

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
MASSILLON CITY COUNCIL
HELD MONDAY, DECEMBER 2, 2024**

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Good evening. Welcome to the Massillon City Council meeting for Monday, December 2, 2024. We have in attendance the following City officials: Safety Service Director, Renee Baker, Chief Counsel, Earle Wise Jr., City Engineer, Alex Pitts, Director of Development, Ted Herncane, Steve Pedro, 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, Madam Clerk.

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, Ed Lewis, Mark Lombardi and John Paquelet

Roll call of 8 present

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lombardi.

COUNCILMAN LOMBARDI – Thank you, President Slater. I’d like to make a motion that we excuse Councilman Ray this evening.

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

8 yes to excuse Councilman Ray

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Councilman Ray has been excused. Councilwoman Cunningham.

2. INVOCATION

COUNCILWOMAN SARITA CUNNINGHAM

3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

LED BY COUNCILWOMAN CUNNINGHAM

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Councilwoman Cunningham.

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. 119 – 2024.

ORDINANCE NO. 119 – 2024

BY: RULES, COURTS & CIVIL SERVICE COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE amending the Section 2(D) OCCUPATION LIST OF CLASS TITLES of Ordinance No. 127 – 1997 to increase the Class Grade pay schedule for the Golf Course Grounds Superintendent within the 920 “GOLF COURSE DEPARTMENT” from 14S UN – 16S UN to 20S UN – 21S UN, and declaring an emergency.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, Mr. President. We discussed this with Mr. Pedro in our Work Session last week. He'd like to bring the pay rate up for their Grounds Superintendent to be comparable with that of similar positions with similar courses in the area. This was voted on by the Parks and Recreation Board and passed unanimously with a 5-0 vote. Any questions or discussion? Mrs. Harwig Smith.

COUNCILWOMAN HARWIG SMITH – Thank you, Councilman Gregg. I had a call from a concerned citizen and her concern was, and Ed, you may have gotten a call too; we're going from 14S to 20S to 21S and I know the concern was to get his pay up to comparable and I'm okay with the pay. The citizen's concern was when you're going from a 13S to a 20S, is he going to, what's that as far as vacation and benefits and weeks and if he quits and he's only been here ten years, does he get paid out like benefits of someone who's got a 21S when we do this? When we're giving him years of service that he doesn't have. I can see increasing the pay. Since he's the only one who has that grade under there, I'm just wondering, can we raise the pay without raising that or what's included?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – I think, and we can call Lori up as well, but just to make sure that we're all...the classification and the years of service are two separate things. So, he's already at, I believe they said something like thirty years of service. That is not his classification. So his, and Lori can correct me if I'm wrong; his earning of vacation would be based on his years

of service, not on his classification. So that would not be impacted by this move. What would be impacted by this move would be the range in which he's able to earn his pay because it would bump him to a slightly higher range. Pedro did tell me, he called me this week, and let me know that he was only, this person, though the range would be up to 21, it would only be a 20 for this particular person. If you want more detail than that, then I would have to defer to Lori or the Safety Service Director.

COUNCILWOMAN HARWIG SMITH – So he was given twenty years of service when he started; he's been here ten years. So now he's a thirty-year employee?

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – I don't know the particulars.

COUNCILWOMAN HARWIG SMITH – I'm just wondering that when we do that to people and we automatically...I can see giving the pay, but when we automatically give them years of service and then if they leave, are they paying out on that?

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – I would also, I hear what you're saying, but years of service, like I said, and classification are different. In my opinion, this Council needs to look at the position the person holds, not the person that holds the position and if the position the person holds warrants a 20S, then that is what should be granted because that is what that position is warranting regardless of who is actually in the position. Any benefits or lack thereof that they may or may not receive. That is the position I always take on these because I think when we get personalities involved, we are making decisions based off of a short-term window instead of the long-term projections of what's best for the City.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilwoman Creamer.

COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER – I think we need clarification because I don't remember hearing that he was given years of service. He has ten years here, but he has fifteen years in the business of doing what he's doing. So somehow I missed if we gave him twenty or thirty years of service.

