

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
MASSILLON CITY COUNCIL
HELD MONDAY, JANUARY 20, 2026**

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Good evening. Welcome to the Massillon City Council meeting for Tuesday, January 20, 2026. We have in attendance the following City officials: Mayor Jamie Slutz, Safety Service Director, Renee Baker, City Engineer, Alex Pitts, Director of Development, Ted Herncane, Parks & Rec. Director, Steve Pedro, Police Chief, Jason Saintenoy, Fire Chief, Matt Heck, Income Tax/Budget Director, Lori Kotagides-Boron, Wastewater Treatment Plant Manager, Tony Ulrich, Chief Building Official, Phil Gorman and Street Superintendent, Josh McClay. 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, please.

1. ROLL CALL

Roll call for the evening found the following Council Members present: Holly Bryan-Huth, Sarita Cunningham, Mike Gregg, Julie Harwig Smith, Seth Marcum, John Paquelet, Mandwel Patterson and Eric Ray.

Roll call of 8 present

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. I make a motion that we excused Councilman Townsend from tonight's meeting.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilwoman Harwig Smith. Roll call.

8 yes to excuse Councilman Townsend.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk.

2. INVOCATION

COUNCILMAN JOHN PAQUELET

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

LED BY COUNCILMAN PAQUELET

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Councilman Paquelet.

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

Appointment of Council Member to Historic Preservation Commission as Council Representative

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilwoman Harwig Smith.

COUNCILWOMAN HARWIG SMITH – Thank you, President Slater. My term on the Historic Preservation Commission is up and we discussed this with the Mayor and I'd like to make an appointment for Council representative for the Historic Preservation Commission and at this point, I'd like to nominate Sarita Cunningham, if she would accept.

COUNCILWOMAN CUNNINGHAM – Yes I will. Thank you.

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

7 yes; 1 abstention to appoint Sarita Cunningham as Council representative for the Historic Preservation Commission

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. I'd like to congratulate you, Mrs. Cunningham for your appointment of Council member to the Historic Preservation Commission as our Council representative.

COUNCILWOMAN CUNNINGHAM – Thank you.

7. INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

ORDINANCE NO. 1 – 2026

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 Marcum.

COUNCILMAN MARCUM – So, this is an ordinance that would basically allow the City to enter into a contract with the Public Defender's office as the title more or less implies. Long

story short, it's generally a lot cheaper to go with the Public Defender's office over the course of the year rather than having to refer cases out to private counsel. Does anybody have any questions or comments? Seeing none, I would make a motion to waive the three readings rule and bring Ord. No. 1 – 2026 forward for a vote.

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

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Ord. No. 1 – 2026 has passed. Ord. No. 2 – 2026.

ORDINANCE NO. 2 – 2026

BY: RULES, COURTS & CIVIL SERVICE COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE amending Ordinance No. 139 – 2023 by enacting a new part-time and seasonal staff pay schedule to comply with State of Ohio Minimum Wage Standards, in the City of Massillon, Ohio, and declaring an emergency.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Marcum.

COUNCILMAN MARCUM – Similar here, I feel the name pretty much covers most of this issue here. Does anybody have any other questions or concerns?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. I would just mention that Parks Director, Steve Pedro, was not able to attend the Work Session last week when we discussed this, so, if there are any questions for Park's Director, Steve Pedro, he's here tonight.

COUNCILMAN MARCUM – Would anybody like to ask questions? Seeing none, I would move to waive the three readings rule and bring Ord. No. 2 – 2026 forward for a vote.

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

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Ord. No. 2 – 2026 has passed. Ord. No. 3 – 2026.

ORDINANCE NO. 3 – 2026

BY: STREETS, HIGHWAYS, TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE authorizing the Director of Public Service and Safety of the City of Massillon, Ohio, to sign the Final Resolution with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) for the

resurfacing project of Erie St. S. and Finefrock Road S.W., (SR 241) within the City of Massillon, Ohio, PID 113028, and declaring an emergency.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Paquelet.

COUNCILMAN PAQUELET – We spoke about this during the Work Session. Does anyone have any further questions regarding this issue? Seeing none, I'd like to make a motion to waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Ord. No. 3 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Patterson. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Ord. No. 3 – 2026 has passed. Ord. No. 4 – 2026.

ORDINANCE NO. 4 – 2026.

