

On Tuesday, September 9, 2025, at 6:00 PM, Mayor Joseph Galea opened the Council meeting with a word of prayer. The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited by those present.

The regular meeting for the Council of the Village of Monroeville was then called to order.

Present at roll call:

Chris Raftery	and	Joseph Galea, Mayor
Mark Miller		Tom Gray, Village Administrator
Sue Rogers		Eunice Collene, Fiscal Officer
Tammy Schlachter		Jim Barney, Solicitor
Bob Whitacre		Chief Jon Earl, MPD
Sam Wiley		

Also attending: Jim Ehrman and Tom Vitaz.

The August 2025 financial reports, bank statements, balance sheets, check reports, and bank reconciliations were previously distributed to the Council via e-mail.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Mayor asked for Council's approval of the agenda. Sam Wiley made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to approve the agenda. Motion carried with no discussion.

DISPOSITION OF MINUTES

The Mayor asked Council for a motion to approve the minutes from the Regular Council meeting on 8/12/25. Sue Rogers made that motion, seconded by Sam Wiley. Motion carried with no discussion.

APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS

The Mayor asked Council for a motion to approve the August 2025 financial reports. Chris Raftery made that motion, seconded by Mark Miller. Motion carried with no discussion.

APPROVAL OF THE MONTHLY CREDIT CARD REPORT

The Mayor asked Council for a motion to approve the August 2025 credit card report. Chris Raftery made that motion, seconded by Sue Rogers. Motion carried with no further discussion.

OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL

Mr. Ehrman expressed his gratitude to the Council, the Administration, and all others involved for the installation of the children at play signs in the North Street/Eagle View area. Mr. Ehrman inquired about the flashing school signs when exiting Broad Street. Upon turning right from Broad Street onto State Route 20, the school traffic sign is positioned on the opposite side, making it impossible to determine if the sign is flashing before ascending the hill on State Route 20. The Chief indicated that if a driver is unable to see the sign, the MPD does not enforce the school zone at that moment, as the driver has not been made aware of the school zone. Mr. Ehrman also requested an update on the ongoing water outlet issues between the residents of Eagle View and the owner of a business located on Sandusky Street. The Mayor responded that he would provide information later in the meeting.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Administrator – Tom presented his report that had been previously submitted to Council. Tom noted that the reservoir was approximately down 10 inches last week. Since that time, the Village has successfully pumped over a million gallons daily, resulting in the reservoir now being down by about 4 inches. We anticipate reaching full capacity by the weekend. The water quality remains excellent, and we are ahead of schedule. The sidewalk contouring at 5, 7, and 9 South Main Street has been finalized. This is the best condition it will be in for the time being. The Village has arranged for Makeever & Associates to visit on Thursday. Tom and R.A. Bores will dedicate a significant amount of time to them, examining both sides of the street to discuss potential plans verbally, which will subsequently be transformed into a quote for next year's budget. The Village aims to secure reliable engineering estimates in the budget, enabling us to proceed with a comprehensive design for both sides of the street. This initiative will positively benefit the Village. Tom then presented the proposed downtown mural to the Mayor. He mentioned that he had met with Jason Ott and Tyler Wasserman from Janotta & Herner, and a site walk was conducted earlier today. The plans for the mural are progressing swiftly. Janotta & Herner are designing the frame, which will be submitted to the Village. Once completed, the mural can be mounted and erected within the next 30 to 40 days. Mark inquired whether the mural would still be positioned on the side of the building owned by David Luna, which overlooks the downtown parking lot owned by the Village. Tom responded that there has been a modification, and the mural will now be freestanding. It was decided to avoid impacting the side of David Luna's building due

to its historical significance. The mural will be freestanding and will not resemble a highway sign. It will be situated within that block, maintaining the appropriate height above ground, and will be positioned adjacent to the building housing Mini Main Street. Tammy inquired with Tom regarding the status of the downtown parking lot, which includes the application of the final coat, the marking of lines, and the installation of lighting, among other tasks. Tom responded that the Village is aiming to complete that work within this year. Eunice asked Tom if he could provide a value for the mural to be included in the Village insurance once all is finalized. Tom mentioned that during his conversation with Tyler today, he would determine the value once he receives the signed agreement back from the Village. Bob questioned whether the Village would bear the cost of maintenance, to which Tom affirmed. He also noted that the mural's durability is expected to be satisfactory. Furthermore, Tom stated that Jason Ott informed him that a slotted support channel will be incorporated into the frame to mitigate water retention.

Sue asked Tom if there had been any movement with the gas station. Tom said he spoke with the owner yesterday, and he will be coming to town within the next two weeks.

Sam mentioned that he has received a variety of feedback regarding Monroe Street, and it seems that the topcoat applied is effective. Tom indicated that the Village will persist in its maintenance efforts, and further fill-in is required. An ODOT mill and fill is anticipated, potentially occurring in 2026-2027.

