

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING  
MASSILLON CITY COUNCIL  
HELD TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2025**

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Good evening. Welcome to the Massillon City Council meeting for Tuesday, September 2, 2025. We have in attendance the following City officials: Mayor, Jamie Slutz, Safety Service Director, Renee Baker, Chief Counsel, Earle Wise Jr., Director of Development, Ted Herncane, Fire Chief, Matt Heck, and Income Tax/Budget Director, Lori Kotagides-Boron. 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, Jill Creamer, Sarita Cunningham, Mike Gregg, Julie Harwig Smith, Seth Marcum, John Paquelet and Eric Ray

Roll call of 8 present

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilman Gregg.

**COUNCILMAN GREGG** – Thank you, Mr. President. I make a motion that we excuse Councilman Lewis from tonight's meeting.

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

8 yes to excuse Councilman Lewis

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Thank you, Madam Clerk.

**2. INVOCATION**

**COUNCILMAN SETH MARCUM**

**3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**LED BY COUNCILMAN MARCUM**

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Thank you, Councilman Marcum.

**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 73 – 2025.

**ORDINANCE NO. 73 – 2025**

**BY: PARKS & RECREATION COMMITTEE**

AN ORDINANCE authorizing the Director of Parks and Recreation of the City of Massillon, Ohio, on behalf of the Massillon Recreation Board, to advertise for and receive sealed bids and to enter into a contract with the lowest and best bidder, upon the approval of the Board of Control, to replace the maintenance equipment at The Legends Golf Course, and declaring an emergency.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilwoman Harwig Smith.

**COUNCILWOMAN HARWIG SMITH** – Thank you, President Slater. This is for, as Director Pedro told us last week, the Board already voted for this. This is to replace the maintenance equipment which is mostly the mowers at Legends Golf Course; they do lease this. What it's for is a new lease agreement which also includes the maintenance and everything. Does anyone have any questions? Seeing none, I'd like to waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Ord. No. 73 – 2025 forward for a vote.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Seconded by Councilwoman Creamer. 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. 73 – 2025 has passed. Ord. No. 74 – 2025.

**ORDINANCE NO. 74 – 2025****BY: RULES, COURTS & CIVIL SERVICE COMMITTEE**

AN ORDINANCE authorizing the Mayor and the Director of Public Service and Safety of the City of Massillon, Ohio, to accept and enter into a collective bargaining agreement with the Massillon Professional Firefighters Association, Local #251, effective August 1, 2024 through July 31, 2027, and declaring an emergency.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilman Gregg.

**COUNCILMAN GREGG** – Thank you, President Slater. First reading.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Thank you. Ord. No. 74 – 2025 has received first reading. Ord. No. 75 - 2025.

**ORDINANCE NO. 75 – 2025****BY: STREETS, HIGHWAYS, TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE**

AN ORDINANCE authorizing the Director of Public Service and Safety of the City of Massillon, Ohio, to enter into contract with American Structurepoint for the preliminary design and right-of-way scoping on the State Route 21 and Lake Avenue Corridor Project, and declaring an emergency.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilman Paquettelet.

**COUNCILMAN PAQUELET** – Last week during the Work Session, Mr. Pitts and we asked questions of him. Does anyone have any other questions regarding this subject matter? Okay, I would like to make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Ord. No. 75 – 2025 forward for a vote.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Seconded by Councilwoman Creamer. 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. 75 – 2025 has passed. Ord. No. 76 – 2025.

**ORDINANCE NO. 76 – 2025****BY: FINANCE COMMITTEE**

AN ORDINANCE making certain transfers in the 2025 appropriations from within the 1100 General Fund, for the year ending December 31, 2025, and declaring an emergency.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilman Gregg.

**COUNCILMAN GREGG** – Thank you, President Slater. We discussed these during the Work Session last week. Basically, we're making transfers to realign the budget for the year. Any

questions or discussion? Seeing none, I'd like to make a motion that we waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Ord. No. 76 – 2025 forward for a vote.