COUNCILWOMAN HARWIG SMITH – I was told that he was given twenty years of service when he was hired. So now he's been here ten years, so now he's got thirty years of service.

COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER – I think we need...

COUNCILWOMAN HARWIG SMITH – So with thirty years of service, is he getting like five weeks of vacation or if he went someplace else, are we paying out someone who's got thirty years of service and getting that lump sum check when they leave as opposed to just giving someone a raise and so much vacation?

COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER – I just remember ten and fifteen years; fifteen years in the business and ten years here. So I think before we even do anything that we need clarification. I mean, we can give possibly first reading tonight and just get Mr. Pedro back here just to clarify that. But I do understand that a 20S or 21S, yes, that's a different classification; a different position versus 14 or 15. Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – I'll just ask if there's anybody from City Administration that can clarify? I know Mr. Pedro's not here this evening, but if anybody else from City Administration can clarify and perhaps we can handle it tonight? It appears that Mrs. Kotagides-Boron can enlighten us.

LORI KOTAGIDES-BORON – Good evening, Council. I can clarify half of that for you. I do not know how many weeks of vacation he has. When you do move within a grade, you don't necessarily get the vacation time that comes with that. That is an option that can be granted, but the payout at the end when you leave is on any unused vacation that you may have had and on your sick time that you've accumulated. So, your sick time is really the basis of what your payout is when you leave and that's for anybody. You accumulate 4.60 hours a pay. So that's where those payouts come from basically. Does that help a little bit? Okay.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – And I do recall Mr. Pedro saying that this individual was given additional years of service. Now, I'm not 100% sure what the number was. I thought he was at thirty now, but I'm not sure on that.

LORI KOTAGIDES-BORON – I believe that he might be a thirty now. I'd have to go back and verify that. I didn't bring that information, but I'm not so sure that is where he's there that he's going on the scale from 20 to 21. So, that would be something that Steve would need to answer.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Any further questions? Yes, Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – I would just add that when we did ask Steve last week, it is only a \$6,000 a year bump in pay going from the 13 or 14 to the 20. So, that would be, based off of what I understand his pay to be would be about 10% to 12%. So if he were to cash out any unused time, it would only be 10% to 12% more than what it would have been prior to this. I'd like to call forward the Safety Service Director.

RENEE BAKER – Thank you. So based on what Steve is telling me, he will start his tenth year in 2025. So his vacation will increase due to his time with the City. So his vacation is only based on his time with the City. So his vacation will not increase.

COUNCILWOMAN HARWIG SMITH – Perfect, that's great.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Does that clarify enough for everybody? Okay, seeing no further questions or discussion, I move that we waive the rule requiring three readings and bring Ord. No. 119 – 2024 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. Ord. No. 119 – 2024 has passed. Ord. No. 120 – 2024.

ORDINANCE NO. 120– 2024

BY: FINANCE COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE making certain appropriations from the unappropriated balance of the 3107 Fire Damage Structures Fund, for the year ending December 31, 2024, and declaring an emergency.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – Yes. As discussed, these are funds that pass through the City when there is a fire in the City. The insurance pays into the City until repairs are made and then we release the money back and that is what this appropriation is doing. Are there any questions or discussion this evening? Seeing none, I make a motion that we suspend the rules requiring three readings, bringing Ord. No. 120 – 2024 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Lombardi. 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. 120 – 2024 has passed. Ord. No. 121 – 2024.

ORDINANCE NO. 121 – 2024

BY: FINANCE COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE making certain appropriations from the unappropriated balance of the 1100 General Fund, for the purpose to pay School District Revenue Sharing, for the year ending December 31, 2024, and declaring an emergency.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – Yes. This ordinance is to appropriate \$37,400 and it is for the purpose of sharing the revenues that we give to the school district based off of tax collections. It is something that we do every year. Are there any questions or discussion this evening? Seeing none, I make a motion that we suspend the rules requiring three readings, bringing Ord. No. 121 – 2024 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. 121 – 2024 has passed. Ord. No. 122 – 2024.

