

**CITY OF MASON
COUNCIL MEETING
OCTOBER 10, 2022**

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. All those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

ATTENDANCE

The following members of Council were present: Diana Nelson, Tony Bradburn, Mark Haake, Kathy Grossmann, Joshua Styracula, and Barbara Spaeth. Ashley Chance was absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the September 20 Council Meeting minutes was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Vice Mayor Nelson. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

The City of Mason opened its first dog park, Pawmyra Dog Park, at the lower level of the Mason Sports Park with a ribbon cutting ceremony earlier today.

The City of Mason is proud to announce Mason, Ohio has been ranked 4th in the country in “Best Places to Live for Families” by Fortune Magazine. Mason was the only City ranked in the top 25 in the state of Ohio. The new Aquatic Center, Community Center, Red, Rhythm & Boom, the City’s many partnerships, the City’s culture of wellness, schools, financial health, and livability were favorably received by the editors. Congratulations to Council, residents, and the City’s business community.

A motion to authorize the purchase of holiday Come Together Mason e-gift cards for all City employees was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Councilmember Styracula. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

October is International Coffee Month, and the City is celebrating by highlighting all of the unique coffee shops that call Mason home. This holiday season, in the spirit of supporting local, the City of Mason is creating a Shop Small Holiday Passport to encourage the community to support small businesses as part of their holiday shopping. Community members who patronize five small businesses in Mason from each unique sector including food, beverage, retail, service, self-care, and hobbies can submit their completed passport to be entered into a drawing to receive a Come Together Mason e-gift card. The passport will be available on the City’s website beginning November 1.

The Mason Historical Society’s Annual Cemetery Walk is scheduled for tomorrow, October 11 at 7:00 p.m. at Rose Hill Cemetery. Tickets are still available at the Mason Historical Society Museum.

The City of Mason will host the 8th annual Mason Corporate Challenge 5K Run/Walk on October 15 at The Grizzly Golf and Social Lodge. The event is a favorite amongst the Mason corporate community as it brings companies together each year for some friendly competition while giving back in a creative way. Since 2015, this initiative has contributed over \$100,000 to non-profits, selected by the corporations.

Mason Deerfield Chamber will be hosting the Gems of Excellence Awards Night on Thursday, October 27 at 5:30 p.m. at the Manor House. Award winners will be announced at the event.

One of the City's newer partners, The Mason Symphony Orchestra is presenting a Sensory Friendly Children's Concert on Sunday, October 30 at 3:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. at the Mason United Methodist Church. There will be a variety of events focused on children as well as children with sensory sensitive souls. For more information visit masonsymphonyorchestra.org.

The City has various permit fees for construction and Mason City Schools is completing expansions at MECC. A motion to waive permit fees for school building projects at MECC was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Vice Mayor Nelson. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

Eric Hansen referenced an Arts Committee of Council discussion. A motion to declare the Gould Property as no longer the preferred site for the Mason Regional Center for the Arts and identifying State Route 741/U.S. Route 42 Gateway Property, as the preferred site and authorizing the City Manager to pursue related agreements was made by Vice Mayor Nelson, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: ALL YEAS. Council discussed listening to residents' feedback, the gateway property having infrastructure in place, and the lengthy process to research and discuss agreements on a property. Eric Hansen said beginning steps would be pursuing discussions with the Arts Council about their interest in the preferred location. Any further commitments would be vetted through Council.

MASON MILE UPDATE – MADE CDC – None.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Mayor Spaeth said Council rules states public input is limited to five minutes per visitor.

Liz Eichler of 5877 Running Fox Lane stated Arts Council partnership concerns including the Arts Council providing mixed messaging and needing an outside consultant.

Lori Shutrump of 5347 Wheatmore Court said the City should budget and move forward with the 2004 Master Plan. She stated the City is ranked 4th without the Regional Arts Center. Eric Hansen said dialogue will continue with the executor of the trust/Gould property to ensure the City and the executor are aligned on the understanding of all contract verbiage.

Char Pelfrey of 5499 Mason Road wants to keep the Gould property out of discussions for future development. She reviewed Save Gould Park website information.