BY: FINANCE COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE authorizing the Director of Public Service and Safety of the City of Massillon, Ohio, to participate in an Escrow Agreement for Highway Improvement with the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT) to deposit the pre-bid estimate for Erie St. S. and Finefrock Rd. S.W. (SR 241) Resurfacing Project, PID 113028, and declaring an emergency.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. We did discuss this is last week's Work Session. Mr. Pitts was here to discuss this with us. I would like to call Mr. Pitts to the podium for a question.

ALEX PITTS – Good evening, Council.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Good evening; thank you. Can you just give us the boundaries of the work, of the project itself? I know it mentions Finefrock and Erie, but kind of a from and to.

ALEX PITTS – So, along Erie St. basically where you start at Tremont on the north end all the way down to where the bridge is where you cross over to Finefrock at that intersection and then heading west out to the corporation limits.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Out to the corporation limits? Okay. So starting at Tremont you said?

ALEX PITTS – Yes.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Okay. Any other questions?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilwoman Cunningham.

COUNCILWOMAN CUNNINGHAM – Thank you, Mr. President. When you say corporation limits, that's out to the park?

ALEX PITTS – Out west past the park.

COUNCILWOMAN CUNNINGHAM – Alright. Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Any more questions?

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you.

ALEX PITTS – Yep.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, sir. Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – If there's no discussion or any further discussion, I make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Ord. No. 4 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Marcum. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Ord. No. 4 – 2026 has passed. Ord. No. 5 – 2026.

ORDINANCE NO. 5 – 2026

BY: FINANCE COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE making certain appropriations from the unappropriated balance of the 1100 General Fund, for the purpose of the Sidewalk Replacement Program, for the year ending December 31, 2026, and declaring an emergency.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. As we discussed last week, this is something we've done each year for a number of years now to fund the Sidewalk Replacement Program. We've actually had a decrease in the funds for this year as not all of the funds appropriated last year were being used. So, any further questions or discussion? Seeing none, I make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Ord. No. 5 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Paquelet. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Ord. No. 5 – 2026 has passed.
Res. No. 1 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 1 – 2026

BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

A RESOLUTION appointing **DIANE ROLLAND** as **Administrative Assistant/Clerk of Council** of Massillon City Council and establishing salary for said job.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. Are there any discussions or questions? Seeing none, I make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 1 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilwoman Harwig Smith. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 1 – 2026 has passed.
Res. No. 2 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 2 – 2026

BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

A RESOLUTION commending **JILL CREAMER** as a Member of City Council of the City of Massillon, Ohio.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. Are there any questions or discussion? Seeing none, I move that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 2 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCILMAN SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Ray. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCILMAN SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 2 – 2026 has passed. Res. No. 3 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 3 – 2026

BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

A RESOLUTION commending **EDWARD LEWIS IV** as a Member of City Council of the City of Massillon, Ohio.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. Are there any questions or discussion? Seeing none, I make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 3 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Marcum. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 3 – 2026 has passed. Res. No. 4 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 4 – 2026

BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

A RESOLUTION consenting to the Mayor's appointment of Mandy Altimus Stahl to the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Massillon, Ohio, upon the recommendation of the Massillon Museum, for the term expiring December 31, 2027.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. This resolution and the following resolutions are all based upon the list of appointees that Mayor Slutz provided to us last week. Are there any questions or discussion? Seeing none, I make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 4 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Paquelet. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 4 – 2026 has passed. Res. No. 5 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 5 – 2026**BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

A RESOLUTION consenting to the Mayor's appointment of John Picard to the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Massillon, Ohio, upon the recommendation of the Massillon Museum, for the term expiring December 31, 2027.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. Any questions or discussion? Seeing none, I make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 5 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Ray. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 5 – 2026 has passed. Res. No. 6 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 6 – 2026**BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

A RESOLUTION consenting to the Mayor's appointment of Fred Horner to the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Massillon, Ohio, upon the recommendation of the Massillon WestStark Chamber of Commerce, for the term expiring December 31, 2027.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. Any questions or discussion? Seeing none, I make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 6 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Marcum. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 6 – 2026 has passed. Res. No. 7 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 7 – 2026**BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

A RESOLUTION consenting to the Mayor's appointment of Jeff Doll to the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Massillon, Ohio, for the term expiring December 31, 2027.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. Any questions or discussion? Seeing none, I make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 7 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Patterson. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 7 – 2026 has passed. Res. No. 8 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 8 – 2026**BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

