

On Tuesday, March 10, 2026, 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 Schachter		Gabby Toscano, Solicitor
Bob Whitacre		Chief Jon Earl, MPD
Jim Ehrman		

Also attending: Diana Nicholl; David Luna; Kevin Rasnick; Tom & Tammy Vitaz; Alex Homan; Ashton Homan; Sam Wiley; Andrew Brown; Josh Braucher; and Will Grosswiler.

The February 2026 financial reports, bank statements, balance sheets, check reports, and bank reconciliations were previously distributed to Council via e-mail.

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

The mayor asked for Council's approval of the agenda. Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Chris Raftery, 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 February 10, 2026, and the Special Council meeting on February 24, 2026. Tammy Schlachter made that motion, seconded by Bob Whitacre. Motion carried with no discussion.

#### **APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REPORTS**

The mayor asked Council for a motion to approve the February 2026 financial reports. Chris Raftery made that motion, seconded by Sue Rogers. Motion carried with no discussion.

#### **APPROVAL OF THE MONTHLY CREDIT CARD REPORT**

The mayor asked Council for a motion to approve the February 2026 credit card report. Chris Raftery made that motion, seconded by Bob Whitacre. Motion carried with no further discussion.

#### **OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS TO ADDRESS COUNCIL**

Kevin Rasnick introduced himself as an independent candidate for the Huron County Commissioner position. Originally from Monroeville, Kevin has prior experience serving on Council. He looks to engage with local communities to gather information on what matters most to them at the county level.

Jozlyn Heckel was scheduled to attend the meeting regarding food truck permit fees, but she did not appear.

Andrew Brown, the owner of properties located at 5, 7, and 9 S Main Street, addressed the issue of downtown sidewalks. During the Council meeting held last month, Andrew inquired about the current status of improvements to the downtown sidewalks. Afterwards, he submitted a public records request for all quotes, estimates, and plans related to sidewalk repairs on S Main Street, as well as any documentation or communications with the state regarding their involvement, and any grant applications that had been filed for the project. Andrew stated the records were concerning regarding the lack of progress over the past five years. Andrew discovered a quote from Poggemeyer Design Group, dated 2021, which was for the design and coordination of the project solely on the west side of S Main Street. There was a second quote from R.A. Bores, dated March 2025, for the repair of sidewalks on both sides of the street near the unfinished parking lot. A third quote was provided by Makeever and Associates, dated October 2025. None of the quotes contained signatures. Andrew did not receive any evidence of communication with the state, apart from a statement indicating that "communication halted the sidewalk project in 2025." This piece of communication was not documented in writing but was communicated verbally over the phone with Village Administrator Tom Gray and an ADA coordinator in Columbus. The call itself was not recorded. In an effort to gather more information, Andrew reached out to his sister-in-law, who had previously served as Deputy Chief Legal Counsel at ODOT. She helped him file a public records request with the Public Information Officer and the Senior Legal Counsel for District 3 at ODOT, who oversees ADA compliance. Andrew requested any correspondence with the village of Monroeville concerning the stopping of the sidewalk project. He received a reply from ODOT this morning. There was no record of any communication with the village of