Kim Ward of 5505 Mason Road suggested removing the Mason Mile and is discouraged by some Council members. She stated Council should investigate Ashley Chance's disclosures. Jeff Forbes stated Council members submit disclosures to the Ohio Ethics Commission. Jeff said Recognition of Visitors is for residents to address Council and not an opportunity for back-and-forth dialogue. Mayor Spaeth encouraged reaching out to discuss additional concerns, separate from the Council meeting.

RESOLUTION 2022-24 DECLARING OCTOBER AS MASON MANUFACTURING MONTH

A motion to read by title only was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Vice Mayor Nelson. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

Brian Lazor, Strategic Planning and Economic Manager, said Manufacturing Day is the largest annual opportunity for the City of Mason as well as the nation to educate and inspire the next generation to pursue careers in modern manufacturing. Mason industry leaders, in partnership with the City's Economic Development Office, are highlighting high-tech manufacturing with activities throughout the month of October. This year, over 13 Mason manufacturers are engaged with this effort, in conjunction with area schools, to promote and teach the importance and excitement of innovation happening in manufacturing. Over the next decade, manufacturers around the nation will seek to fill four million high-skill, high-tech and high-paying jobs.

A motion to suspend the rule and allow for adoption after the first reading was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Councilmember Grossmann. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

A motion to adopt Resolution 2022-24 was made by Councilmember Styracula, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

RESOLUTION 2022-25 PROCLAIMING THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 9-15, 2022 AS NATIONAL FIRE PREVENTION WEEK

A motion to read by title only was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

Lieutenant Bryan Shaw stated Fire Prevention Week is observed each year the week of October 9. The National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) theme for 2022 is "*Fire won't wait. Plan your escape.*" Today's homes burn faster than ever due to modern day construction materials. Individuals may have as little as two minutes to safely escape a house fire from the time the smoke alarm sounds. The Mason Fire Department encourages families to plan your escape route, test your smoke alarms, choose an outside meeting place, and practice home fire drills. He said in recognition of Fire Prevention Week in Mason, the City of Mason Fire Department held an open house at Fire Station 51 on Sunday, October 9. The open house included a grill out, demonstrations, touch-a-truck opportunities, and more. In addition to the open house, the annual "Smoke Alarm Blitz" will occur again as firefighters go door-to-door to check or install smoke alarms and replace smoke alarm batteries, if necessary. This year, the Fire Department will focus on completing the blitz in the Mason Heights and Manhasset Village subdivisions.

A motion to suspend the rule and allow for adoption after the first reading was made by Councilmember Styrcula, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

A motion to adopt Resolution 2022-25 was made by Councilmember Grossmann, seconded by Vice Mayor Nelson. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

RESOLUTION 2022-26 RECOGNIZING OCTOBER AS HINDU HERITAGE MONTH IN MASON

Jeff Forbes read the Resolution.

Vishakha Manek said more than twenty U.S. states and over fifty cities have declared October as Hindu Heritage Month. There are an estimated six million Hindu's in the nation and several more million Americans who have incorporated Hindu practices into everyday life such as yoga and meditation. Hindu beliefs and values can be expressed by the word Hindutva, the spirit of being a Hindu. Hindutva epitomizes self-reliance, freedom of choice, and the essence of responsibility towards our nation and its future. She invited Council and residents to learn about Diwali on Wednesday, October 19 at 6:00 p.m. in the Mason High School Large Commons. This event celebrates the significance of Diwali bringing in positivity and removing darkness from our lives.

A motion to suspend the rule and allow for adoption after the first reading was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Vice Mayor Nelson. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

Councilmember Grossmann and Vishakha discussed not needing to register for the event.

Councilmember Haake said he went to a similar event at the Municipal Center that was enlightening, friendly, and welcoming. He encouraged residents to attend to experience different cultures.