A RESOLUTION consenting to the Mayor's appointment of Michelle Del Rio-Keller to the Historic Preservation Commission of the City of Massillon, Ohio, for the term expiring December 31, 2027.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. Any questions or discussion? Seeing none, I make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 8 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Ray. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 8 – 2026 has passed. Res. No. 9 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 9 – 2026**BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE**

A RESOLUTION consenting to the Mayor's appointment of Kordell Ford to the Civil Service Commission of the City of Massillon, Ohio, for the term expiring December 31, 2031.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. At this point, I'm just going to pause a moment and just mention that although this process is extremely repetitive and tedious, I think it is important that each person's name is read into the record. That's why we're going to press on through this. Any questions or discussion? Seeing none, I make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 9 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilwoman Harwig Smith. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 9 – 2026 has passed. Res. No. 10 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 10 – 2026

BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

A RESOLUTION consenting to the Mayor's appointment of Tom Rivera to the Recreation Board of the City of Massillon, Ohio, for the term expiring December 31, 2030.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. Any questions or discussion? Seeing none, I make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 10 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Paquelet. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 10 – 2026 has passed. Res. No. 11 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 11 – 2026

BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

A RESOLUTION consenting to the Mayor's appointment of Joni Dingey to the Board of Health of the City of Massillon, Ohio, for the term expiring December 31, 2028.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. Are there any questions or discussion? Seeing none, I make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 11 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Patterson. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 11 – 2026 has passed. Res. No. 12 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 12 – 2026

BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

A RESOLUTION consenting to the Mayor's appointment of Dr. Sonia Glick-Ullum to the Board of Health of the City of Massillon, Ohio, for the term expiring December 31, 2030.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. Any questions or discussion? Seeing none, I make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 12 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Marcum. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 12 – 2026 has passed. Res. No. 13 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 13 – 2026

BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

A RESOLUTION consenting to the Mayor's appointment of Keith Herring to the Fair Housing Commission of the City of Massillon, Ohio, for the term expiring December 31, 2029.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. We're coming down the stretch. Any questions or discussion? Seeing none, I make a motion to waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 13 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Patterson. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 13 – 2026 has passed. Res. No. 14 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO – 14 – 2026

BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

A RESOLUTION consenting to the Mayor's appointment of Austin Bennett to the Fair Housing Commission of the City of Massillon, Ohio, for the term expiring December 31, 2029.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. Any questions or discussion? Seeing none, I make a motion to waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 14 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Ray. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 14 – 2026 has passed. Res. No. 15 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 15 – 2026

BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

A RESOLUTION consenting to the Mayor's appointment of Jacquie Knight to the Fair Housing Commission of the City of Massillon, Ohio, for the term expiring December 31, 2029.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. Any questions or discussion? Seeing none, I make a motion to waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 15 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilwoman Harwig Smith. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 15 – 2026 has passed. Res. No. 16 – 2026.

RESOLUTION NO. 16 – 2026

BY: COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

A RESOLUTION consenting to the Mayor's appointment of Bobby Grizzard to the Fair Housing Commission of the City of Massillon, Ohio, for the term expiring December 31, 2029.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. Any questions or discussion? Seeing none, I make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 16 – 2026 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Ray. Roll call for suspension.

8 yes for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

8 yes for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Res. No. 16 – 2026 has passed.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9. PETITIONS AND GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS

A Request for a New Liquor License for Teeshotz Indoor Golf, LLC, located at 2142 Wales Rd. N.E., Massillon, Ohio 44646. Permit Class is D-1 and is located in Ward 1.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Marcum, did you receive a copy of this?

COUNCILMAN MARCUM – I have, thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you.

10. BILLS, ACCOUNTS AND CLAIMS

LocaliQ Gannett Ohio	-	\$ 1,427.12	Publication of Oct. & Nov. 2025 Ords.
Bonnie's Engravers	-	<u>249.00</u>	Name Plates and Rubber Stamp
Total	-	\$ 1,676.12	Total

US Bank Equip. Finance - \$ 127.00 – January Invoice for copier submitted to the Auditor's Office for payment January 9, 2026

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. I make a motion that we pay the bills.

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

8 yes to pay the bills

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – The Clerk will pay the bills and charge them to their proper accounts.

11. REPORTS FROM CITY OFFICIALS

Mayor's Report	-	November 2025
Auditor's Report	-	December 2025

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, President Slater. I make a that we accept the Auditor's Report

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

8 yes to accept the Auditor's Report

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. The Auditor's Report has been accepted. At this time, I'd like to call up Mayor Slutz.