Monroeville. Andrew also reviewed Council minutes from January 2023 to the present. There is no mention of the sidewalk project during 2023 or 2024. The sidewalk project discussion in 2025 did not progress much. A Finance Committee meeting took place on March 19, 2025, during which a quote from R.A. Bores was addressed. In those minutes, former Fiscal Officer Bonnie Beck indicated that the village was obligated to secure three quotes for any project. However, no motions were proposed, and no progress was made. Andrew feels he has received conflicting information regarding coal chutes, ODOT, finances, and so forth, and he believes the village is concentrating on issues rather than solutions. Andrew is aware that this is an expensive project, but an OPWC grant has been mentioned. Andrew inquired if anyone was aware of the grant amount. The mayor referred to Tom. Tom stated that there is no limit; however, a grant match will be necessary. Andrew asked if any other grants are currently being explored. The mayor mentioned that he and Tom had previously discussed the capital projects budget, but it is not something the village can take advantage of at this time. The mayor said a community health grant was available; however, the village was ineligible due to the sidewalk being made of hard concrete. The mayor inquired with Tom about the availability of other grants. Tom responded that the grant cycle for ODOT has not yet commenced, but that he would keep monitoring the situation. Andrew noted that the records he received mention a fund for downtown sidewalk renovations. He inquired when this fund was established and the amount of taxpayer money allocated to it. Eunice clarified that the sidewalk fund was created prior to her coming on staff and that the fund is a Star Ohio investment, which amounts to just over \$60,000. This fund was intended for both downtown and residential sidewalks. The mayor indicated that the fund was established within the last 18 months, and Eunice said she will obtain the specific date for Andrew. Andrew referenced previous meeting minutes where Tom had indicated a pursuit of grant funding from ODOT, and he asked Tom if this was the same grant cycle being discussed tonight, to which Tom confirmed. Andrew then questioned Council about whether they had explored any community resources for funding or reached out to Sarah Ross at the Huron County Growth Partnership for assistance in securing funding. Additionally, the village could reach out to Sydney Raifsnider, the CHC Grant Coordinator at Huron County Public Health. In October, an email was received from Sidney that included several members of the village administration. Within that email, Sydney mentioned various grants from AARP, America Walks, Community Foundation Locator, T-Mobile Hometown Grants, and Safe Routes to School. Andrew inquired whether the village had explored any of these options. The mayor acknowledged that discussions had taken place with Sarah Ross, but could not recall the specifics and referred the matter to Tom. Andrew stated that in his public records request, he requested evidence of any communication on grants, but did not receive any documentation. Tom clarified that there are no written records available, as the communication was verbal. Andrew asked if the village had considered hiring a grant writer, similar to other municipalities. Andrew noted that Tom has raised concerns regarding the coal chutes located beneath the sidewalks. Andrew said it's his belief that the village should seek additional quotes for the sidewalk project. Given that the project may be more complicated on the west side of the street due to the coal chutes, Andrew wondered why the village would not seek additional quotes. Andrew said that if he is responsible for covering the costs of the four feet of sidewalk in front of his building, he is reluctant to accept the first quote and inquired why the village is only pursuing a single quote for these projects. Minutes from previous Finance Committee meetings reveal that Tom mentioned the coal chutes beneath the sidewalk in front of the Monroeville Model Railroad Group (MMRG) have been filled. However, Andrew spoke with Andy Betchsman at MMRG, who informed him that the coal chutes remain unfilled. Additionally, records indicate that during the same meeting, Tom noted that material had been pushed under the old sidewalk. Andrew said he is concerned about this issue and whether proper water drainage is being maintained away from his building. He also questioned if this situation could lead to problems with the sidewalk above, and he feels it needs investigation. Andrew said ODOT should assist in reviewing these concerns, especially if they are the ones delaying the project. Andrew inquired about the scheduling of Sidewalk Committee meetings, to which Chris responded that a meeting could be scheduled. Andrew said it has been five years since the initial quote was received, and he will continue attending meetings and asking questions until progress is made.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS**

**Administrator** – Tom presented his report that had been previously submitted to Council. He requested Council's approval to enter into a contract with Makeever & Associates for the amount of \$27,650, providing engineering and surveying services for the development of construction site plans related to the proposed Downtown Sidewalk Improvement Project, covering both the east and west sides of S Main Street. The mayor requested that Tom elaborate on the project's scope. Tom explained that the team would manage the project from its inception to completion, including the creation of design documents that would comply with ADA standards for the curb and access to the walkways. They intend to drill core samples on each side of the street to determine the potential cavity structure beneath the surface. A full set of plans will be prepared and presented before the bidding process, resulting in a project cost estimate. The village will utilize the engineer's estimate to review the available funds necessary for the project, aiming for a timeline of 2026-2027. There is no construction involved at all with this quote. The

earlier quotes included a design-build element that did not meet the required standards. The mayor asked whether the threshold for bidding is set at \$75,000. Gabby confirmed. The mayor explained that while the village can obtain additional quotes for the engineering process, he believes the issues raised by Andrew Brown earlier pertained to securing three quotes for the construction phase. The mayor stated that it is up to Council to decide if they wish to obtain three quotes for the engineering stage. Mark said that it has been five years since the initial engineering quote, which is why the public is upset with how long this has taken. The mayor requested Gabby's input. Gabby mentioned the ORC permits villages to enact legislation that holds property owners accountable for their share of the sidewalk, which also introduces liability concerns. There was discussion, but nothing significant to report. Mark said that it does not reflect well when the village requires homeowners to repair the sections of sidewalk in front of their homes, while Council is not addressing the downtown sidewalks. Bob asked whether Makeever's quote includes the review of the coal chutes beneath the sidewalk. Tom confirmed that the quote includes a complete design package and a full review of the relevant areas.