ORDINANCE NO 122 – 2024

BY: FINANCE COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE reducing the appropriations in the 1409 Municipal Road Fund, the 3109 TIF Service Fund and the 3110 Massillon Museum Fund, for the year ending December 31, 2024, and declaring an emergency.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – Yes. This is an ordinance reducing the appropriations in the named accounts so that we can zero them out for end of year. Are there any questions or discussion this evening? Seeing none, I make a motion that we suspend the rules requiring three readings, bringing Ord. No. 122 – 2024 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Lombardi. 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. 122 - 2024 has passed. Ord. No. 123 – 2024.

ORDINANCE NO. 123 – 2024

BY: FINANCE COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE authorizing the Auditor, the Mayor and the President of the Health Department Board of the City of Massillon, Ohio, to enter into contracts with Local Government Services (LGS) to compile the basic financial statements for the City of Massillon and the City of Massillon Health Department for the financial year ending December 31, 2024, and declaring an emergency.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – Yes. We have to compile these financial statements every year. We are using Local Government Services which is, essentially, the State. In order to do so, we do have to pass an ordinance to give the permission to do so. Are there any questions or discussion this evening? Seeing none, I make a motion that we suspend the rules requiring three readings, bringing Ord. No. 123 – 2024 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Lombardi. 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. 123 – 2024 has passed.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

9. PETITIONS AND GENERAL COMMUNICATIONS

10. BILLS, ACCOUNTS AND CLAIMS

LocaliQ Ohio Gannett	-	\$ 475.92	Publication of Sept. Ords. & Pub. Hrg.
Visual Edge IT	-	<u>75.23</u>	Overage Chg. 08/2024 to 11/23/2024
	-	\$ 551.15	Total

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – I make a motion to pay the bills.

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

8 yes to pay the bills

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

11. REPORTS FROM CITY OFFICIALS

Treasurer’s Report	-	October 2024
Mayor’s Report	-	October 2024

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk.

12. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Our next Work Session will be Monday, December 9, 2024, at 6:30 p.m. There will be a Health, Welfare and Building Regulations Meeting at 5:30 p.m. here in Council Chambers prior to the Work Session.

13. RESOLUTIONS AND REQUESTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – I’d like to request, if possible, for Diane; that bill that we get for the copier that we’ve been talking about getting legislation drafted. Do you know what I’m talking about?

COUNCIL CLERK ROLLAND – Yes sir.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – If we could possibly, if you would be able to work with the Law Dept. this week and maybe get something on our agenda for a request for legislation where we'd be able to make so that you would have the authority to pay that bill when it comes in throughout the course of the year. Does that make sense what I'm requesting?

COUNCIL CLERK ROLLAND – Yes sir.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – I just don't want us to forget and then the bill come again and us be in that same position. It seems simple enough.

COUNCIL CLERK ROLLAND – Okay.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – Is the rest of Council tracking what I'm asking for? Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Gregg.

COUNCILMAN GREGG – Thank you, Mr. President. I just want to give a shout-out to the 2024 Massillon Tiger football team on a fine season. It ended sooner that they would have liked, but they represented themselves, their team and their school and their families and the community in a fine fashion this year. So, good luck to the seniors that will be departing. Many of them will be playing at the next level and we just look forward to the 2025 campaign. Go Tigers. Beat McKinley. Thank you.

14. CALL OF THE CALENDAR

15. THIRD READING ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Ord. No. 104 – 2024.

ORDINANCE 104 – 2024

BY: PUBLIC UTILITIES & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE amending sections of PART NINE "STREETS, UTILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES CODE" under Chapter 937 "Wastewater Treatment Revenue Fund" of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Massillon, Ohio, pertaining to proposed rate increases, and declaring an emergency.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilwoman Bryan-Huth.

COUNCILWOMAN BRYAN-HUTH – Thank you, Mr. President. We have spent several sessions discussing this. So this is the wastewater treatment revenue fund ordinance, the sewer system, specific. Does anyone have any further questions this evening? Seeing none, I'd like to bring this ordinance forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Lewis. Roll call for passage.

