On Tuesday, July 28, 2026, at 6:30 p.m., Mayor Joseph Galea opened the Special Council meeting with a word of prayer. The Pledge of Allegiance to the flag was recited by those present.

The special 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		Eunice Collene, Fiscal Officer
Sue Rogers		
Andrew Brown		
Jim Ehrman		

Also attending: Bonnie Beck; David Luna; Diana Nicholl; Dale Beck; Tom Sitterly; Dan Bemis; Ken Underwood; Melissa Zehnder; Jill Tangeman; Aaron Pickrell; Joe & Holly Weilnau; and Elisa Brown.

EXCUSE COUNCIL MEMBER

The mayor asked for Council's approval to excuse Tammy Schlachter from the meeting, due to Ms. Schlachter being on vacation. Ms. Sue Rogers made that motion, seconded by Ms. Chris Raftery. Motion carried with no discussion.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The mayor asked for Council's approval of the agenda. Ms. Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Ms. Chris Raftery, to approve the agenda. Mr. Jim Ehrman asked if the agenda could be amended to allow time for public comment during tonight's meeting. The mayor confirmed that public comment was not included in the agenda and would need to be added if Mr. Ehrman is requesting it. The mayor asked Mr. Ehrman to make a motion if he wished to amend the agenda. Mr. Jim Ehrman made a motion to amend the agenda to include public comment, prior to tonight's legislation being presented, seconded by Mr. Mark Miller. Motion carried with no further discussion. The mayor then asked Council for a motion to approve the amended agenda. Ms. Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Mr. Andrew Brown, to approve the agenda as amended. Motion carried with no discussion.

ACKNOWLEDGE AND ACCEPT RESIGNATION OF VILLAGE ZONING INSPECTOR DAVE MAHL

The mayor asked Council for a motion to accept the resignation of Village Zoning Inspector Dave Mahl. Ms. Sue Rogers made that motion, seconded by Ms. Chris Raftery. Motion carried with no discussion.

AUTHORIZE POSTING OF THE VILLAGE ZONING INSPECTOR POSITION

The mayor asked Council for a motion to authorize the posting of the Village Zoning Inspector position. Ms. Chris Raftery made that motion, seconded by Mr. Jim Ehrman. Mr. Mark Miller asked the mayor how quickly he was looking to fill the position. The mayor responded he would like to fill the position immediately. Mr. Andrew Brown asked if the position is part-time. The mayor confirmed. Motion carried with no further discussion.

PUBLIC COMMENT

The mayor asked those who wished to speak to step forward to the podium and state their name and address.

Ms. Jill Tangeman, a lawyer for Decimal Digital at Vorys, Sater, Seymour and Pease LLP, spoke about the ballot question for the Huron County Board of Elections regarding Ordinance 2026-13. Ms. Tangeman urged Council members to consider the ballot question before proceeding. She said that asking the question without having complete information is too premature. She emphasized the need for regulations, including proper locations, setbacks, noise control, and landscaping. She encouraged Council members to take the time to educate themselves and their constituents, not only about this project but also about data centers as a whole. She said it's Decimal Digital's responsibility to ensure everyone understands the full context and details. There will be numerous chances to evaluate the project and its specifics throughout the process. Ms. Tangeman urged the Council members to allow themselves and their constituents to receive all relevant information before posing a question that lacks clarity and does not empower Council to act in the community's best interest.

Mr. Dan Bemis stated that his property line is adjacent to the proposed data center site. He said that he recently sent a letter after hearing that Council was considering hiring a lawyer. He said that, with all due respect to Ms. Tangeman's earlier comments, there is a lot of information highlighting the negative impacts of introducing a data center to a community. He explained that he was not there to oppose Decimal Digital or the development itself. Upon reviewing his letter and Decimal Digital's plans, he noted that his property would be near several high transmission lines. This raises a new set of zoning, safety,