Mayor's State of the City Address

MAYOR'S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS:

MAYOR JAMIE SLUTZ – Good evening Council, Council President, Massillon residents.

As we begin 2026 I would like to wish everyone a happy new year – one that is certainly a milestone for the City of Massillon. This year marks the City's 200th anniversary. It is an honor for me to serve as mayor of our great City during this bicentennial year. This occasion allows us to look back and recognize our City's history, but it also gives us the opportunity to think about what's next and how we can all make Massillon better for future generations. There are numerous community events and activities being planned for our bicentennial celebration and those details will be shared with the community in the coming weeks and months.

Today, the City's financial position is strong. Our local economy is growing. And our streets and neighborhoods are safer. I am proud of the work my administration has done in my first two years as mayor and extend that sentiment to all City of Massillon officials as we continue to work together to make Massillon a better place for everyone.

With concentrated efforts focused on economic development during the previous two years, the City of Massillon achieved significant year over year financial growth. Net profit collections increased by over 14%. Tax withholding collections grew by almost 2%. And resident collections also showed strong performance, rising 10.6% year over year. This is great news

by itself. But additional system upgrades and targeted automation initiatives contributed to notable improvements in processing efficiency with the Income Tax Department.

Moody's, the agency that evaluates the creditworthiness of governments and corporations, upgraded the City of Massillon's credit rating from A2 to A1, indicating a stronger financial position and lower credit risk. This is good news and shows that our finances are moving in the right direction.

Heading into 2026, the City's General Fund carryover balance is \$5.3 million. With approximately \$700,000 on existing purchase orders, that carryover balance is around \$4.6 million in reality. This is an increase from the prior year, and sound financial footing for the City. But we must continue to be fiscally responsible and accountable. All facets of City government share in that responsibility because we are all stewards of the public's money. It is important that we continue to live within our means and look for new ways to make the most out of our existing revenue, while continuing to grow our tax base through economic development.

A significant highlight from last year was the grand opening of Massillon Community Health & Innovation Center in October. Since becoming mayor, I have worked closely with operators Chris and Jaci Zimmerman to get the former hospital reopened so our residents can access the health care they deserve. The Zimmermans are great partners and we should all be excited about their accomplishments to date, and their plans for the future.

Operated by Ohio Valley Physicians, Access Care is the first tenant at MCH. In the near future, OVP will open a highly professionalized inpatient recovery center to provide care for adults seeking to recover from addictions or other mental health issues, such as acute depression. Additional services that will be added include diagnostics, outpatient imaging, primary and dental care, among many others.

A new center for athletic excellence and peak physical performance is proposed and will be owned and operated by Catalyst Performance, led by John Cominsky, a recently retired NFL veteran. John's passion is making elite level treatment and experience accessible to all.

For the Innovation Center part of the complex, MCH will open a free co-working space for new entrepreneurs and students to work on their businesses or education, with direct access to mentors from the fields of medicine, sports, and business.

As we have said from the beginning, Massillon Community Health & Innovation Center is not going to be the hospital that many of us remember. But its transformation into a unique health care facility curating cutting edge technologies and practices in specialized spaces that are accessible to people of all levels of skill, ability, and economic means will have a great impact on Massillon and our surrounding community.

Improving our neighborhoods is a major area of focus for my administration, and the City approaches that in three specific ways: code enforcement, animal control, and infrastructure improvements.

Enforcing the City's housing and building code is an area where we have made significant improvements over the last year. The adoption of the International Property Maintenance Code has given Code Enforcement staff the legislative tools and authority to hold property owners and landlords accountable for their actions, and in many instances, their inaction. The adoption of the IPMC has resulted in cases being concluded within a realistic time frame, which didn't happen before. When I took office two years ago we discovered that there were over 400 open code enforcement cases, some going back five years or more. Today there are 114 open code cases and are concluded in around 90 days. The IPMC was the tool needed to bring cases to conclusion, whether that conclusion is compliance, or Law Department review for civil or criminal penalties. Where compliance is not achieved, fines are imposed. \$109,000 worth of fines were imposed since April of last year, and those fines are either paid by the property owner directly or sent to a collection agency for recovery.

Last year we upgraded the computer software tracking system which now links the Code, Building, and Engineering departments so they can all access the same database and records. Code staff now use tablets and portable printers in the field to improve efficiency and productivity by turning their vehicles into mobile offices – which allows our staff to handle more cases throughout the city.