7 yes; 1 abstention

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Ord. No. 104 – 2024 has passed. Ord. No. 105 – 2024.

ORDINANCE NO. 105 – 2024

BY: PUBLIC UTILITIES & ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE amending PART NINE “STREETS, UTILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES CODE” under Chapter 943 “Stormwater Utility”, Section 943.04 “Stormwater Fee” of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Massillon, Ohio, and declaring an emergency.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilwoman Bryan-Huth.

COUNCILWOMAN BRYAN-HUTH – Thank you, Mr. President. This ordinance is to address the rates increase needed for the storm sewer, specific. And again, we’ve spent much time discussing these issues. One of the considerations was that we move this to a five-year, shortening it from a ten-year piece of legislation or a ten-year fee to a five-year fee and starting that five-year fee at the \$4.50 level. I think the one question I had for Chief Counsel Wise if he’s available, was if we amended the legislation this evening, could we then vote on it or does it need to have something different done?

EARLE WISE – Rule 25 of the Council Rules provides for three readings of ordinances unless otherwise ordered by the Council. That’s when we suspend rules on ordinances. That’s what that talking about. And then Rule 30 also talks about going through the process and it goes for first reading and unless otherwise ordered by Council, again, suspend the rules then it goes to a second reading. Rule 30 talks about second reading and third reading. But no, if you amend the rules, I see nothing in Council Rules that prohibits Council from amending the ordinance and then on the same evening, if they wish, with three quarters of Council, which is seven votes, suspend the rules and then pass it. I believe it’s on an emergency basis.

COUNCILWOMAN BRYAN-HUTH – It’s at three readings.

EARLE WISE – Oh, okay.

COUNCILWOMAN BRYAN-HUTH – But, if it’s amended, it would be at first reading. If I’m amending, it’s at first reading.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – So, based off of what Atty. Wise is telling us is if we amend tonight, it goes to first reading even with the abstention, I believe, Mr. Paquelet would give, the other remaining seven would have to vote in favor of suspension and would be fine.

COUNCILWOMAN BRYAN-HUTH – Understood, thank you.

EARLE WISE – That’s my understanding of the question, yes.

COUNCILWOMAN BRYAN-HUTH – Thank you. With that being clarified, I would like to move that we amend the ordinance...I’m sorry, Councilwoman Creamer.

COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER – I have a question. So with the proposed ten-year plan, it was stated that they were going to need three additional staff members. Two permanent staff

members and one possible contracted employee. If we amend the plan to five years, how will that impact staffing?

COUNCILWOMAN BRYAN-HUTH – We could ask City Engineer Alex Pitts if he has any information on that. I know that by the amendment, they will be at their full rate now instead of later. So now instead of at ten years so those monies would be more available.

COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER – The first five years?

COUNCILWOMAN BRYAN-HUTH – For five years and then revised after that. Alex do you have more to say on that?

COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER – Would there be an impact to your three additional staff members?

ALEX PITTS – So, I just want to ask a question; I hate to ask a question with a question, but are we...so, what are we amending to change this to? Are we amending to change it to the five-year rate at the \$4.50 and it stay at the \$4.50? Or are we amending it to \$4.50 and then “sun-setting” it back? Because that makes a huge difference on my answer, so.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – My recommendation would be to take it to the \$4.50 and then that \$4.50 ceases as of December 31, 2029. But, to clarify, at that time Council would be able to look at the effectiveness of the program, would be able to look at if there are additional or alternative revenue streams have developed over those five years to see what would be the best route to fund the continuation of the programming. It's not a question of whether or not this is needed in our City. It is a question of what is the most appropriate and proper way to fund this. I brought up these issues because I know we call it a fee, but at the end of the day it's an additional tax that we are putting on our citizens. It is a tax that they do not have the opportunity to vote on. So by placing the five-year window, it is placing the accountability on the City to make sure that we use it as effectively as we can. Which I will say under the leadership of Mr. Pitts, I'm sure we'll be done, but it will also allow us the opportunity to look at alternative revenue streams from increased economic growth or whatever else may come about the City and then that Council can decide, in five years, if they want to continue on with this tax/fee or if they want to use alternative resources.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Any more questions?