and health issues. In his letter, Mr. Bemis said that he questioned whether Council planned to hire an expensive attorney to negotiate a strict business development agreement and a community benefit agreement. He said that Decimal Digital claimed online they were ready to sign an agreement. He urged Council not to rely solely on Decimal Digital's statements. People can make promises, but unless they sign a contract with penalties for not following through, those promises hold little weight. He believed Council was seeking an opinion on the ballot, which may not be favorable, especially based on conversations with local neighbors. He was unsure about the noise regulations but was aware of the current levels in his backyard, at the school track, at Cindy Linley's home, and at the Bischoffs' house down the street. If those regulations change, the village would no longer be a quiet community, and that would be unfair to the residents. He said that Council bringing on an attorney would be money well spent. If the community had to do crowdsourcing to fund it, they could do that. He asked if that is something that the village was considering, and asked when that decision would be made. The mayor said yes, it's being considered, it will happen, but it hasn't been engaged yet. A Finance Committee meeting is coming up, and the budget would need to be reviewed. Mr. Bemis asked if residents are allowed to participate once someone is selected. The mayor confirmed and said that he anticipates that will be a part of the process. The mayor said that he and Council will ensure that, especially for those that live closest to the proposed project. Mr. Mark Miller said that to date, he had read everything that Mr. Bemis had submitted, and said that Mr. Bemis had a lot of valid points, which Mr. Miller appreciated. Mr. Bemis also thanked Council for the recent assistance with a tree stump that was removed in front of his property.

Ms. Holly Weilnau said that she was dealing with challenges regarding data centers in Oxford Township. In her findings, many data centers are experiencing a backlog of five to seven years in acquiring equipment and going online. She asked about the minimum investment the village would require from Decimal Digital if they begin construction but are unable to secure the necessary equipment. Recent discussions have focused on the maximum investment, but the minimum investment hasn't been addressed. She also questioned who would participate in the discussions regarding the community service agreement. She asked if it would involve the community, or if it would be someone hired by the village who may not fully understand community needs. If Decimal Digital is informed that the fine is $1000 and they operate generators for 24 hours due to delays in going online, they might not be concerned. She said Council should ensure that fines are significant. Given the five- to seven-year backlog, Council must prevent Decimal Digital from relying on generators due to delays in going online or insufficient megawatt capacity, as this would lead to increased noise for residents. Decimal Digital often presents big numbers, but the minimum figures sometimes do not align with community interests. The mayor noted that outside the meeting, Ms. Weilnau had suggested to him that residents and others should be involved in creating the community service agreement, and he supports this idea. Ms. Weilnau said there is a need for community involvement, ensuring that those affected have a say.

Ms. Elisa Brown stated she was speaking as a resident, not as a member of the BZA (Board of Zoning Appeals). She said her comments were in response to the representative from Digital Decimal today. Ms. Brown noted that Ms. Jill Tangeman had discussed the power of the Council members. Ms. Brown said this is something that doesn't sit well with her. She acknowledged that Council has power and control over village matters. Ultimately, Council should represent the whole community. The community should consider reducing Council's power or viewing the ordinance as a data point. A data point reflects the entire community's voice. Ms. Brown believes that power should be used to represent all those affected. Another concern is the burden of proof. Ms. Brown pointed out that Ms. Tangeman said Council is voting based on information they don't have. She stated it is Ms. Tangeman's responsibility to provide the community with this information. It is also Ms. Tangeman's responsibility to convince the residents that whatever plans Decimal Digital has for their science fair or community meetings, the burden of proof lies with them, not the residents. If the vote is postponed, the moratorium would be lifted. The voters wouldn't have another chance to voice their opinions until May, which would be too late. Ms. Brown said that educated voters are not receiving enough recognition. Members of this community are conducting their own research; they are knowledgeable, and this should not be overlooked. She believes that any zoning regulations must originate from the community itself. The community should identify its needs, which should then be reviewed by experienced legal counsel to ensure they are bulletproof and legally sound. Everyone understands how legal processes function, often using policies from other areas and making adjustments based on feedback. It is important that the regulations be created from the ground up to reflect the community's interests and then presented back to the community for approval, ensuring the community is protected. The community deserves better representation.

Ms. Holly Weilnau asked about the time it took for the village to develop the latest zoning ordinance. Ms. Chris Raftery said it took a considerable amount of time. The mayor clarified that the latest zoning ordinance was not seen as urgent, but addressing issues related to the data center is urgent. Ms. Weilnau then asked when the moratorium would expire. Mr. Mark Miller said that it would expire in

March 2027. Ms. Weilnau questioned whether it was possible to implement faster zoning regulations for data centers. The mayor said that it was possible since they are not reviewing hundreds of pages of the zoning book line by line. They are concentrating on specific issues that need to be resolved within a set timeframe. Ms. Weilnau asked if the moratorium could be extended. Mr. Miller said that there might be an opportunity to extend it, and Mr. Andrew Brown agreed. The mayor confirmed and said it would require legal scrutiny. He said that while there are no current plans for an extension, it is possible, and other communities have handled it similarly. Ms. Raftery stated that Council aims to create zoning that is enforceable.

