

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
MASSILLON CITY COUNCIL
HELD MONDAY, JANUARY 6, 2025**

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Good evening. Welcome to the Massillon City Council meeting for Monday, December 16, 2024. We have in attendance the following City officials: Mayor, Jamie Slutz, Chief Counsel, Earle Wise Jr. and Director of Development, Ted Herncane. Under #5 on the agenda is where the public can speak on any topic that appears on tonight’s agenda and under #17 is where the public can speak on any topic that does NOT appear on tonight’s agenda. I’d like to remind you that if you have a cell phone, please set it to mute, vibrate or turn it off. Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Roll call, Madam Clerk.

1. ROLL CALL

Roll call for the evening found the following Council Members present: Holly Bryan-Huth, Jill Creamer, Mike Gregg, Julie Harwig Smith, Ed Lewis, John Paquelet and Eric Ray

Roll call of 7 present

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – I’d like to make a motion that we excuse Councilman Lombardi and Councilwoman Cunningham.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilwoman Creamer. Roll call.

7 yes to excuse Councilwoman Cunningham and Councilman Lombardi

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk.

2. INVOCATION

COUNCILWOMAN JULIE HARWIG SMITH

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

LED BY COUNCILWOMAN HARWIG SMITH

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Councilwoman Harwig Smith.

4. READING OF THE JOURNAL

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Madam Clerk are the minutes of the previous meeting transcribed and open for public viewing?

COUNCIL CLERK ROLLAND – Yes, they are.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Are there any additions or corrections to be made?

COUNCIL CLERK ROLLAND – No, there are not.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – If not, then the minutes stand approved as written. Thank you, Madam Clerk.

COUNCIL CLERK ROLLAND – You are welcome.

5. **REMARKS OF DELEGATIONS AND CITIZENS TO MATTERS ON THE AGENDA**

6. **NEW AND MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS**

7. **INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Ord. No. 1 – 2025.

ORDINANCE NO. 1 – 2025

BY: RULES, COURTS & CIVIL SERVICE COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE authorizing the Director of Law of the City of Massillon, Ohio, to renew a one (1) year contract with the Stark County Public Defender’s Office, for the purpose of providing representation for indigent defendants that are charged under City Ordinances, and declaring an emergency.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. Yes, we did discuss this in Work Session on Monday. This is an annual contract we do each year. The terms of the contract have not changed from previous year. Are there any questions or discussion tonight? Seeing none, I make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Ord. No. 1 – 2025 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilwoman Bryan-Huth. Roll call for suspension.

7 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

7 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Ord. No. 1 – 2025 has passed.

8. **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

9. **PETITIONS AND GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS**

10. **BILLS, ACCOUNTS AND CLAIMS**

11. REPORTS FROM CITY OFFICIALS

Auditor’s Report - December 2024
Treasurer’s Report - November 2024
Mayor’s Report - November 2024

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – I’d like to make a motion that we accept the Auditor’s Report.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Gregg. Roll call.

7 yes to accept the Auditor’s Report

12. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Our next Work Session will be Monday, January 13, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.

13. RESOLUTIONS AND REQUESTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. I just want to mention that I will not be able to attend Monday’s Work Session and in my absence, Councilwoman Harwig Smith will handle anything for Rules & Courts Committee. Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you.

14. CALL OF THE CALENDAR

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Ord. No. 103 – 2024.

ORDINANCE NO. 103 – 2024 **BY: HEALTH, WELFARE & BLDG. REGS. COMMITTEE**
Tabled November 4, 2024 until January 6, 2025

AN ORDINANCE enacting CHAPTER 1306 “INTERNATIONAL PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE” under TITLE ONE – BUILDING CODES of PART THIRTEEN-BUILDING CODE of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Massillon, Ohio.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Ray.

COUNCILMAN RAY – Thank you, President Slater. This is an ordinance that consists of us adjusting our existing building code to the IMPC. Right now I think we’re just going to go with a second read.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Ord. No. 103 – 2024 has received second reading.