COUNCILWOMAN BRYAN-HUTH – Well, Mr. Pitts.

ALEX PITTS – So, I would like to add to that. So, I'm hearing that it's a fee, it's a tax; but the thing is that with storm sewer, it's no different than sanitary sewer. The only true difference with sanitary, you are treating it, storm, you are not. You are discharging it to the river. It's essentially clean water that's being discharged back into our environment. That's the only true difference. So, in that sense, it's still a utility that is being supplied for our residents to protect their properties and health and welfare of their property. So, it is still a utility service. It's no difference. I went to a Stormwater conference earlier this year and that's how they've addressed it, the EPA has addressed it. It is a utility; it is a service. So I just wanted to make

that very clear when we're talking about this being a tax or a fee. This isn't optional. We have to maintain our storm sewer system. There's no way around it, so.

COUNCILWOMAN BRYAN-HUTH – And I think the concern was the longevity of staff, is that right, Councilwoman Creamer?

COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER – Correct. If we reduce it to five years, how does that impact staffing? Because three additional staff members are going to be needed with this.

ALEX PITTS – So, there's three options regarding the staffing solution. The first option which was in the study was based off of three employees. One to basically oversee the storm sewer system program, the preventative maintenance program and then two employees to be field personnel to go out and clean the storm sewer systems, camera them and basically do a majority of the work 90% to 95% of the work in-house with our internal staff. That was the first option. The second option, which is the option that I'm leaning more towards is hiring one personnel to assist with catch basins and having that personnel work alongside with the W0astewater Treatment Dept. to clean out just the catch basins and inspect the catch basins. And then, for the investigation of the pipes, that would be done under contract. So we would go out for bid and hire a contractor, receive sealed bids and have it done that way and then we would assess all of the investigation work and then plan our capital improvements that way. Now if its amended to where the fee is "sunset", I would propose we hire no additional employees just because it's a risk on whoever would be hired. Because that fund as it stands would not be able to support an additional employee. So, it depends on what Council is proposing to do tonight, but those are the three options.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – I would also point out, and one of the reasons I'm thinking this way is currently, so with the storm water, we can use other dollars to address these issues and one of those dollars is 1401 which is our capital improvement. We currently are sitting at a 93/7 split. Over the course of the next five years, through economic growth and strong fiscal management which I believe we have in this City, you can move that dial to 91/9 or 92/8 or whatever. Every percentage that we move it is over \$200,000 of additional funding that would go to capital improvement which could assist in funding the work being done. So that is why I was thinking this is that there are means. We are in a situation where we could potentially do that. Now in five years if the fiscal picture is not looking that way, then that Council can make that decision. I just know that when the street lighting fee was in existence, the amount of blow back that we got from our citizens and that was only \$2 a month. This is more than that because it is viewed as an additional tax and I hear you about the utility and the necessity of it, but so are streets. Streets are also a necessity in the City and we had to go the taxpayers to vote on that. So are many of the other services that we offer as a community and those are all funded by taxes that are voted on by the citizens. So, in this manner when we go in front of our citizens and say "Hey, we have an immediate need now. Our excellent engineer has identified these issues we need to address now. So we're going to put this in place so that we can get to work and not wait". And if five years we re-evaluate and if we continue to need that funding, we will provide it. If not, or if alternative resources exist, we'll use those instead. That was my approach for the citizens of Massillon.

COUNCILWOMAN BRYAN-HUTH – And to that I would agree that my perspective for the five-year, it was a shorter quantitative amount of time. You could reassess it later and know that

the need was still going to be there, but maybe in that amount of time, knowing what is coming down the pipeline with hydrogen and all the other things, maybe there were other funds available. Not saying that it wouldn't be a necessity in five years, it will still be, but check where we are, how the work has progressed and go from there.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Anymore questions? Thank you.