Mr. Ken Underwood said that he had talked to the mayor and Fiscal Officer Eunice Collene about creating a five-year revenue forecast for the data center. Ms. Collene had informed him that she lacked the necessary data to create a forecast, so she could not determine the revenue. Mr. Underwood said that Decimal Digital's Eagle Ridge website mentioned a figure of $100,000 per month, and he questioned the source of that number. He stated that it is Decimal Digital's responsibility to explain how they arrived at that figure, which would allow the village to verify if it's accurate. Mr. Dan Bemis agreed with Mr. Underwood. He said that it should be clear to everyone what Decimal Digital's assumptions are and how the revenue actually flows. The $100,000 figure might represent tax money that Decimal Digital would owe, but the question is who ultimately receives the revenue. If Council states that the moratorium will end in March 2027, they would need to hold three meetings before that, which would be around November 2026. An agreement will likely need to be negotiated. Council should approach it from the community's point of view.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS FOR FIRST READING
The mayor asked Ms. Collene if Ordinance 2026-12 needs to be passed as an emergency or not. Ms. Collene conferred with Village Solicitor Jim Barney. Mr. Barney said the ordinance doesn't contain an emergency clause. It's his opinion that the ordinance should be read, and if Chief Earl wants to pass it as an emergency, that could be done in August when presented for a second reading.

ORDINANCE 2026-12 *An Ordinance amending section 141.04 of the codified ordinances of the Village of Monroeville, Ohio, regarding fees and compensation for police special services and mutual aid assignments* was presented for first reading. No discussion.

ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS FOR PASSAGE
The Mayor asked for a motion to suspend the rules for the following legislation. Ms. Chris Raftery made that motion, seconded by Mr. Andrew Brown. Motion carried with no discussion.

ORDINANCE 2026-13 *An Ordinance directing the Huron County Board of Elections to submit a ballot question to the electors of the Village of Monroeville at the November 3, 2026, general election and declaring an emergency* was presented for passage. Mr. Andrew Brown made a motion, seconded by Mr. Mark Miller, to pass Ordinance 2026-13 by title only. Ms. Rogers said that she agreed with Ms. Jill Tangeman that Council is acting prematurely on this matter. She said that zoning should be established first. She questioned the benefit of placing a question on the ballot since Decimal Digital has already acquired the land and obtained an ESA (Electric Service Agreement). If Council denies the data center, Decimal Digital could sue the village, leading to significant litigation fees. Mr. Jim Ehrman said that the ballot question would serve an informational purpose, helping Council understand what the community wants. The deadline to submit for the November ballot is August 5, 2026. Ms. Rogers said she understands, but noted that based on previous Council meetings, it seems the community has already said no. Mr. Brown explained that the ballot question offers Council direct feedback from the residents they represent, as they were elected to do. This issue could impact the village for many years, so he believes it's important to ask residents for their opinions. It also provides a more accurate representation than informal polls. Mr. Brown said that he has been advocating for evidence-based, reliable information throughout this process. He believes Council members should be held to the same standards to gather information from their constituents. This method is better than polls, petitions, and questionnaires, which sometimes reflect only local opinions. It ensures that every registered voter has an equal chance to voice their opinion while maintaining voter privacy. A formal ballot allows people to vote without social pressure and creates an official public record, eliminating speculation about community preferences. Council would have certified election results, and this would help with the public's trust in the process. The ballot question lets voters know that Council is listening to what they say. He understands the cons as well, and the misunderstanding that it's only advisory is a concern. Ms. Rogers agreed that people might not realize it's only advisory. Mr. Brown asked the mayor whether the language they had discussed prior would appear on the ballot for voters to see. The mayor said no. Mr. Barney mentioned that he had never done something like this before. When a property tax issue is put on the ballot, the Secretary of State requires specific wording. He consulted with other attorneys and the Assistant Prosecutor who represents the Board of Elections. However, this doesn't seem to be

