson. Roll call vote: six ayes. Motion carried.

**Ordinance No. 2020-24.** An Ordinance vacating a certain easement containing 2,750 square feet no longer needed for municipal purposes.

Mr. Brock advised that when the water treatment plant was constructed there was a well on property owned by the sellers of the property to Park North. This easement was for that well that we no longer have. The current property owner has asked that it be vacated.

Mr. Hickman noted that it is a small piece of land and asked what could be put on that property. Mr. Brock did not know what could be located on the property.

Mr. Funk moved to consider this the first reading of Ordinance No. 2020-24 and have it read by title only; seconded by Mr. Routson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Ordinance No. 2020-24 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to approve the first reading of 2020-24; seconded by Mr. Routson. Roll call vote: six ayes. Motion carried.

**Consideration of Motion** authorizing the expenditure of \$69,500 to Enterprise for the purchase of nine previously leased vehicles for the Department of Public Works.

Mr. Brock explained that all of these vehicles are coming off of the lease and it was determined that we could get more useful life off of these rather than renew the lease or lease any additional vehicles.

Mayor Frentzel asked if there was any concern that it would cost more later down the road and there was no concern.

Mr. Funk moved to authorize the expenditure of \$69,500 to Enterprise for the purchase of nine previously leased vehicles for the Department of Public Works; seconded by Mr. Routson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

**Consideration of Motion** to accept the quote and authorize the expenditure of \$20,500 to J.W. Brennen Excavating, LLC for the installation of a 6” sewer lateral for the Monroe Crossings Park Restroom Facility.

Mr. Brock stated this will extend the sanitary sewer to the Monroe Crossings Park Restroom Facility.

Mr. Funk moved to accept the quote and authorize the expenditure of \$20,500 to J.W. Brennen Excavating, LLC for the installation of a 6” sewer lateral for the Monroe Crossings Park Restroom Facility; seconded by Mr. Routson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

### ***Administrative Reports***

**Executive Session.** To consider confidential information related to the marketing plans, specific business strategy, production techniques, trade secrets, or personal financial statements of an applicant for economic development assistance.

Mr. Funk moved to adjourn into executive session to consider confidential information related to the marketing plans, specific business strategy, production techniques, trade secrets, or personal financial statements of an applicant for economic development assistance; seconded by Mr. Routson. Roll call vote: six ayes. Motion carried.

Council adjourned into executive session at 7:24 p.m.

Mr. Funk moved to reconvene into regular session; seconded by Mrs. McElfresh. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Council reconvened into regular session at 8:09 p.m.

Mr. Funk moved to amend the agenda to consider Resolution No. 52-2020; seconded by Mr. Routson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

**Resolution No. 52-2020.** A Resolution revoking the tax exemption provided by an existing Community Reinvestment Area Agreement concerning a parcel of commercial real property in the City of Monroe.

Mr. Funk moved to consider this the first reading of Resolution No. 52-2020 and have it read by title only; seconded by Mr. Routson. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Resolution No. 52-2020 by title only.

Mr. Funk moved to approve the first reading of Resolution No. 52-2020; seconded by Mr. Hickman. Roll call vote: five ayes; one nay (Funk). Motion carried.

### *Adjournment*

Mr. Routson moved to adjourn the regular meeting of Council; seconded by Mr. Funk. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The regular meeting of Council adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela S. Wasson, MMC  
Clerk of Council