COUNCILWOMAN BRYAN-HUTH – Does anyone else have any questions?

COUNCILWOMAN HARWIG-SMITH – I'm okay with reevaluating in five years. I understand the necessity; I don't like it. I know people aren't going to like it, but we have lines that are close to a hundred years old, some of them and it's a huge issue in the City and around the Country and we need to still pursue grants and everything else, but we do need these additional funds even if we get grants to get the match to get the funds. So, I agree on the amount too. I'm okay with that. I mean, when you're talking an increase that's only thirteen cents and we're so far behind to just jump to it now, the \$4.50; it'll bring in some funds, reevaluate in five years and hopefully some of these businesses that we have coming in will start bringing more money in and we can decide what needs done at that point.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you. Councilwoman Creamer.

COUNCILWOMAN CREAMER – I'm not in favor of the five-year. The increases for the ten years are very minimal for residents. If we do have a growth, an economic growth that we have additional funds, we can look at this and we can halt it or hold that rate instead of increasing it every year because we sat here and listened how the age of the system is old. We're finding problems throughout the City and I'm in favor of being proactive in having the funds needed and start correcting things here and now, instead of evaluating it in five years and depending on extending it, if Council approves it. We may not get approval and where do we stand then? So, I am not in favor of shortening the length. I'm in favor of following the plan for ten years. Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Anymore questions? Councilwoman Cunningham.

COUNCILWOMAN CUNNINGHAM – Thank you, Mr. President. You weigh this back and forth and again, our citizens keep getting hammered every which way and I believe in the five-year plan and we can reevaluate it at that time. Because remember, we soon will be having the streets levy come up again and we're going to need our citizens to vote for that levy as well. So, I'm in favor of the five years.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – I guess I would make a motion that we amend Ord. No. 105 – 2024 from the current projected or proposed of increase in the rate to \$4.00 per month in 2025 with 3% increases for the term and changing it to increasing the rate to \$4.50 in 2025 and that will remain in effect until December 31, 2029.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilwoman Bryan-Huth. Roll for the amendment.

6 yes; 1 no; 1 abstention to amend Ord. No. 105 - 2024

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Ord. No. 105 – 2024 has been amended. Councilwoman Bryan-Huth.

COUNCILWOMAN BRYAN-HUTH – I would like to make a motion to waive the rules requiring three readings and bring the amended Ord. No. 105 – 2024 forward for a vote.

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

7 yes; 1 abstention for suspension

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – And for passage.

7 yes; 1 abstention for passage

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Ord. No. 105 – 2024 has passed. Ord. No. 111 – 2024.

ORDINANCE NO. 111 – 2024

BY: FINANCE COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE to adopt the appropriations for the operating and capital expenditures of the City of Massillon, Ohio, for the fiscal year 2025, and declaring an emergency.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – Yes. We've had a lot of discussion about the budget over the past few weeks, but some recent discussion on some technicalities that we're trying to work out to make sure everything is squared away warrants us the need to take a couple more weeks. So with that said, I would ask that we table Ord. No. 111 – 2024 until December 16, 2024.

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

8 yes to table Ord. No. 111 – 2024 until December 16, 2024.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you, Madam Clerk. Ord. No. 111 – 2024 has been tabled until December 16, 2024.

16. **SECOND READING ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS**

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Ord. No. 117 – 2024.

ORDINANCE NO. 117 – 2024

BY: FINANCE COMMITTEE

AN ORDINANCE authorizing the Director of Public Service and Safety of the City of Massillon, Ohio, to enter into an agreement for a one (1) year renewal with Medical Mutual of Ohio for health insurance coverage for City employees, effective January 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025, and declaring an emergency.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilman Lewis.

COUNCILMAN LEWIS – Are there any additional questions or conversation this evening regarding this matter? Seeing none, I make a motion we suspend the rules requiring three readings, bringing Ord. No. 117 – 2024 forward for a vote.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Seconded by Councilman Lombardi. 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. 117 – 2024 has passed.