**Fiscal Officer** – Eunice presented her report that had been previously submitted to Council. Ashley Hankins will be returning from maternity leave on Monday, April 13, 2026.

**Police** – Chief presented his report that had been previously submitted to Council. Overall activity was down in February, mainly due to cold weather conditions and reduced traffic. There has been an increase in school zone violations compared to the same period last year. Chief is happy with the police presence at the red-light intersection of Route 20 and Monroe Street, noting that it has led to a decrease in GATSO citations issued for that area. The FLOCK camera recently identified a stolen vehicle, resulting in the suspect's arrest by another municipality outside Monroeville. Kelley Foor started her Field Training Officer (FTO) program last week and has completed three ride-alongs, all of which received positive feedback. Kelley has expressed interest in bringing in her K-9 unit, although this matter still requires further discussion. Recently, there was an incident at Amcor involving a former employee who caused damage to the facility and disabled machinery. Officer Meyer responded quickly and made an arrest.

The Chief distributed a handout concerning a School Resource Officer (SRO). His presence has been requested at this month's school board meeting to outline his proposal for an SRO. This arrangement is still tentative, with a 50/50 funding split between the school and the village. It includes a community donation of \$10,000 annually to the village, which results in a total cost lower than what the school would typically pay. This will coincide with the cruiser that the Police Department has ordered. The village would cover the costs for uniforms and training. Bob inquired about the responsibilities of an SRO during the summer months. The Chief clarified that the officer would be reassigned to the village, which accounts for 25% of their time in the village. The officer will cover various shifts, including vacation coverage and swing shifts. Additionally, the Chief plans to have them participate in Hooked-On-Fishing and other community events. The Chief said that during the summer months, he would like to assign the officer to an overlapping shift to manage high traffic periods. From August through May, they will be assigned to the school. An SRO will not respond to emergency calls that would divert them from the school, nor will they serve as the sole officer in the village during their shift at the school. Attendees discussed the possibility of pursuing alternative funding. Will Grosswiler asked if the county commissioners were approached about assisting with the funding. The mayor will reach out to them but suspects they will not since they have the sheriff's department in other schools that they fund. No other significant points were raised. The Chief has also communicated with the St. Joseph School District, which has shown interest in having an SRO. Sue inquired whether the annual donation of \$10,000 would extend beyond the first year. The Chief confirmed that he has secured a three-year commitment of \$10,000 per year, totaling \$30,000.

**Solicitor** – Gabby Toscano attended on behalf of Jim Barney, and she had no information to report.

**Mayor** – The mayor advised that Elisa Brown is now on the Planning Commission. The mayor has received a letter of interest from someone who is interested in serving on the Board of Zoning Appeals.

## **BOARD AND COMMISSION REPORTS**

### **HRJFD**

Huron River Joint Fire District convened on Wednesday, March 4, 2026: Bob reported that there were thirteen calls in February, six of which were in Peru Township. There is one payment left on the pumper, which was purchased five years ago.

## **ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS FOR PASSAGE**

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

**Resolution 2026-02** *A Resolution revise the previous Resolution 2026-01 imposing a temporary moratorium on the establishment, conversion of other structures or buildings into a data center or crypto currency mining centers, including the development and construction of any building, structure, use or change of use that would allow data centers or crypto currency mining centers for a period of twelve (12) months from the effective date of this Resolution in order to allow the village Administration and village Council time to review applicable federal codes, Ohio statutes, codes and regulations along with the village's codified Ordinances relative to such activity, and declaring an emergency was presented for adoption. The Mayor clarified that this Resolution is being introduced to amend the prior Resolution and to incorporate specific language to ensure that crypto mining is included, as certain Council members had voiced concerns regarding the wording. Chris Raftery made a motion, seconded by Jim Ehrman, to adopt Resolution 2026-02 by title only. Motion carried with no further discussion.*