A motion to adopt Resolution 2022-26 was made by Councilmember Haake, seconded by Councilmember Styrcula. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2022-99 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH RACK & BALLAUER EXCAVATING COMPANY, INC. FOR THE CITY OF MASON MUNICIPAL AQUATIC CENTER PARKING AND DRAINING IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$764,485

A motion to read by title only was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

Kurt Seiler said this project combines parking lot improvements with the needed drainage improvements at Corwin M. Nixon Park, adjacent to the Mason Municipal Aquatic Center (MMAC). The MMAC parking lot improvements project will include adding landscaped medians to comply with the City of Mason Landscape Code. Other improvements include an additional sidewalk to provide a connection to parking lots, defined crosswalks and parking lot

lighting. There are significant parking area drainage issues caused by runoff from the Corwin M. Nixon Park baseball fields. Drainage improvements as part of this project will include installation of a storm sewer system capturing runoff from the ballfields and parking lots south of MMAC and conveying the water to an existing stream to the east of the aquatic facility. Most of the work will likely occur in the spring of 2023 with a completion date of late summer 2023 due to anticipated long lead times for materials.

A motion to suspend the rule and allow for adoption after the first reading was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Councilmember Styracula. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2022-99 was made by Councilmember Haake, seconded by Councilmember Styracula. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2022-100 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH THE CENTER FOR PUBLIC SAFETY EXCELLENCE FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

A motion to read by title only was made by Councilmember Haake, seconded by Councilmember Grossmann. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

Eric Hansen said the City of Mason Fire Department is celebrating its 25th anniversary next year. The City of Mason Fire Department has had several consultants evaluate and recommend structural advancements in order to continue to deliver a high level of emergency and fire service to the Mason community. A reorganization plan had put the Fire Department on the trajectory to achieve a full-time staffing model which has been successful over time as the Department currently has 99% of staff positions filled with full-time, cross-trained fire/EMS professionals. In 2012, voters approved a charter amendment that created the current income and property tax model utilized to provide funding for Safety Services. The plan also indicated the need for at least three fire stations in the City to achieve optimal response time standards in the future. Eric said the total annual call volume has increased significantly while the number of fire stations has remained the same. The recent addition of a third ambulance has proven to be successful in relieving some of this burden, however fire station locations remain less than optimal to address response time needs. The Safety Committee met several times in 2022 to discuss future strategies for the growth of the Fire Department. Staff has presented the Committee with information on the City's Insurance Services Office (ISO) Public Protection Classification Rating (PPC). The City's current ISO PPC is a three, on a scale of 1-10, with one being the highest rating. The ISO PCC rating impacts a department's insurance premiums. A rating of three ranks among the top 15% of fire departments in the country. The Department is currently working to improve this rating by focusing on community risk reduction, outreach programs, and the improved documentation of training. Strategically located fire stations, improving response times, would have a positive impact on the PPC rating, which ultimately lowers property insurance premiums. He stated staff has presented information to the Committee on the international fire accreditation model. The fire accreditation program is administered by the Center for Public Safety Excellence (CPSE) and requires agencies to develop a long-term strategic plan to guide the development of the Department. The Safety Committee recommended the City begin the process of developing a

strategic plan for the Fire Department following this type of model. Eric said Council adopted Resolution 2022-11 emphasizing Council's support in moving forward with the development of a formal strategic plan for the City of Mason Fire Department. CPSE offered the most appropriate level of consulting work at the best possible price. In addition, the selection of CPSE assists in meeting several goals on the path to international fire accreditation and an improved ISO-PPC rating. Due to the current Department workload and consultant availability, the strategic planning process is anticipated to take 6 to 12 months. CPSE will work with staff to assess and document the history of the Department, response strategies, staffing models, and plans for maintaining or improving response capabilities. An emergency clause is included in the ordinance to allow for staff to secure the consultants' schedules, establish the timeline necessary to move the plan forward in early 2023, and take advantage of the current quoted price which will expire by the end of October.

A motion to suspend the rule and allow for adoption after the first reading was made by Vice Mayor Nelson, seconded by Councilmember Styracula. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2022-100 was made by Vice Mayor Nelson, seconded by Councilmember Bradburn. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2022-101 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH KINGS FORD INC. FOR THE PURCHASE OF FIVE (5) FORD PICKUP TRUCKS IN A NOT TO EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$275,000 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

A motion to read by title only was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