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

BILL WEAVER – I own Victorian Reflection Flower Shop downtown in the middle of the destruction area. I'm pretty upset that nobody bothered to inform me or come to me and say, "Hey, we're gonna shut your road down, yet once again, for this disastrous area", which is shutting my business down yet, once again, and I'm going to lose my entire Christmas season of walk-in business. This is not fair to me. When they did the streetscape thing, we were told it was going to take three months. It took eleven months. My business was shut down for eleven months. I lost my entire life savings, my husband and I, we lost our entire life savings, we lost our business. We re-opened for four months and then COVID shut us down for four more months and we could not survive. We lost two hundred thousand dollars because we were lied to by the City of Massillon over the damn streetscape, okay. So we closed the Sugar Bowl down which was my life's dream to open that back up. The first week we were open, we did \$8,000 in business. People loved it. They wanted to come in. So when we shut it down, we saved the candy counters and moved them over to the flower shop where we're across the street. We just made \$3,000 worth of chocolates. We just got in \$8,000 worth of Christmas things into our shop to sell for the Christmas season. What the hell am I supposed to do with it? Who's going to walk in to buy it? Nobody; nobody can get to us. The only business we're going to get for Christmas are telephone orders. Nobody's going to come into our store. Nobody's been into our store since the fence went up outside. What are we supposed to do? How is the City going to compensate us? What are they going to do? I asked this question three years ago when streetscape started and the answer was "We're not going to do anything". When they shut us down to tear the other buildings down next door to us which, by the way, did not need to be torn down because there were architects and engineers on the back of the building trying to fix it and were told to get off of it, the City was going to tear it down. I was there, I saw it. My insurance company had to pay me for the orders that we lost. It was \$16,000 they paid us. The leftover amount was \$3,800. It was supposed to pay for all of our plants, all of our flowers, all of the food in our refrigerator. All of the stuff that was perishable that was in our store. The City said they would pay for it. Dave Maley said, "We'll pay you for it. Don't worry about it. Don't worry about it". As soon as the election happened last November, everybody ran like mice. They scattered. The Mayor left, Dave Maley left, everybody downtown left. Not a damn soul stood up and paid me for that. Not a soul. It was \$3,800, I turned in the bills. When the Administration changed, I called everybody up and I said "Who's going to take care of this now?". And the answer to me was "Did you get it in

writing?”. Hell no I didn’t get it in writing. And nobody has paid us yet. Not a soul. I helped elect this Administration and I’m sorry I did because I’m fearful we’re going to lose this business now too. Because we’re going to finish the year in the toilet because we’re not going to have any business coming into our store. What are we supposed to do? How is the City going to help us downtown? What are they going to do? Even at night when the street is empty, there’s no construction people working after 4:00 p.m. They could open Lincoln Way back up. There’s no reason to have it blocked off at night. Take the damn barricades down. Let traffic go through. People can get to us. We could afford to stay open a little bit later maybe and maybe get a little bit of business. Smiley’s could get a little bit of business. The steakhouse could get a little bit of business. Bender’s, Daugherty’s; they have a back parking lot. We don’t. Our business is a lot of seniors. Seniors can’t walk. I can’t walk for God’s sake. Who’s going to walk blocks to get to my store to buy a pound of candy or a pound of nuts or a Santa Claus or something out of our store? Nobody. Where is the help for us downtown? There’s never been any help for us downtown. We’re like the bastard stepchildren of Massillon and nobody’s coming forth to say anything to us. I would just like somebody to think about us and see what they can do to help us downtown. Because right now I don’t see an end to this at all; I don’t. Thank you.

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Thank you. Anyone else?

18. ADJOURNMENT

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Councilwoman Cunningham.

COUNCILWOMAN CUNNINGHAM – Thank you, Mr. President. I move to adjourn.

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

8 yes to adjourn

COUNCIL PRESIDENT SLATER – Meeting adjourned.

DIANE ROLLAND, COUNCIL CLERK

MIKE SLATER, PRESIDENT