**Resolution 2026-03** *A Resolution authorizing the Fiscal Officer to advertise and receive bids for the Hamilton Street Improvements Project in the village of Monroeville, Huron County, Ohio, and declaring an emergency was presented for adoption. Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Tammy Schlachter, to adopt Resolution 2026-03 by title only. The mayor requested that Tom present an overview. Tom clarified that, should legislation be passed, the village would initiate the bidding process and return to Council for approval at the regular Council meeting in April. Upon approval, construction can commence. Chris inquired about the source of funding for this project. Eunice informed that she would provide Chris with this information. Motion carried with no further discussion.*

#### **APPROVAL OF BILL SUMMARY**

The mayor asked Council for a motion to approve the February 2026 bill summary. Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Tammy Schlachter, to approve the bill summary as presented, which included memo expenses and check #047534 to check #047604, for a total of \$712,593.57. Motion carried with no discussion.

#### **COUNCIL BUSINESS**

The mayor clarified that there is currently no ordinance in place concerning stray cats. Over the past twelve months, the police department has received numerous complaints regarding this matter. It may be necessary to establish a committee to figure out an effective course of action. Chris said she is in agreement with forming a committee in order to create an ordinance. The Chief reminded Council of the importance of addressing the issue with the individuals involved. His plan would involve informing these individuals about the complaints he receives related to this matter. The individuals accused of violating the situation would be contacted and offered a solution to resolve the issue. If the problem continues, citations may be issued. The persistent concern involves property owners whose properties are being damaged by stray cats, which are being fed by others, and these property owners are looking for help. Chief has encouraged them to attend Council meetings in order to make Council aware of their concerns, since there is no Ordinance pertaining to the issue. Tammy Schlachter, Jim Ehrman, Sue Rogers, and Chris Raftery volunteered to serve on the committee.

The mayor initiated further discussion about the quote from Makeever and Associates for the downtown sidewalk project. Sue inquired whether the engineer's study was necessary before any work could begin, to which Tom confirmed. Sue advised that she doesn't understand the delay in moving forward. An attendee questioned whether Council could obtain additional quotes, and Tom confirmed this is a possibility. Sue advised that this would prolong the process. There was a discussion among those present, but no significant points were raised. Will Grosswiler said that he presumes someone in attendance tonight recommended Makeever and Associates for this project, and that they weren't just "cold-called". Eunice responded to Will's comment, as it appeared that he was directing the comment towards her. Eunice clarified that, in the interest of transparency, she is from the Bucyrus area and is familiar with Makeever and Associates. However, she had no involvement in the selection of Makeever for the quote. Eunice noted that the village had previously engaged Makeever and Associates before her employment. Eunice then addressed Tom regarding obtaining additional quotes and inquired about our timeline for obtaining them, with securing OPWC funding. Tom indicated that the package must be submitted to the engineer by August 2026. Mark asked Tom about the likelihood of finding someone who had previously performed these types of repairs. Tom responded that this was where the village had previously stopped, as it required a comprehensive design package that was compliant with all height, level, standard, slope, and ADA regulations. This task must be completed by a professional engineer. This requirement was the reason for the failure of the earlier design-build attempt. The mayor asked whether it was the consensus of Council for Tom to seek additional quotes or to proceed with the quote from Makeever and Associates. Sue expressed her preference to advance with Makeever, as it appears to be a reputable firm and would require less time than obtaining further quotes. Chris noted that Council is not obligated to obtain three quotes, given that this is solely for engineering services and the quote is under \$75,000. The construction will be a different story. Chris Raftery made a motion for the village Administrator to enter into a contract

with Makeever & Associates for the amount of \$27,650, providing engineering and surveying services for the development of construction site plans related to the proposed Downtown Sidewalk Improvement Project, covering both the east and west sides of S Main Street, seconded by Tammy Schlachter. Motion carried with no further discussion.