Taken together, all of these changes have improved documentation, efficiency, and compliance, as we work toward the overall goal of creating safer and cleaner neighborhoods for our citizens.

2025 was a busy year for animal control, and the numbers justify why I wanted to bring this much needed position back. Our animal control officer responded to approximately 1,350 calls throughout the year. 54 citations were issued. And working in partnership with the Massillon Police Department, one (1) felony conviction for animal cruelty was secured. The City's TNR program, which is a partnership with Altered Tails Project, a local non-profit organization, spayed or neutered 180 cats throughout the city. As a community, we can never eliminate the problem that feral cats, loose dogs, and other animals pose to our neighborhoods. But with a dedicated full-time animal control officer, the numbers don't lie – we are making our neighborhoods safer one day at a time.

Last year the Engineering Department engaged in 17 capital improvement projects, which is a lot for one year. Collectively, these projects represent an investment approaching \$10 million in infrastructure upgrades. An additional \$3.2 million in grants was secured for future capital improvement projects. The City also paved 55 streets through the annual street resurfacing program. Since the first year of the 0.2% street levy in 2017, the City of Massillon has paved half of the roads in Massillon. And with current tax collections trending in the right direction, we are on target to pave the other half in the next 7-8 years. The average life expectancy of an asphalt city street is around 20 years, so we are on pace to resurface every road in the city within its projected life expectancy for the first time in our City's history. The street levy on the May 5 ballot is not a new tax or an increase. It simply provides the funds necessary to continue maintaining one of our most important infrastructure assets and provide the safe roads that our residents deserve.

This year the Engineering Department will oversee a major reconstruction project on Warmington Road SE, and the much-needed resurfacing of Erie St. SE from Tremont SE to Finefrock Rd. and from Finefrock west to the City limit. For this year's street resurfacing program, the City has proposed \$1.5 million for resurfacing improvements. Also this year, the Sewer Department will be replacing sewer lines on Commonwealth and Medill NE, and Wellman SE. The new vactor truck and camera truck purchased last year will be put into use this year as we strive to stay ahead of the game on maintaining our sanitary and storm water assets.

Public safety will always be a major area of focus for the City of Massillon. Although the men and women of the department work hard every day to make Massillon safe, there are a few accomplishments worth noting. Last year the City added 3 new officers to the department bringing the current force to 49 officers, the highest level in over a decade. And we anticipate adding 2 more in the near future which would bring us to full staff for the first time since before I started with MPD in 1997. Having additional officers allows us to add a 4th school resource officer so that all 4 Massillon City School District buildings have their own Massillon Police officer on site each day. Last year we added a Traffic Enforcement Officer dedicated solely to traffic safety throughout the city. This was a campaign pledge of mine and I am glad we achieved it in year two. While one officer can't be everywhere in the city at once, speed tables have been effective in slowing down traffic in areas where speeding is a concern. I know some people don't like them, but the number of calls my office has received from residents who appreciate them far outweighs the negative calls.

Grant funds were secured to purchase new K9 officer Lennox and was put into service in June. We also added 4 new police cruisers and have 2 more on the way. The capital investment in new vehicles allows for more patrol coverage throughout the city and these additions make our current vehicle fleet the newest in many years. The Massillon Police Department operated within the budget approved for 2025 which covered all operating, equipment, and overtime expenses. As more officers have been added, overtime costs continue to trend down from 2024, into 2025, and we look forward to keeping that trend moving downward this year.

Last year the Fire Department hired 8 new firefighters bringing the department to full staff. A new ambulance was added to our fleet. The Department responded to over 6,400 incidents, which is one of the busiest years ever. The City also worked in collaboration with other County fire departments to establish a County Technical Rescue Operations Team, which will increase efficiency and effectiveness throughout Stark County.

In 2025, the Health Department introduced several new programs to address food insecurity in Massillon. The new pop-up drive-through food pantry is held every third Tuesday and serves over 250 families each month. We also opened a small food pantry at the Health Department office on Erie St. SE for emergency hunger situations with food donated by department staff. The Health Department also held a diaper drive to donate to the Heart of Ohio Diaper Bank, that distributed over 36,000 diapers valued at \$15,000 to anyone with a need for diapers. And last year's upgrades to the vital statistics system now allows for residents to obtain birth and death certificates at our local health department, even if the event occurred elsewhere in Ohio.