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**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. 76 – 2025 has passed. Res. No. 8 – 2025.

**RESOLUTION NO. 8 – 2025**

**BY: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

A RESOLUTION whereas Massillon City Council is in support of the proposed plans of the Massillon WestStark Chamber of Commerce (the “Chamber”) and its partners in the effort to revitalize the alley known as Postal Place N.E., Massillon, Ohio, east of 59 Lincoln Way E., into a space to be enjoyed by the community and to attract others to downtown Massillon, and declaring an emergency.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilman Gregg.

**COUNCILMAN GREGG** – I believe that would be Councilwoman Creamer.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilwoman Creamer.

**COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER** – Thank you. So this resolution is requesting Council to support the plans of the Massillon WestStark Chamber of Commerce. Debbie Busby was present on two occasions to discuss the proposed plan of moving a bridge that is located in Stark Park to the City of Massillon the Postal Place alley after its been refurbished by a vendor. We did have conversation; there was some discussion regarding liability, legalities regarding this proposed plan. So after the Work Session last Monday, I spoke with Mr. Wise regarding getting a better idea of the concerns that the City/Law Dept. may have regarding this plan. So he's here tonight. I'm going to ask him to come up, but a few things that have been added to this resolution based on our conversation that I want to bring to Council's attention. Mr. Wise added, per my request, two additional sentences. The first is “Whereas the Chamber has presented a concept for the revitalization of this alley to be enjoyed by the community in which would attract others to visit downtown Massillon”. “Whereas the Council seeks to express its support as the Chamber continues to develop non-city funding sources and a plan for the implementation of the project with appropriate agreements between the various entities”. And that was, I think, the piece that I was kind of getting caught up on. The discussions back and forth with these two entities. Our position is based on the language is to support or not support the proposed plan. So, I'd like to bring up Mr. Wise to discuss this further and answer any questions that Council may have.

**EARLE WISE** – Good evening, Mr. President, Council.

**COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER** – So can you just expand on the conversation we had regarding the concerns from the Law Dept./City regarding the liability and the legalities of this proposed plan and how we discussed it and possibly moving forward the appropriate language that we now have in this resolution?

**EARLE WISE** – Yes. After the Committee meeting last week, I had an opportunity to speak with Debbie Busby of the Chamber. We've spoken a number of times. We've had meetings; I think the first one that I was involved with was back in April and I indicated to her that, at least initially, the concerns are, who are the parties? Who's involved in this and then which parties are involved, at what stages? What agreements need to be in place? I indicated to her that I would like to have some discuss with their attorney. There may be the ability for the Stark Parks to donate these structures directly to one of the entities, Downtown Massillon or the WestStark Chamber. I don't know exactly which and then they have an understanding, the Chamber I'm talking about, the Chamber has an understanding with a fabricating company that would go pick up these structures, clean them, refurbish them and store them. In my opinion while the City may not be directly involved in that, I believe there needs to be some agreement first with Stark Parks about the donation. Some agreement with the fabricating company as to between the fabricating company and the Chamber with regards to that agreement, while the City is not directly involved, if in fact this project goes forward and it becomes property of the City, then that fabricating company who did work on that, I believe, would have some warranties owing to the City, ultimately. So, I'd like to know at least the framework of that, whether or not the City actually needs to be involved in that initial agreement. They need to understand that the City will in all likelihood be a successor to that agreement. There's yet no contractor who will be build the project involved and I understand that. This is a big project. But, I would think that the attorney would be able to sit down with us and give us some type of framework understanding what that agreement might be. The City is certainly, specifically the Law Dept., advising the City would have some things to point out and suggestions and things that we would want to definitely see in that agreement. Then agreements between whatever entity takes possession of those and then the City as far as possession of those, once its constructed, an agreement with moving forward any type of maintenance, repair that that funding entity would have to have with the City and I think the estimate was \$500,000 for the project which is certainly non-insignificant and while I appreciate the public spirit to get those funds put together, that is then an expensive possession of the City that may need, well not may; ultimately, hopefully long beyond any of our careers, but the City will be here and the City will be responsible for some of those things and would there be agreements or a fund for potential refurbishing, repair, repainting? What happens when there's vandalism? With regard to the entire project, the first thing is the bridge. This bridge project and it's not a bridge in what you think. There'll be no bed of the bridge. The bed of the bridge will actually be the alleyway. What is sitting up along Rt. 21 towards Canal Fulton are two of the trusses, bridge trusses from an old bridge across one of the streams up there. I believe they're about 55 feet long and if you picture a bow and arrow or a bow for archery, the truss is like the bow itself. The arch or the curve and then the bottom of the truss is the bow string and of course, if you pull back it gets steeper. This would be just like a bow at rest, laid down on the bow itself with the bow arching over. So, what was discussed and there's some renditions and those are very nice, it's my understanding that there would be four pillars placed in the alleyway. I think last week it was said to three to four feet tall. So you have a pillar three or four feet tall, let's just assume maybe it's this podium and then this bow along with the string sits on, one end of it sits on two separate structures; one on each side of the alleyway and then end of the bow would sit on the one pillar and the bow itself would arch then to the other pillar and lay on that. But, there's still the bow string; it's a piece of metal that would be at the level where just slightly