specifically required. Whether the Huron County Board of Elections wants to review it is a different matter. Mr. Brown asked if Council could revise the language if they submit it and the Board of Elections rejects it. Mr. Barney said that typically, if everything is submitted on time and the changes are not significant, the Board of Elections would permit revisions. Mr. Brown questioned the harm of calling it an advisory question. Ms. Rogers said she is concerned that voters wouldn't understand that. Mr. Brown said that voters are more informed than Ms. Rogers believes. Ms. Rogers said that voters could reject it, yet the data center could still be approved, leading to confusion for those who said they didn't want it. She said that she is not suggesting that people shouldn't have a voice in this issue. Mr. Brown said that in reply to Ms. Rogers' earlier comment on litigation costs, Council has to do the right thing, even when it's difficult. If Council needs to advocate for the community's needs, then that's what they will do. Ms. Rogers asked if residents would be willing to pay increased utility rates to provide Council with funds for litigation. Mr. Brown questioned the need to increase utility rates. Ms. Rogers said that she thought some fees would need to be increased to cover litigation costs. Mr. Miller said that receiving the 1.3 million owed to the village would assist in funding any litigation. Mr. Brown stated that sometimes the struggle is worthwhile. It's a risk, but it's important to do what is right. Mr. Ehrman said that Council should discuss where the no vote would come from in the community. The community is aware of Gray Matter and their impact. They are receiving negative reports from the media. It's Council's responsibility to understand the community's desires, create regulations, and inform the public. The community should have the final say. They cannot make an informed choice without knowing all the information. Strict regulations would be necessary. Decimal Digital has guaranteed a specific amount of revenue, but the source of that revenue is unclear. Council is under a time constraint, and months have been wasted just discussing issues. It's time to focus and take action. The ballot question serves as information, and the village cannot be sued over it. It acts as a guide for Council. Mr. Brown agreed and said it's a useful data point. The mayor said that the village cannot be sued over the ballot question; however, it could face lawsuits regarding the use of the information. Mr. Ehrman said that his only concern is that the ballot wording is controversial. The question should ask voters if they want a data center. Mr. Brown added that it needs to be specific, asking voters if they agree to a data center as long as it meets the zoning regulations that Council would establish. Ms. Raftery confirmed, and said if an extension of the moratorium is necessary, it can be requested. Mr. Brown said that the ballot question should indicate whether an extension of the moratorium is required. Mr. Miller said that if Council finalizes the zoning and Decimal Digital complies with the standards, it would just be another business in the Industrial Park. He also suggested that the power lines should be placed underground. The mayor asked for a roll call on the motion to pass Ordinance 2026-13. Mr. Andrew Brown, Mr. Mark Miller, and Mr. Jim Ehrman voted yea. Ms. Sue Rogers and Ms. Chris Raftery voted nay. Motion carried with no further discussion.

ORDINANCE 2026-14 *An Ordinance amending or supplementing certain funds for appropriations Ordinance No. 2025-24, and declaring an emergency* was presented for passage. Ms. Chris Raftery made a motion to discuss Ordinance 2025-24, seconded by Ms. Sue Rogers. Motion carried. Ms. Raftery asked Ms. Collene to provide details about the appropriations. Ms. Collene explained that the ordinance is meant to allocate funds to State Highway Fund 202. When employees are mowing or working near the state highway, they log their hours, and their wages, OPERS, and benefits are paid from Fund 202 rather than Fund 201. This year, the village did not hire seasonal workers, resulting in higher costs for full-time employees to handle mowing. Mr. Andrew Brown asked if the employees are working overtime. Ms. Collene said no, but they are paid from Fund 202 at double the rate of a seasonal worker. The second part of the ordinance is to increase the wage line item for the Street Department, which also covers OPERS and benefits. Ms. Collene said that the Street Department hopes this will provide enough funds to last through the year. As Council is aware, if the village has a bad winter and requires overtime for snow plowing during year-end, additional appropriations may be necessary. Ms. Collene and the departments try to maintain a conservative budget. There are two full-time employees in the Street Department, and they sometimes receive help from Electric Department employees. This leads to those employees being paid from the Street Fund. The departments work together to support one another. Mr. Brown said Council may need to consider hiring seasonal staff next year. Ms. Sue Rogers made a motion, seconded by Ms. Chris Raftery, to pass Ordinance 2026-14 by title only. Motion carried with no further discussion.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 7:16 p.m.

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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 A. Collene examined them for both form and content, subsequently approving them as transcribed.

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