The mayor informed Council that David Luna is present this evening concerning the request made during the February 2026 Council meeting for reimbursement from the village, for \$33,880, due to emergency sewer repairs. A village utility pole, situated within a 12-inch storm pipe, had a direct impact on the private sewer line at 18 S Main Street. The mayor clarified that Eunice reached out to the village insurance company, which confirmed that they would not provide any payment, and also indicated that the village bears no responsibility. Eunice confirmed this, noting that Ohio is a no-fault state. Chris asked whether David's insurance would cover any costs, to which he responded no. The mayor indicated that prior to any discussions regarding reimbursement, Council and the Fiscal Officer must figure out from which fund the reimbursement would be paid from, and this would necessitate an appropriation of funds. The mayor also mentioned that a Finance Committee meeting will be arranged to further discuss the reimbursement request.

The mayor addressed the letter received by the village from Jozlyn Heckel at the Monroeville Public Library concerning the food truck permit fee. Eunice mentioned that the library intends to invite food trucks for several upcoming events. There was a misunderstanding regarding the permits. The library believed that the food truck permit fee was \$25, whereas the actual fee is \$100. The library had communicated the \$25 fee to its vendors. When the vendors reached out to the village, they were informed that the fee is \$100. The village clarified to the vendors that the \$100 covers their village permit for a duration of one year. In an effort to maintain good faith with their vendors, the library is asking whether the village would consider reducing the fee to \$25 for their event(s), to ensure fairness to their vendors. The mayor expressed that he sees no reason to refrain from lowering the fee to \$25 moving forward, as the cost for the village to process a permit is not \$100. There was a discussion regarding the procedures for obtaining a permit. Kevin Rasnick suggested reaching out to the city of Norwalk, as they have streamlined their food truck permit process effectively. Gabby proposed the creation of a new Ordinance to address the fees. It was suggested to charge \$25 for a permit and \$100 for the permit if water and/or electric was needed.

Jim Ehrman addressed Council, stating that he had previously submitted a records request for zoning and building permits related to the Gray Matter site. He received a zoning application for 17 Fort Monroe Industrial Parkway, which he then distributed copies to Council. Jim explained that the village zoning inspector is responsible for completing the permit, ensuring it complies with zoning regulations, and then forwarding it to SafeBuilt, since it's a commercial property. SafeBuilt conducts a review and then issues the permit. Jim noted that this permit was signed by WSLN in Norwalk, OH, and he assumes that this was the property owner at the time the permit was issued. The permit was specifically for a commercial fence and contains zoning inspector Dave Mahl's signature. The Gray Matter address on the permit is 9733 York Beta Drive, located in North Royalton, Ohio. This property was sold in 2026 for \$620,000, which probably relates to the receivership. The fence permit application was approved and was signed by Dave Mahl on April 30, 2024. Jim remarked that a zoning permit fee was not charged, and it also appears that no documentation was submitted to SafeBuilt. Jim questioned the reason behind this and expressed concern regarding regulations if they are not adhered to. Jim urged Council to help him investigate these matters before the twelve-month moratorium deadline is reached. Mark asked Tom whether Dave Mahl informs him upon receiving a permit. Tom responded that he is kept informed when Dave receives a permit. Mark then asked Tom if Gray Matter would have needed to secure a permit to pour the nine new pads currently situated at that location. Both Mark and two other employees have been suffering from headaches due to the noise generated by bitcoin mining, with the decibel levels reaching ninety throughout the day. Mark questioned whether he should begin contacting the police regarding this issue. Chief indicated that the police are unable to enforce the noise matter. The mayor explained that Dave Mahl is employed by Council, and if Dave is not fulfilling his responsibilities, it is Council's duty to take action, not Tom's. Mark said he thinks the village needs a new zoning inspector and that Dave is selective in his zoning decisions. Jim said that Council is facing challenges ahead in drafting regulations and ensuring their enforcement. Mark mentioned that his supervisor plans to purchase a device to measure noise decibels in the Industrial Park. He questioned what actions would be taken if it exceeded 70 decibels, as stated in the noise ordinance. The mayor advised that they would need to reach out to the zoning inspector, Dave Mahl, since he oversees all zoning regulations, and Council is responsible for overseeing Dave. Chief stated that this is the reason the PD is unable to take action; the responsibility lies with the zoning inspector. Chief advised that if Mark's supervisor is going to purchase a device to test the decibel level, he should make sure it's calibrated to ensure its admissibility in court.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Regular Council Meeting 3/10/2026

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:38 pm.

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Eunice A. Collene, Fiscal Officer

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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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