above this three or four-foot pillar. The arch of the bow or the bridge truss, I'm estimating here, but it's certainly not four feet tall. It may be three to four feet tall, at the peak height. So, if you're in the alley on a three or foot pillar, the top of this would be eight feet, tops, and the bottom of the structure would be at the level of the pillar. So, that is not going to be up and out of the way. In the diagram, there is some type of structure, the two bridge trusses are alongside the edges of the alley, though not touching the alley and I have some concern about how far away from the alley, but they're on each side of the alleyway and then in the diagram, there's some type of structure, a cross-hatch structure, I don't know if its metal or not, is that permanent is a City vehicle that needs to do some type of maintenance. Will that be able to get underneath this at the bottom level, potentially three or four feet, even if you don't start that structure until you're up on the bow, it's going to be head height or lower. Those are some questions that I have about the practicalities. There are then, I believe, seven other structures. There's an old farm tractor, a bus and I think an airplane, I'm not sure. But there was some indication that someone could, as the bus example, walk up into the structure that looks like a bus and take a picture and look out the window or sit on the bench and look out the window and take a picture. That's great, but, is it always open? There'll be ice and snow and rain and slip and fall; those types of things. The City has a great deal of immunity, not always absolute, but more along the lines is will the City be responsible for clearing the snow and the ice from those structures? These are some of the things I don't have answers for, but I'm here to represent the City and these are questions that I have and things that might need to be discussed in some types of agreements and I say agreements because I think there may need to be several of them. Some of which may involve just the entity, the Chamber or Downtown Massillon and Stark Parks, but the rest I think probably, if not at least initially need to involve the City. The City needs to be a part of those or have some input on some of those. In that alleyway which is a public land, public alley, there's at least a storm sewer that drains rain water from those two buildings and runs down the alleyway. It's my understanding that as part of that project that that storm sewer will be replaced. I can't tell you if there are other utilities in that alleyway or not. There needs to be a check for gas, electric; electric seems unlikely to me, AT&T, phone. We have a project right now on Federal and Erie where there's an AT&T duct bank. Well, we haven't gotten there yet, but there is some indication that there's some fiber networks in that street. Where they go after that? I don't know, but those are questions that come to mind when I think about this resolution or this project. I don't know what these seven transportation objects will be made out of. When there is damage to them or spray painting, not trying to give anybody any ideas, but we're adults; those things happen and I think we need to have some provision for who will pay for those. I'm not here to say this is a good project or a bad project, but these are legitimate things that the City will have to address at some point in the future. Again, hopefully not in any of our careers, but if there is some type of vandalism or structure or someone pulls down that alleyway and hits something, there needs to be repairs done and it doesn't sound like any of it's going to be an expense, based upon the cost of the project. So, that's my initial concern with regard to moving forward on just saying "let's do this". It's a different order of magnitude than something like the "Umbrella Alley" in Louisville. It's great and I've been there and seen it a number of times. There's nothing on the alleyway. There's some benches, table, but the umbrellas themselves are well up above overhead and you can't get to those. Yes.

**COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER** – Clarification. You stated there's a storm sewer that needs replaced in Postal Place?

**EARLE WISE** – That's my understanding.

**COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER** – The City has identified that that needs replaced?

**EARLE WISE** – That's my understanding, but it's also my understanding that part of the proposal of this project, which again, I think needs to be part of an agreement, is that the project using the donated money will fix that, replace that and that's great.

**COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER** – Okay.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilwoman Bryan-Huth.

**COUNCILWOMAN BRYAN-HUTH** – Thank you, President, thank you, Earle. Yes. To a lot of what you said; there's need to be lots of communication in between. I want to start by saying, as a volunteer officer of the Downtown Massillon Association, I've been involved with this project since its inception two years ago and then the committees going forward. I don't profit from this. I don't make any money from this. I pay to be a member of the DMA. I don't benefit from it other than if it goes forward it will contribute to our community. I invested in it, I will say that unbiasedly and I can speak from the committee standpoints, not on behalf of them; I don't have their permission to do that. But from the committee standpoint, one of the challenges that we've had is not knowing how we can go forward and move forward to make decisions like what the installments, the art installations are made of. Because we don't have guidance from the City or the people that are about how to maintain them, what, going forward is going to be. The funds or the means to care for them? So, we were coming to the City to make that initial step because we can't go forward with any plans unless the City says, "This space is okay to do this project" and what we were looking for from a committee standpoint was the buy-in and help in these decisions from the City. I do wholeheartedly agree that MOU's or whatever contracts or whatever documentation needs to be applied in communicating where the bridge is going? Who's going to take care of it? Who's going sign the whole harmless if something happens in transit from the park? All of those things, I think, makes a lot of sense and need to be done and I agree with those. I will, just for clarification, it's the WestStark Chamber of Commerce and Massillon Main Street. Massillon Main Street would be the non-profit entity that would be involved with taking over the alley. The Chamber is a for-profit entity and because of that, they cannot. The Downtown Massillon Association is a committee member along with the Museum and some others. And a lot of the decisions that you spoke to that you weren't sure of; we're not sure of either. Because we haven't been able to move forward because again, this...what I see this, and you can tell me if I don't read it correctly, but I see this resolution as just a message of support so that when we do go to make decisions, to contract with artist, to do these different steps, we know that the City is backing us and then however that communication and appropriate agreements, however you would like it worded that we come back and check in before decisions are made on X, Y, Z. We're happy to abide by whatever those decisions are and working in collaboration with. So, a lot of those decisions aren't made. I will say that we do know the utilities; we did meet with the Street Dept. ahead of time; Alex was there, Tom was there. We certainly can rehash those and go over them again and then the grid that's on top is removable because of the utility truck. Mr. Picard was very aware of needing to get through there. The columns are called stanchions, in architectural land and those are to support those trusses because we did not want to put them on the street, per his architectural design knowledge and we did not want to attach anything to any walls because we don't own those buildings. So whatever safety guidelines that the City feels we should follow, if we look to playground regulations, if we look to, I know Safe Kids has a lot of regulations for what you should and should not put in places for child safety, materials you use and things like. Whatever guidance you want to give the committee in that respect, we're

happy to take and move forward with. We just want this to be a super great place to pull people off the highway, to get them invested in our community for us to hang out in and have a good time and whatever iteration of the design works for the better of all is what the committee is going to go with is my two cents.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilwoman Creamer.

**COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER** – I just wanted to state, that was my intent. After the Work session stopping Mr. Wise because I feel this proposed plan would be beneficial to the downtown area, but I also heard from him representing the Law Dept. for the City, all the hesitation. Like the liability, legalities of “who owns this, who’s going to do this, who’s going to cover this?”. And that was kind of why I wanted to remove Council from that conversation. Those conversations should be between the City and WestStark Chamber of Commerce to work out those agreements. Council should not be in the middle of those discussions, so that’s why I thought adding that additional verbage stating that a plan for the implementation of the project with appropriate agreements between the various entities would bring those two together, work it out however it pans out to move forward or not move forward, but those things need to be in place and eliminate us. All we’re doing is, by reading the verbage, is do we support this plan and then leave the rest up to the two entities to work out those agreements for this project. Thank you.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilwoman Cunningham.

**COUNCILWOMAN CUNNINGHAM** – Thank you, Mr. President. I’m fully behind this project. I think it’ll be wonders for the downtown. But as Mr. Wise was standing there and reporting everything, there’s way too many unknowns. But I am in support of this project to go forward.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilman Ray.

**COUNCILMAN RAY** – Thank you, Mr. President. I think I’ve had fairly the same questions; was there a conversation with the Chamber or has there been a conversation of these concerns? Because I think like she said, that is kind of between you guys and probably working together to try to come to a common solution. I’m a general contractor myself and I can get the job done a lot better if I see the plans and have an understanding of how things are built, but I know that if they’re still in the planning stages, I’m pretty sure that the height could be tweaked or whatever it is that has to be done to make everybody happy in the process. I understand, I think my biggest issue was who would be liable if someone got hurt on it. Would it be the City if they were to take over ownership? Those are the type questions I would have. Remodeling, I’m thinking if it’s an entity and it’s a structure, it can be insured. I mean, there’s a way to have that done, I would believe so. But either way, I think the legislation is important because it is stating if we are in support of something that someone is going out their way to try to beautify the City downtown and if we can work together, it shows that anyone can work together to make something possible in Massillon. That’s all I have to say.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilman Marcum.

**COUNCILMAN MARCUM** – So, just to answer another quick question, because I took the initial stab at the draft. I don’t know if what I drafted is what ended up being what was presented on last Monday, but, so the resolution was originally crafted just with the intention of green lighting the grant applications because they can’t apply for half of grants they want to



apply to unless they have a letter from the City or in this case, a resolution from the City saying “we like this idea”. It doesn’t bind us to anything. We don’t have to shell out any money. We’re not promising that the end result is going to be this. Some other comments here; it kind of sounds like the City here can run the show or run the table as far as these agreements. I know I’ve had at least one County Commissioner asks some questions about this project and it sounds like they’re fully behind the project and are willing to work with the Parks Dept. to make what concessions need to be made to make this happen and then as far as the Chamber is concerned, they don’t have a lawyer on staff. So I think if we give them rue brick that needs to be found out, we can all reach an agreeable result. I know I do this on the daily, not every day, but once every couple of months in my day job where we’re the community with the lawyer and we put the project together and then bring everybody else on board and everybody agrees. If somebody has a problem, it’s like, well, go talk to a lawyer. If you don’t want to talk to a lawyer, talk to my people and we’ll see if you guys can agree with whatever changes you want, but, as the City, the municipal entity over here, this is what we like. So, maybe we just need to be a little more forceful with these other entities and say we want this, we want this, we want this. The simpler you make it; the more likely people are going to agree to things. As far as liability is concerned, I don’t see liability as a huge issue here. I don’t know how there’s any willful, wreck less or wanton municipal conduct here and if it’s a “park”, it’s probably governmental conduct instead of a propriety function. So, we’re probably immune from 99% of the hazards that exist out there from this. I mean, if a kid climbs on it and falls, what’s the difference from that or Reservoir Park or out front here, if a kid gets hurt out here. We’re still, most likely, be immune. As far as the maintenance, I did think about that. That’s a good point to come up with. Maybe there’s some funding out there that’ll help, but I believe it would probably be negligent when compared to the \$500,000 to remove, restore, install and build everything. I mean, cheaper than everything else. I think Holly has a comment on that.