The Mayor asked Council for a motion to execute the agreement between Tyler & Jessica Wasserman, and the Village of Monroeville, allowing the Village to accept the donation of the mural and to sign and date the agreement. Sam Wiley made that motion, seconded by Sue Rogers. Motion carried with no discussion.

Fiscal Officer - Eunice presented her report that had been previously submitted to Council. Eunice explained that her office has encountered some challenges with this year's budget. She and her team are diligently working on the budget and identifying any issues that require attention. As they approach the 2026 budget, the primary goal will be to minimize the number of amendments and supplements compared to previous years. Eunice has convened the department heads to discuss inquiries, and they are facing a shortage of funds for their respective departments. This year, the budget did not allocate sufficient funds to cover wages in certain departments, along with other expenses. Eunice indicated that a special Council meeting will need to be convened before the end of the month to address legislative matters concerning the budget. Eunice is approximately halfway through the budget process and will continue to expedite her work. However, the Village is currently undergoing its annual state audit, which is quite time-consuming. When Eunice issues the notice for the special Council meeting, she will aim to provide more details for Council. Eunice mentioned that if anyone has questions, her door is always open. Both the financial team and the technology team have been present for the audit. Eunice believes the technology team has completed their work, with Jim Fairbanks leading the technology audit. A team of about four additional auditors has been conducting the financial audit, and Eunice anticipates they may conclude in approximately two weeks.

Eunice is considering making changes with the Village's certificates of deposits (CDs). There is a CD with over \$500,000 in funds, yet it yields only 0.47%, which is quite low. All CDs are being reviewed to determine if breaking them and investing the funds elsewhere would yield a better return on investment. Bob inquired about investing in Star Ohio. Eunice clarified that a significant portion of the investment portfolio is already invested in Star Ohio. Offerings from other financial institutions are being reviewed to include increased liquidity through CDs, with quarterly renewals to ensure access to funds if necessary. The Mayor inquired whether Croghan Colonial Bank would be open to discussing alternatives and asked about the remaining duration on the large CD that Eunice previously referenced. Eunice indicated that this CD is set to mature in February 2026. She has had discussions with Croghan, and they concurred that it would be prudent to break the CD. There have been multiple conversations with Croghan, expressing various concerns. Eunice questioned Croghan on who made the decision to opt for the lower rate during the rollover of the large CD at 0.47% and was informed that it was a decision made by the higher management at Croghan. The Mayor suggested that perhaps a discussion could take place, allowing Croghan to determine whether they wish to retain the Village's business. It appears that Fifth Third offers building a more diverse investment portfolio and competitive rates, and the response from Croghan regarding the rationale for the CD being rolled over at a lower interest rate was unsatisfactory. Bob remarked that he believed we had already investigated this matter some time ago. The Mayor recalled the previous fiscal officer had successfully rolled over several CDs simultaneously without incurring penalties and had invested the additional funds in Star Ohio. Eunice recounted that previously, a CD was cashed in prior to the maturity date. Eunice also mentioned that Croghan provided her with the forfeiture amounts for the CDs, which vary. Bob expressed his gratitude to Eunice for her efforts in investigating this matter.

Eunice said she has filed an attempt to get some unclaimed funds back to the Village from the State of Ohio.

The Ohio Auditor of State has issued Bulletin 2025-007, and by the conclusion of this month, the Village must implement a new cybersecurity policy. Eunice mentioned that if any Council members have yet to finalize their questionnaire for the auditor, they are welcome to reach out to Eunice, who can print the documents and/or arrange for them to be scanned and sent to the auditor.

Eunice has provided the Council and the Mayor with a packet regarding the software she is currently considering for acquisition. We are inclined to proceed with SSI (Software Solutions Incorporated), and the software in question is named VIP (Visual Intelligence Portfolio). The packet contains details about the funds and accounts designated for the associated costs. Eunice wishes to emphasize that this encompasses all three software applications, specifically for finance, payroll, and utilities. It is compatible with our meter reading system. Utilizing this system will enable us to furnish significantly more information to the department heads. It will also result in savings in time, paper, and labor. The financial reports generated will be more comprehensible. Currently, there are certain reports required for auditing that cannot be generated with the software we presently possess.

