



**Monroe Council Minutes  
Regular Meeting  
July 26, 2022 – 6:30 p.m.  
233 South Main Street, Monroe, Ohio**

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***Pledge of Allegiance***

Mayor Funk opened the regular meeting of Council at 6:30 p.m. with the Presentation of Colors and Pledge of Allegiance by the Monroe Fire Department Honor Guard.

***Roll Call***

Council members present: Marc Bellapianta, Kelly Clark, Jason Frentzel, Keith Funk, Christina McElfresh, and Ben Wagner.

Mrs. McElfresh moved to excuse Mr. Callahan; seconded by Mr. Bellapianta. Voice vote. Motion carried.

***Approval of the Minutes***

Mrs. McElfresh moved to approve the Public Safety Committee Minutes of July 7, 2022 and Council Minutes of July 12, 2022; seconded by Dr. Clark. Voice vote. Motion carried.

***Visitors***

Law Director Callahan administered the oath of office to Joshua Spradling as Fire Lieutenant.

***Committee Reports***

Mr. Frentzel reported that the Finance Committee met this evening and reviewed the condensed version of the monthly Finance Reports. Having received no comments from Council, the monthly reports will be in this format with a more comprehensive report quarterly. Mr. Frentzel further reported that the Budget Retreat is scheduled for August 27, 2022 and invited Council to share any ideas they would like to see at this retreat.

***Old Business***

**Resolution No. 29-2022.** A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into an agreement by and between the City of Monroe and Fidelity Health Care to provide an employee assistance program. (Second Reading)

Mr. Brock stated this allows for a new employee assistance program.

Mrs. McElfresh moved to consider this the second reading of Resolution No. 29-2022 and have it read by title only; seconded by Dr. Clark. Voice vote. Motion carried.



The Clerk of Council read Resolution No. 29-2022 by title only.

Mrs. McElfresh moved to adopt Resolution No. 29-2022; seconded by Mr. Frentzel. Roll call vote: six ayes. Motion carried.

**Ordinance No. 2022-21.** An Ordinance establishing Part Eighteen, Chapter 1801 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Monroe to establish a Historic Preservation Commission. (Second Reading)

Mrs. McElfresh moved to amend Ordinance No. 2022-21 as presented; seconded by Dr. Clark. Voice vote. Motion carried.

Mr. Bellapianta commented that Council does not know what properties will be involved with this proposal and he did not feel comfortable with the property owners not knowing what is forthcoming.

Mr. Brock reported that the downtown is zoned C-3 Downtown Commercial District and defined as having high density and high intensity commercial, cultural, and residential uses. This is inconsistent with what you see downtown. When you look at the Comprehensive Plan it builds on that vision wherein it reads, in part, “this includes creating opportunities for more urban living and to attract new development and subsequently, more residents.” Mr. Smith presented to Council the idea of being a Certified Local Government that includes a process of creating a Historic Preservation Commission for this area and Council gave permission to move forward. The Commission will be tasked with reviewing the standards to maintain the existing character of downtown, define the standards of what historic preservation means for this downtown area, and to define the area. It could include everything in the C-3 District now or it could be less or more. As we submit our application to the state to become a Certified Local Government this is the area that we are considering for the district. It doesn’t define the district and it doesn’t set the standards. Once the Commission is set, which Council must approve the membership of, it defines it as being members of the community and a member of the Monroe Historical Society. It wants to have some architects on there. Some professionals that understand the character of housing stock and the character of buildings. The Commission would be directed by Council to create the standards for this area and they would give a recommendation to Council. Thereafter, Council would have a public hearing and decide if this is what you really want to do. The legislation before Council simply creates the Commission.

Mr. Brock confirmed the Mayor’s understanding that Council can request the Commission to revise their recommendation or disband the Commission.

Mrs. McElfresh felt good about the process moving forward and as Mayor Funk stated, it is a low risk process.

Mr. Bellapianta is not opposed to the revitalization of the downtown area, but concerned with adding another layer of regulations on top of what is there and we haven’t provided anyone with any information.



Mr. Wagner noted the Commission actually sets those parameters so the homeowners can be part of the process and agreed the homeowners need to have input once the rules and enforcement are in place.

Mrs. McElfresh asked if it is possible to have a Council representative on that Commission. Mr. Brock replied that we have not talked about the particular application for appointment, but one of the considerations would be a Council member.

Dr. Clark sees this as the first building block in a process where the citizens can be part of the process.

In response to Mr. Frentzel's question, Mr. Smith recommended that anyone that wanted to participate in the process can. We have people that have interest in the properties that are business owners. The establishment of this qualifies us for grant funding that could go towards payment for the design guidelines and a consultant to coordinate everything. All of this is with public engagement.

Mr. Frentzel asked why we are going this route as opposed to just updating the downtown development zoning ourselves. Mr. Smith replied that the Comprehensive Plan had items such as a gathering place or a hub that the community wanted. Changing a specific zone doesn't necessarily do that. Having an overall plan of what that looks like gives us some action steps to take over the years. Mr. Frentzel is concerned about the long-term effects this could cause.