**COUNCILWOMAN BRYAN-HUTH** – For the initial workings there is a grant from the Massillon Development Foundation. I believe it’s \$25,000 for repair and maintenance and then I don’t know that they wouldn’t renew that going forward. But, that’s certainly something that we can look into and keep in some kind of agreement that every two years, the Chamber solicits X amount of dollars for ongoing repairs or keeps the coffers at a certain amount or however it needs stated, so that theirs is ongoing funds and it doesn’t take away from any of the City’s monies. I wouldn’t see how that would be. Visit Canton is our visitor convention bureau for the County and its based off taxes and we deserve those monies as much as Louisville, as much as Canton, as much as everybody else and they’re happy to send them our way when we have the venue to do that. So, it gives us a good project to pull from to get those monies.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilwoman Creamer.

**COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER** – Two clarifying questions; you mentioned park. This does not fall under the parks. So just to clarify that, on the record to clarify that. Number two, have you seen any language? Because since you created this, I want to make sure that you saw this.

**COUNCILMAN MARCUM** – Yes, I read it today. I have it right here.

**COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER** – And you’re okay with that verbage regarding “seeks to express support as the Chamber continues to develop non-city funding sources and a plan for the implementation of the project with appropriate agreements between the various entities”. Are you good with that?

**COUNCILMAN MARCUM** – Yeah.

**COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER** – Okay. I just wanted to make sure that, I don't recall who created the verbage, now knowing that you did and then I requested to add this verbage. I wanted to make sure.

**COUNCILMAN MARCUM** – You're good. It probably changed before it even hit on Monday last week.

**COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER** – Okay. That's all I had, Mr. Marcum. Thank you.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilwoman Harwig Smith.

**COUNCILWOMAN HARWIG SMITH** – I do support this project. I think it sounds really great in gathering the funds from sources other than the City so it's not a cost. But, I think we should have something probably written up of who is going to be responsible. Whether it's the Street Dept. I mean, if it would change and it's no longer an alley and we're going to call it a park, then that would have to go to the Park and Recreation Board if they are the ones who are going to be responsible for maintenance unless it's going to stay under the Street Dept. I'm just wondering who's going to be responsible because of their budget, this and that or we don't want to assign anyone. I don't like not having anyone not be responsible.

**COUNCILMAN MARCUM** – I would just say that it can't be a park because if it's a park, we can't do DORA there and that's part of the attraction. So, it'll probably remain an alley unless we did something really funky. Unless we wanted something different.

**COUNCILWOMAN HARWIG SMITH** – The pillars are only 4 foot and then the bridge itself another 4 foot?

**EARLE WISE** – Well, Debbie said last week that the pillars would be 3 to 4 feet tall. There's a diagram which I've seen and it shows people, I assume, of normal height walking and this is well above them. That's not what I see from 3 or 4 foot pillars and then a 3 to 4-foot height at the peak of the bow.

**COUNCILWOMAN HARWIG SMITH** – I would be worried too about the bow string, if that's only with four or five feet, people could run right into it. If it's going the whole length of the bridge, maybe the whole thing needs raised up higher so it's a good seven or eight feet in the air. I don't know. I would be concerned about that.

**COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER** – And this is why this resolution is requesting for us to support the plan. Those details are outside of Council. Those are the things that the City needs to sit down with Massillon WestStark Chamber of Commerce and Massillon Main Street and figure out those details. That's why I just felt like the conversations last week and now today are just outside of our scope. This resolution is being you in support of it or not? And then the rest of the details are to be worked out between those two entities. That's my opinion. Thank you.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilman Gregg.