15. THIRD READING ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

16. **SECOND READING ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**

17. **REMARKS OF DELEGATIONS AND CITIZENS TO MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

BROOKE LONGHEIER – Ward 2. I'm discussing comments made on December 16th by Ted Herncane. I am here today to address a comment made about me in front of the City Council at the last regular meeting. Before I do, I'd like to remind you all that numerous times over the last 2 years, I have come in front of Council seeking help for my building with no help given. I've had multiple meetings with the City which ended with me being told they were not helping me. All of you have concentrated on codes for 2 years without no regard to the code that states the issues with my wall are not up to me to fix. All of you have approved hundreds of thousands of City dollars for demolitions and not a dime of money for all the income and property damage I received due to the demolitions. Now on to the point at hand; after a citizen asked why I was not being given the same help for my wall that Art Bomb is being offered, Mr. Herncane came in front of you all and lied about a conversation we had on November 19th. He stated, and I am quoting from the December 16th meeting minutes, "On that day, Brooke told me she was not leaving the house to come let anyone in". Making it seem like I was at home, on the couch refusing to come. As Mr. Herncane was informed on that call, I was at work at the time and that it was my birthday and I had plans after work. He was also informed in the same conversation that I would be available to meet someone any other day that week after 3:00 p.m. In both the voicemail he left me, which I've given to you, and the conversation we had, he informed me that he gave my number to John Picard to call me. I have given you all a copy of the voicemail where Ted states he is giving John my number and a copy of the e-mail I sent to four (4) Council members on November 24, 2024, five (5) days after the phone conversation with Mr. Herncane. Before I read you the e-mail, I would like to ask a few questions. Why do you think it is that I was only contacted about them waiting to be in my building the of and not a day or several days ahead of time? Why do they need inside my building to see how to weatherproof an outside wall? Does the City really want to help me or just give the façade that they do? Did Mr. Herncane tell the Mayor that I was at work and it was my birthday and that I was willing to come another day or did he lie to the Mayor as well and just say I refused to leave my house? How is it acceptable for a City employee to go in front of Council and lie on and lie on a citizen? Mr. Herncane also stated "I was hoping that the next day I would get a call. Two days, three days, it will be four weeks' tomorrow". How was I supposed to know to call the City back when I told Mr. Herncane when I was available and he said he would let Mr. Picard know? I was expecting a phone call back and when I didn't receive it, I sent an e-mail to my Ward Council member as well as all three at-large members. Two of you couldn't be bothered to respond. I will now read the e-mail sent to the Council Members as I feel it addresses the entire conversation and the truth. I would ask that you extend my time, if I go over and allow me to complete the reading as it is important for the citizens to know the truth of the matter. Thank you. This was sent to the members at-large and Mr. Ray; "Good evening. I felt the need to contact you regarding a voicemail and phone call I had with Ted Herncane this week. It didn't sit too well with me and I want to document the conversation to the extent I can. On Tuesday morning while I was at work, I got a voicemail from Ted stating to call him. While they were doing the demo, they wanted to have John Picard look at my building too and whether they can do something to the side of my structure. That he was giving John my number as well because he needed in my building preferably that day. As you can imagine, this has been a stressful part of my life for almost two years. I was a little bit off of why they would need in my building to see what they could do for my outside wall. When I returned the call to Ted within the half hour, he was rude from the

time he answered. I asked why they would need in my building to how they could fix the outside wall? His response was "I don't know, Brooke". I reminded him that I had a structural engineer look at my building in February and that they have the report; to which he responded that he didn't have it. I then asked why the Margarita's building had not to weatherproof their wall as I'm getting orders for mine. Again, he stated "I don't know, Brooke. We're just trying to help you". I informed him that it was my birthday, that I was at work and then had plans and would not be meeting anyone that day, which was a Tuesday, November 19th and expressed my fear of them trying to get into my building to somehow declare it unsafe. I told him that I could meet anyone down there the rest of the week, 3:00 p.m. or later. His reply is that he would let John know and hung up. It's now Sunday night and I've not heard back from Ted or John Picard. I've not been told anything about the demolition and whether I'll be able to get into my building while it is being done. I just want it known that, of course, I want any help the City is willing to give me as I believe they should have already fixed my wall and especially since they're willing to spend so much on demolishing historical buildings why continuing to state that they want to save them. What I cannot do is leave my job for day or miss a day of work to be there on demand as I do not have sick pay or paid days off and unfortunately, I'm in the position to need all the hours that I can get. I would hope as my Council representatives that you would do all you can to help me in this situation. All I ever asked for is for my wall to be fixed as per the ordinance states. It's not my responsibility and pretty much everyone else in this situation has had their debt forgiven. Thank you for your time.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you. Anyone else that would like to speak?

18. **ADJOURNMENT**

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilwoman Harwig Smith.

COUNCILWOMAN HARWIG SMITH – I make a motion that we adjourn.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilwoman Creamer. Roll call.

7 yes to adjourn

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Meeting adjourned.

DIANE ROLLAND, COUNCIL CLERK

MIKE SLATER, PRESIDENT