My administration will continue to focus our efforts on economic development, specifically industrial and commercial development. Last year RealTruck, formerly A.R.E., completed its major expansion on Nave Rd. SE. resulting in 330 new jobs in Massillon and an investment of approximately \$20 million. Bitdeer will open their \$180 million facility this spring bringing 70 well-paying, IT-related jobs to Massillon. We are working closely with the Massillon Development Foundation to identify the City's next sites for industrial development. As Massillon continues to grow, our available space for future development decreases. So the need for future industrial space is vital for Massillon to remain a leader in manufacturing and industry in northeast Ohio. We will work with our partners MDF and the Stark Economic Development Board to look for available areas within the City, or annexation if necessary.

There are several local manufacturers we are currently working with on expansion projects. There is a lot of exciting news to share in the coming months as these projects take shape – each project added capital investment in our community and providing new job opportunities for our residents. Massillon has a strong and diversified local economy, and the sheer fact that companies continue to invest here shows that Massillon is a great place to do business. Which is why Babcock & Wilcox chose Massillon as the home of their \$60 million hydrogen plant set for groundbreaking this spring.

There were 41 new single-family housing units built or under construction last year. Building Department permit valuations exceeded \$58 million for commercial, industrial, residential, and various alteration and renovation projects. In addition to major renovations at major retail locations like Target, Walmart, and the Amherst Shopping Center, many smaller commercial establishments opened in Massillon. Planet Fitness, Penn Station, two cannabis dispensaries, among others joined the Massillon business community. The need for office space grew downtown as well with additional buildout at the First North building to accommodate Shearer's and several local business professionals. The Massillon City Schools opened two new elementary schools, which deserves mentioning because an investment of that magnitude is a great sign of growth in our community. There are others I could mention like non-profit organizations, churches, and medical offices, but the main point is that Massillon is a growing community with all sectors of economy investing in our future.

This year the restoration of the Reservoir will begin. We intended to complete Phase 1, the north streambank restoration project in the fall, but the Federal government shutdown impeded our ability to receive a permit from the Army Corps of Engineers in time to complete that work last year. We are currently underway with Phase 1 and it will be complete by spring. Phase 2, the large body of water, will hopefully begin this year as we work with the Park and Rec Board on funding options. Restoring a body of water is estimated to cost around \$1.8 million. New restroom facilities at the Reservoir were completed last year to enhance accessibility and maintain a safe and clean park experience for our residents.

Last year we celebrated the opening of the Jake Roberson Memorial Splash Pad at Wampler Park and made improvements to Genshaft Park and the Rec Center. The Senior Center Activity Club increased membership in 2025 highlighting the growing need for engaging programs that promote health, social connection, and a sense of community among our senior residents. These opportunities help seniors stay active, build friendships, and remain connected throughout Massillon. I frequently visit the Senior Center and always enjoy

spending time with them and learning about their concerns and how best we can address them.

In 2026, the Parks and Recreation Department remains focused on reinvestment and long-term sustainability with the restoration of our cherished Reservoir Park, a planned veterans garden project, and upgrades to the aquatics center at the Rec to ensure it remains a safe, welcoming, and enjoyable facility for families and residents of all ages.

Although the grant from the Stark Tusc. Wayne Recycling District that funded the yard waste collection program was not renewed, the City of Massillon will continue to provide this service to our residents this year with basically the same hours during the week, and will add spring and fall cleanup times with extended hours like before. But I want to ensure our residents that the City will continue to provide this service.

Downtown Massillon is important to all of us. This year the City will use the CIC to work towards the development of four vacant parcels downtown. The corner of Erie and Lincoln Way has the potential for new commercial space in our downtown business district, creating jobs and new business opportunities.

In closing, the future is bright for the City of Massillon, and I am excited about the growth we have seen in my first two years in office. Whatever challenges await us this year or next, I know we can meet them head on if we continue to work together to put the needs of our citizens first, because that's how Massillon has thrived for 200 years, and will continue to thrive for 200 more. Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Mr. Mayor.

12. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Our next Work Session will be Monday, January 26, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

13. RESOLUTIONS AND REQUESTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

14. CALL OF THE CALENDAR

15. THIRD READING ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

16. SECOND READING ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

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

18. ADJOURNMENT

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Paquelet.

COUNCILMAN PAQUELET – I'd like to make a motion of adjournment.

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

8 yes to adjourn

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Meeting adjourned.

DIANE ROLLAND, COUNCIL CLERK

MIKE SLATER, PRESIDENT