**COUNCILMAN GREGG** – Thank you, President Slater. I agree 100% with Councilwoman Creamer. I don't want to get into the woods on this. It's not our purview. As this is stating, the

resolution as it is, well, first of all, I want to say that I'm 100% behind this project; behind the concept of this project. The resolution that we have in front of us, especially with the language that Councilwoman Creamer was thoughtful to add, I think I can support this resolution and I think what I'd like to see is let's support the resolution, let the City and the other entities that are involved do their work, do their job, get together and make the agreements that are necessary to be made, get the ball rolling and then at some point, come back to City Council and say that this is what we've got, what do you think? That's my opinion.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – So do you want to make motion to make the change in the verbage then?

**COUNCILMAN GREGG** – No, it's in there. It was added since last week.

**EARLE WISE** – The resolution in front of you is what was put out on Thursday or Friday of last week is my understanding. And I would just state that it has to remain an alley. It can't be vacated or becomes the property owners which there are two buildings beside that downtown and you all know some of the history of some of the buildings downtown and if those buildings need repaired, what does that involve with these structures that will be permanent structures? I understand the top may be able to be removed, but these structures don't get removed and I think there needs to be some agreement with building owners. There was some talk, again, I've heard a lot of different things and the details do matter and if there's someone who wants to paint those buildings, that's fine. Someone that owns it could say "Yeah, you can paint that" and if they need repainted fifteen to twenty years from now, maybe a different owner or we have no agreement, the property owner could say "No. You're not touching my building". Liability, I agree. We have a lot of liability, but some of that also involves proper maintenance of those things. If it is damaged or vandalized and there's some sharp piece of metal. If they're made of metal, I don't know, that has to be repaired; my point and my concern is, great, it's a project that everybody is in support of, but it's not a done deal and there are a lot of different entities and I think there needs to be lawyers involved. I'm not making any money from this. I'm here regardless. I'm not trying to sell everyone on that you should have a lawyer. But in this particular case I think there's a number of entities with a number of different interest that need to be represented and I'm trying to get some solid, if not signed agreements, at least some framework. Because if there is some problem and all this effort gets put into it and the decision is not to do it, that's a problem. So, I'm raising questions and I think they're legitimate and the resolution is the resolution, but that's not carte plange to do whatever and I think those agreements are important to get at least the frame work of details in front of everyone before this goes too far down the road and I would make some joke about crossing that bridge when we get to it, but I won't do that.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilwoman Creamer.

**COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER** – Before we move on, the Safety Service Director, Renee Baker has something to say.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Would you like to come forward? Please do.

**RENEE BAKER** – Good evening. First of all, I just want to say that the City Administration has been in support of this project, but because of some of the potential issues that we saw, these questions have been raised and I just want to make sure that; there's been meetings where these questions have been raised to the Chamber that we need to work out these details. And