Mrs. McElfresh asked Mrs. Patterson if she had any issues with this. Mrs. Patterson replied that on the economic development side they can work with whichever direction Council decides to go.

Mr. Bellapianta commented that Mr. Frentzel brought up some good points and did not understand why it was necessary to go this route. We do not need another layer of rules and hope is not the way you move forward.

Mrs. McElfresh moved to consider this the second reading of Ordinance No. 2022-21 and have it read by title only; seconded by Dr. Clark. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The Clerk of Council read Ordinance No. 2022-21 by title only.

Mrs. McElfresh moved to adopt Ordinance No. 2022-21; seconded by Dr. Clark. Roll call vote: four ayes; two nays (Frentzel and Bellapianta). Motion carried.

### ***New Business***

**Consideration of Motion** approving the appointment of Jacob Burton as Director of Finance.

Mrs. McElfresh moved to approve the appointment of Jacob Burton as Director of Finance effective August 8, 2022; seconded by Mr. Bellapianta. Voice vote. Motion carried.



### ***Administrative Reports***

Mrs. Patterson reported that the zoning and sign permits have been issued to Moeller Brew Barn. She advised that each of their sites have their own unique feel. Moeller has looked at items that were salvaged from what was formerly Americana and have requests on what they could have on a long-term loan so they can build that into their space. They would like to have one to three sky rides, three outdoor tables, and two sets of signs. This will bring in the park's history and the community's memories.

Council had no objection to allowing Moeller Brew Barn borrowing the requested items.

Mrs. Patterson provided an update on a community survey. Some of the survey options staff looked at were:

- Are we looking to information gather or engagement?
- How many residents or households do we want to reach?
- What type of outreach is most comfortable for that resident/household?
- How comprehensive are the results?
- How do we communicate those results to the stakeholders?

Mrs. Patterson outlined the following three bigger contenders other than local universities:

**National Community Survey.** The average survey is 5 to 6 pages taking about 10 to 20 minutes to complete. Their real strength is benchmarking against others because everyone is asking the same questions. They send a postcard with a URL and if you do not respond within a certain amount of time, you receive a paper copy and then you receive a reminder. The cost is approximately \$17,000 for a basic survey and when you add community specific questions it would be around \$25,000.

**OnPointe/City Point of View.** The average survey is 7 to 8 minutes long with 2 minutes of optional questions. The average response rate is 10% with 60% by phone and 40% by a computer. The cost is \$15,000 or \$9,700 with a three-year contract.

**CivicLab.** The surveys are built by staff with the assistance of the software company. They have an online landing space and can run multiple projects at once. The cost is \$8,000 to \$10,000 per year for the software.

Mrs. McElfresh asked how these compare with the University of Cincinnati. Mrs. Patterson replied they are \$8,000 to \$10,000 with a mailing and a website option. They are less expensive on the data entry.



Mrs. Patterson explained a long-term engagement is recommended as a survey would be every three years and we are benchmarking against ourselves and spreading it across the departments. CivicLab would give the City the most flexibility.

For the park-specific survey we would be working with a local printing company to determine how quickly we can move. Mrs. Patterson asked Council if they would like to reach every household or use a statistical sample. We are leaning towards every household should have an opportunity.

Mayor Funk would like to see every resident receive a postcard. Mrs. Patterson advised staff would have to determine the cost for mailing and the data entry. We also need a way to go back to people if they have not responded.

It was the consensus of Council for staff to continue to finalize additional information with CivicLab and the separate mailing of postcards for a quicker response on the park survey.

Chief Buchanan addressed Council about Butler Tech's request for a School Resource Officer and his staffing update. Currently there are two School Resource Officers. One assigned to the Monroe Local School District full-time and one assigned the majority of time at the Monroe Local School District and a certain number of hours each week at the Butler Tech Natural Science Center. Butler Tech has increased the size of their campus and requested a full-time School Resource Officer. The challenge is staffing has not increased to account for the School Resource Officers. Chief Buchanan noted they are currently performing a staffing study.

Currently, Chief Buchanan reported that there are 36 sworn officers, which includes himself and other administrative staff. There are 3 sergeants and 18 patrol officers covering 3 shifts. This is three less than the last staffing study reflected. Chief Buchanan is requesting that Council authorize the number of sworn officers from 36 to 39. During most of July the department was down to three officers per shift and with a city of our size that is not safe. The City is going through a hiring process right now and we are not seeing the number of candidates that we used to see. In this current process there are 25 candidates between lateral entry and entry position.

- **Executive Session** – Reviewing negotiations with public employees concerning their compensation or other terms and conditions of their employment.

Mrs. McElfresh moved to adjourn into executive session to review negotiations with public employees concerning their compensation or other terms and conditions of their employment; seconded by Mr. Wagner. Roll call vote: six ayes. Motion carried.

Council adjourned into executive session at 7:57 p.m.

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

Council reconvened into regular session at 9:02 p.m.



***Adjournment***

Mrs. McElfresh moved to adjourn; seconded by Mr. Bellapianta. Voice vote. Motion carried.

The regular meeting of Council adjourned at 9:02 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Angela S. Wasson, MMC  
Clerk of Council