

ORDINANCE NO. 2023-12

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING ALL ACTIONS NECESSARY TO AFFECT A GOVERNMENTAL NATURAL GAS AGGREGATION PROGRAM WITH OPT-OUT PROVISIONS PURSUANT TO SECTION 4929.26 OF THE OHIO REVISED CODE AND DIRECTING THE BUTLER AND WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS TO SUBMIT A BALLOT QUESTION TO THE ELECTORS.

WHEREAS, the Ohio legislature has enacted natural gas deregulation legislation which authorizes the legislative authorities of the cities and villages to aggregate the retail natural gas loads located within the respective jurisdictions and to enter into service agreements to facilitate for those loads the purchase and sale of natural gas; and

WHEREAS, governmental aggregation provides an opportunity for residential and small business consumers to participate collectively in the potential benefits of natural gas deregulation through lower natural gas rates which would not otherwise be available to those natural gas customers individually; and

WHEREAS, the City of Monroe seeks to establish a governmental aggregation program with opt-out provisions pursuant to Section 4929.26 of the Ohio Revised Code for the residents, businesses and other natural gas consumers in the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MONROE, STATE OF OHIO, THAT:

SECTION 1: The City Council of Monroe has concluded that it is in the best interest of the City, its residents and businesses located within the corporate limits of the City to establish this aggregation program in the City.

SECTION 2: The aggregation program must be approved by the electors of the City pursuant to Section 3 of this Ordinance. Upon approval by the electorate the City is hereby authorized to automatically aggregate in accord with Section 4929.26 of the Ohio Revised Code, the retail natural gas loads (customers) located within the City, and enter into service agreements to facilitate for those loads the purchase and sale of natural gas. The City may exercise such authority jointly with any other municipal corporation, township, or county or other political subdivision of the State of Ohio.

SECTION 3: The Board of Elections of Butler County and Warren County are hereby directed to submit the following question to the electors at the general election on November 7, 2023:

Shall the City Council of Monroe have the authority to aggregate the retail natural gas customers located in the City, and for that purpose, enter into services agreements to facilitate for those customers the sale and purchase of natural gas, conversion to the aggregation program will occur automatically unless the customers choose to opt out of the program.

The Clerk of Council of the City of Monroe is instructed to immediately file a certified copy of this ordinance and the proposed form of the ballot question with the Butler County Board of Elections not less than ninety days prior to the general election. The aggregation program shall not take effect unless approved by a majority of the electors voting upon this ordinance and the aggregation program provided for herein at the election held pursuant to Section 2 of this ordinance and Section 4929.26 of the Ohio Revised Code.

SECTION 4: Upon approval of a majority of the electors voting at the general election provided for in Section 3 of this ordinance, the City Council of Monroe, individually or jointly with any other political subdivision, may develop a plan of operation for the aggregation program. Before adopting this plan, the City Council of Monroe shall hold at least two public hearings on the plan.

Notice of the hearings shall be published once a week for two consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the City prior to the first hearing. This notice will summarize the plan and state the date, time, and place of each hearing. No plan adopted by this City Council shall aggregate the natural gas load of any natural gas load center within the City unless it, in advance, clearly discloses to the person owning, occupying, controlling or using the load center that the person will be enrolled automatically in the Aggregation Program and will remain so enrolled unless the person affirmatively elects, by a stated procedure, not to be enrolled. The disclosure shall state prominently the rates, charges, and other terms and conditions of enrollment. The stated procedure shall allow any person enrolled in the Aggregation Program the opportunity to opt-out of the program at least once every two years without paying a switching fee. Any person that opts out of the Aggregation Program pursuant to the state procedure shall default to the standard service offer provided under division (a) of Section 4929.26 of the Ohio Revised Code until the person chooses an alternative supplier.


SECTION 5: It is found and determined that all formal actions of this City Council of Monroe concerning and relating to the passage of this ordinance were adopted in an open meeting of this City Council of Monroe and that the deliberations of this City Council of Monroe and any of its committees that resulted in such formal actions were in meetings open to the public in compliance with the law.

SECTION 6: This measure shall take effect and be in full force from and after the earliest period allowed by law.

PASSED: June 27, 2023

ATTEST:

APPROVED:


Clerk of Council


Mayor

First Reading: June 13, 2023

This legislation was enacted in an open meeting pursuant to the terms and provisions of the Sunshine Law, Section 121.22 of the Ohio Revised Code.