The documentation provided by Eunice indicates that the yearly fee for the new software is set at \$44,400, while the one-time cost amounts to \$55,100. Upon signing, the Village is required to remit 10% of the total, followed by a payment of 60% when the sandbox is made available. The sandbox functions as a testing environment for the software, allowing users to practice, generate reports, and conduct tests without affecting the live interface. This feature will greatly benefit both the Administrative Staff and department heads. Employees will have the ability to log in to access their payroll details, including W-2 forms, pay stubs, and more. Additionally, employees will be able to submit leave requests electronically, regardless of whether they are on duty. This enhancement will also simplify the annual audit process, as auditors will be granted restricted access to pull reports and other necessary information. Eunice expressed her intention to add this topic to the agenda for the special meeting scheduled for later this month. SSI has provided references from several other municipalities that utilize the software. Eunice has reached out to these municipalities, and they have extended an invitation for her and her staff to visit their locations to observe and learn more about the software. Mark inquired whether Eunice had experience with this software in her previous job, to which she affirmed. The Mayor questioned whether we are currently incurring any annual fees with CMI. Eunice confirmed this, noting that we paid a significantly high fee to them in 2023, approximately \$150,000. Thus far this year, we have already disbursed around \$10,000 to them. Our payments to them appear to have varied significantly. Bob inquired about the duration of our relationship with CMI. Eunice mentioned that she is uncertain, but she believes it has been an extensive period. Mark questioned whether this new software is more efficient, to which Eunice affirmed. This software will offer many more features than what we presently utilize with CMI. During our demonstrations with VIP, employees will even have access to a payroll calendar to check who is scheduled off, and they are exploring a Village calendar that all employees can access. The Administrative Staff was highly impressed with the presentation provided by SSI. They are compatible with our server, GovPay, and other systems. Once we give the green light, we anticipate a timeline of 9-15 months before the go-live date. Bob asked if there are funds available in the budget for this initiative. Eunice indicated that there is cash not currently allocated in the budget, necessitating an appropriation of funds. At first glance, cash appears to be available in the amended certificates. The Mayor expressed gratitude to Eunice for her efforts in coordinating all of this.

Police - Chief presented his report, which had been previously submitted to the Council. Overall, there has been an increase in activity compared to August 2024. One of Chief's objectives is to continue addressing speeding complaints within the Village. Officers have been more active with the commencement of the school year. Chief and his team have been considering a few upgrades. They are participating in the OA (Office of Accountability) quality assurance program, for which the Police Department was randomly selected, and they are scheduled for tomorrow for the CJIS (Criminal Justice Information Services) review. This will ensure that the Police Department remains current with OLEG (Ohio Law Enforcement Gateway). Consequently, Chief will be able to run licenses, check criminal histories, retrieve photos, and more. In recent investigations, Chief discovered that there is no secondary review process for the reports recorded by MPD officers. Chief has now established a system where every incoming report is reviewed by either the Chief or Lt. Kimball for approval or rejection, and they also assess the quality and accuracy of the reports. If any discrepancies are found, the officers are required to amend the report. This process is also in line with the racial bias report that the state will soon mandate. Chief has incorporated this into the PD's policy, which simply requires the reporting of a driver's race during each traffic stop. Chief has observed that many traffic stops from previous years lacked proper documentation. This requirement will now be enforced by the state.

Since the beginning of the school year, Chief has been monitoring school zones and has utilized the dragon camera, which had seen limited use previously. In less than two hours, he issued 26 citations. Chief is considering adjusting the schedules of his officers to increase the number of citations issued during school zone hours to better enforce the speed limit. It is astonishing how fast vehicles are traveling in these zones, particularly with children frequently crossing between the school and nearby establishments like Dollar General or Subway. Chief is surprised that no accidents have occurred thus far. Numerous flashing lights and speed limit signs are being ignored by drivers. Chief believes his officers must be present during these times. Sam mentioned that several individuals have commented on their inability to read the text on the speed limit and school zone signs on Broad Street. Chief stated that he has addressed this concern with Tom. Many drivers had previously complained that the old signs did not display the times, and now they are expressing dissatisfaction with the readability of the new signs. Chief reached out to ODOT to discuss the possibility of coordinating with the public and Catholic schools to standardize the times, but unfortunately, this is not feasible.

Solicitor – Jim Barney had no information to report.

Mayor - The Mayor announced that he has an update concerning Mr. Ehrman's inquiry regarding the business on Sandusky Street and the Eagle View development. Progress is being made, although the engineering complexities may require time. For example, the configuration of the storm drains does not facilitate a solution for the Route 20 storm lines. This necessitates considerable deliberation on how to tackle this issue. The property owner on Sandusky Street has consulted with engineering firms to obtain quotes for the studies that will be essential. The Mayor spoke with Tom, emphasizing that engineering studies are required to meet the stormwater EPA regulations. There is a financial implication associated with this, which is expected to be significant. No discussions have taken place regarding who will bear the costs, and there has not been any formal request made to the Village. The property owner is addressing this matter, and the expenses for the engineering will indeed be considerable. Bridging this financial gap will be the subsequent step. However, no decision has yet been reached regarding the next course of action.