so, this is not new. We want to support it, but there's things that need worked out. I understand, like you say, if they don't have attorneys, then we write and they agree. That's great. But that's only of our portion of the agreements and our portion is really that once that bridge is done and gets placed in that alleyway and that's what we've been trying to say. Everything prior to that, the City doesn't have anything to do with. We're not going to get the bridge. We're not paying to revitalize it. We're not paying to transport it. We're not liable if anything happens until it gets into that alleyway. Then is when it would potentially become ours and so, all those other contracts or agreements that need to be made before that, we're not going to, obviously, I mean I can't speak for the Law Dept., but we would not normally make those. Ours are for the ones that we're involved with. And so, again, I appreciate Councilwoman Creamer that this is obviously just support. There are so many details that we need to work. But I just want you guys to know that from an Administration standpoint, we would like to see this. The liability, yes, there is some, but your right, a playground has liability. Other things have liability. But there are some things of this that could be more potential liabilities down in an area where there's drinking, depending on how high certain things are. There are different things. But, again, those are all discussions to just be had. But we've been having these discussions and we're trying to get these answers. And so, I just wanted to make sure that everybody understands; we want to go forward. It's just we have to work these details out and all these things that have been raised have been raised and been discussed in meeting trying to work through them. I'm not saying that we're at a standstill or blaming anybody, but we've just got to be able to work past these. But, again, it's so much in the early stages. I mean, really a lot of those other particulars; I mean, the original contract that was brought to us said that we were going to get all of this. So, again, there's lots of things that have to be worked out and we're willing to work it out, but, again, a lot of these questions can't get answered. A couple of times it came up about the street. Would the Street Dept. be responsible and things like that? Again, those are things that have to be worked out. What if something happens to the things when the Street Dept. is in there doing something? How do we insure that whatever entity is going to always have the money to repair and fix it and those types of things? Because we don't want it to deteriorate and then it doesn't look good. So, these are all, obviously, all these questions have been raised and they were raised long before last week or the week before and that's why we've had meetings after meetings because we would like to see this happen or we would have just said "Sorry, we think it's too much or we're not interested or we didn't like the idea". But we're not. We're willing to take our property and work on this, but we have to get these things answered and so, again, obviously what you do with the resolution is what you do. But I just wanted to make sure that everybody knew that the Administration would like to see this go forward and we can work those things out, but we've just got to have some answers to our questions. Whether that's an attorney, whether that's not, however that case may be. But, that's we need. Again, I think that's all I had. I have some notes and wanted to make sure I hit them all. But, again, we'll work it out, but we've had these discussions and I just wanted you guys to know our stance. Thank you.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Appreciate it; thank you. Councilwoman Creamer.

**COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER** – Thank you, Mr. President. This request does have emergency language and the reason is "To ensure all impacted entities can apply for grant funding and other sources of revenue in a timely manner". So, seeing that, hearing from Council, I would like to waive the rules requiring three readings and bring Res. No. 8 – 2025 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. Res. No. 8 – 2025 has passed.

**8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

**9. PETITIONS AND GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS**

**10. BILLS, ACCOUNTS AND CLAIMS**

American Legal Publishing	-	\$ 7,041.63	Pub. 2025 Replmnt. Pgs. & Website
Visual Edge IT	-	\$ 56.67	Overage Chg. 05/24/25 to 08/23/25
<b>Total</b>	-	<b>\$ 7,098.30</b>	

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilman Gregg.

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

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

8 yes to pay the bills

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Thank you, Madam Clerk. The Clerk will pay the bills and charge them to their proper accounts.

**11. REPORTS FROM CITY OFFICIALS**

Mayor's Report - July 2025

**12. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES**

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Our next Work Session will be Monday, September 8, 2025, at 6:30 p.m.

**13. RESOLUTIONS AND REQUESTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS**

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Councilwoman Cunningham.

**COUNCILWOMAN CUNNINGHAM** – I think this is the place that I can be. I wanted to say the Tigers won last Friday, but what I really speak on; anybody that was there and saw the patriotic band show and I know when the Glenoak band came on the field with the Massillon Tiger Swing Band and they played "God Bless America" and everybody in the stands is singing, I had goose bumps the entire time. It was the most patriotic, most beautiful thing I've seen in a long time and it was great to see both the bands together. And I just want to give a shout-out to our band director, to the kids, to all the directors in the band and thanks to the crowd. They were amazing. Thank you.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – You are welcome. Councilman Gregg.

**COUNCILMAN GREGG** – Thank you, President Slater. I just want to follow-up on what Councilwoman Cunningham had to say and just say the Tigers played a great game against Glenoak the past week and got the first win of the season. Got a big game coming up this weekend against Rabun Gap Georgia, a nationally ranked team. So we hope that everybody can get out there and support the Tigers. Go Tigers.

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Thank you, Councilman.

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 Marcum.

**COUNCILMAN MARCUM** – I move to adjourn.

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

8 yes to adjourn

**COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER** – Meeting adjourned.

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DIANE ROLLAND, COUNCIL CLERK

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MIKE SLATER, PRESIDENT