The Mayor indicated that Council members likely received an email regarding the Firelands EMS District, which is located in New London. He mentioned that Tom will be present at the meeting, and it is at the discretion of the Council members whether they choose to attend as well. The Mayor will not be able to attend. Additionally, there is a meeting scheduled for 9/25/25 at the Huron County Administration Building to discuss the establishment of an ambulance district. This topic was also recently covered in a newspaper article. Efforts are being made to identify a method to mitigate the costs associated with EMS, as Fisher-Titus was unable to absorb the financial shortfall from North Central EMS. The EMS service based in New London cannot be maintained unless the townships participate. Both the Mayor and Tom plan to attend the meeting on 9/25/25. Although a discussion occurred, no notable conclusions were reached.

BOARD AND COMMISSION REPORTS

HRJFD

Huron River Joint Fire District convened on September 3rd: Bob reported that there were ten calls in August, two of which took place within the Village. The roof of the HRJFD building is being worked on. They have two tax levies on the ballot this fall that are for renewal, not increase.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS FOR PASSAGE

The Mayor asked for a motion to suspend the rules for the following legislation. Sam Wiley made that motion, seconded by Chris Raftery. Motion carried with no discussion.

Ordinance 2025-16 *An Ordinance amending or supplementing certain funds for appropriations, Ordinance no 2025-05, and declaring an emergency* was presented for passage. Eunice went over the sections of the Ordinance. Section one pertains to the Star Ohio interest, which is received into the General Fund and subsequently allocated to the funds for streets, sidewalks, and parking lots. We have received more interest than anticipated in our budget, necessitating an increase in those revenues to facilitate the transfer of interest into these funds. Sections two and three address county funds and auditor fees, which are required for the payment of fees on taxes collected by the auditor. Section four concerns civil matters managed by the Village solicitor. Section five is essentially similar, but it pertains to income tax cases overseen by the solicitor. Section six addresses the costs incurred due to the recent storms that impacted the Electric Department, as well as the GOAB switch at the Firelands Federal Credit Union location, where damage was sustained. This allocation will enable the Electric Department to conduct repairs and provide them with the necessary funds to maintain operations through the end of the year. Section seven is designated for a screen for the leaf-vac. Sean Crosby will perform the work

internally, but the necessary part must be purchased. The Street Department successfully returned an unused guardrail, and the funds from this return were applied toward covering most of the expense for the leaf-vac screen. Without the screen during the operation of the leaf-vac, leaves would simply be expelled from the opposite side. Section eight addresses medical, dental, and vision prescription costs for an employee who experienced a change in coverage. Sam Wiley made a motion, seconded by Bob Whitacre, to pass Ordinance 2025-16 by title only. Motion carried with no further discussion.

APPROVAL OF BILL SUMMARY

The Mayor asked Council for a motion to approve the bill summary. Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Sue Rogers, to approve the bill summary as presented, which included memo expenses and check # 047180 to check # 047254, for a total of \$1,070,595.24. Motion carried with no discussion.

COUNCIL BUSINESS

Chris Raftery made a motion that all Village employees be given Friday, November 28th, 2025, as a paid day off, which is the day after Thanksgiving, seconded by Sam Wiley. Discussion. It will be a paid day off, not a paid holiday. The Chief asked if the employees who are required to work get paid holiday, and Chris confirmed. Eunice asked if Chief's staff could just take the day off at a different time, and Chief said he doesn't think they can do that. Motion carried with no further discussion.

Sam inquired whether a meeting for the Handbook Committee or a Finance meeting should be arranged. Eunice responded that it can be done if necessary. The Mayor questioned the necessity for the Handbook Committee to convene, and it was concluded that there is no need at this moment. The Mayor expressed that he does not perceive a requirement for the Finance Committee to meet at this time, although it may be considered towards the end of the year. Eunice sought clarification regarding a Finance meeting, indicating uncertainty about whether these meetings involve only the Finance Committee or the entire Council. Upon completion of the audit, they will inquire if Council desires an exit meeting, leaving her uncertain about how Council wishes to proceed—whether it should involve solely the Finance Committee members or the entire Council. The Mayor believes it would be beneficial for the Finance Committee to commence quarterly meetings. Eunice questioned whether Council or just the Finance Committee convenes when discussions regarding the budget begin. The Mayor indicated that typically, it is Council that meets, particularly during work sessions. Furthermore, it is common for all Council members to attend Finance Committee meetings as well.

It was determined that a special Council meeting will take place on Tuesday, 9/23/25 at 6:00 p.m. for budgetary discussions and to address new software.

Bob asked if there was any update on the Industrial Park. Tom said not at this time.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business to come before them, the Mayor asked Council for a motion to adjourn. Sam Wiley made that motion, seconded by Sue Rogers.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 pm.

Eunice A. Collene, Fiscal Officer

Joseph Galea, Mayor

The minutes of this meeting were recorded by Administrative Specialist Heather Alicea. Fiscal Officer Eunice Collene examined them for both form and content, subsequently approving them as transcribed.

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