Jennifer Heft discussed Ordinance 2022-101, Ordinance 2022-102, and Ordinance 2022-103 together. The City continues the strategy developed several years ago to rely on contingency amounts to more closely align vehicle failure with replacement. Having replacement equipment on hand and ready is significant to delivering City services. Staff has been monitoring the equipment purchasing environment as a result of current economic impacts such as supply chain delays and inflation. Staff is recommending moving forward with authorizing the purchase of several pieces of equipment in order to secure the necessary equipment for delivery and use by the end of 2023. Ordinance 2022-101 authorizes the purchase of five Ford pick-up trucks. Two pickup trucks were included in the 2022 budget but to date have not been authorized for purchase because the order bank with Ford closed early due to supply chain issues. As part of the 2023 Budget process, staff is recommending the purchase of three additional pickup trucks. She said over the past few years, several of the vehicles slated for surplus have remained in the fleet as new vehicle purchases were delayed and staff vacancies were filled. The order bank is anticipated to open on October 17 and to close that same day as there remains a significant demand for vehicles. Ordinance 2022-102 authorizes the purchase of two Chevy Tahoe police package vehicles. These vehicles will replace two current Chevy Tahoe police vehicles that are aging out due to mileage, repair costs, and overall condition. Ganley Chevrolet of Aurora has ordered additional Chevy Tahoe's to sell from their inventory. Jennifer stated Ordinance 2022-103 authorizes the purchase of one John Deere 1600 Wide Area Mower. This mower will replace

a Toro Batwing Mower that is in poor condition. This piece of equipment was previously authorized for replacement with Ordinance 2021-179, however all orders were cancelled earlier this year by the manufacturer due to supply chain problems. Recently, John Deere resumed production of this mower with an expected lead time of approximately six months. An emergency clause has been added to all three ordinances in order to move forward with ordering vehicles and equipment when order banks open up this month.

A motion to suspend the rule and allow for adoption after the first reading was made by Vice Mayor Nelson, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2022-101 was made by Vice Mayor Nelson, seconded by Councilmember Grossmann. VOTE: 5 YEAS, 1 ABSTAIN (Bradburn).

ORDINANCE 2022-102 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH GANLEY CHEVROLET OF AURORA LLC FOR THE PURCHASE OF TWO (2) CHEVROLET TAHOE POLICE PACKAGE VEHICLES IN A NOT TO EXCEED AMOUNT OF \$90,000 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

A motion to read by title only was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Councilmember Grossmann. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

A motion to suspend the rule and allow for adoption after the first reading was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Councilmember Grossmann. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2022-102 was made by Vice Mayor Nelson, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2022-103 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH DEERE & COMPANY FOR THE PURCHASE OF ONE (1) JOHN DEERE 1600 WIDE AREA MOWER IN THE AMOUNT OF \$71,303 AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY

A motion to read by title only was made by Vice Mayor Nelson, seconded by Councilmember Grossmann. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

A motion to suspend the rule and allow for adoption after the first reading was made by Councilmember Styrcula, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2022-103 was made by Councilmember Styrcula, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2022-104 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT WITH THE WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS REGARDING VICTIM WITNESS COORDINATOR SERVICES IN THE ANNUAL AMOUNT OF \$50,000

A motion to read by title only was made by Vice Mayor Nelson, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

Eric Hansen said Ohio Revised Code obligates local Municipal Courts to provide Victim Witness Coordinator Services to victims of crimes for those cases filed within the Municipal Court. The County Prosecutor reached out to the City as part of their 2023 budget process, proposing an increase of \$20,000 to the annual cost, for a total of \$50,000, for providing Victim Witness Coordinator Services. There has been no increase for these services since 2013, while the workload and costs have increased. The agreement is ongoing at an annual cost of \$50,000.

A motion to suspend the rule and allow for adoption after the first reading was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Councilmember Grossmann. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2022-104 was made by Councilmember Haake, seconded by Councilmember Grossmann. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2022-105 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT, NOT TO EXCEED \$40,201 WITH WARREN COUNTY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT FOR THE 2023 EDUCATION, INSPECTION, AND ASSOCIATED SERVICES NECESSARY TO MEET THE NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION (NPDES) PHASE II REQUIREMENTS

A motion to read by title only was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Councilmember Styracula. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

Kurt Seiler said since 2004, the City has annually entered into an agreement with Warren County Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to meet outreach and inspection requirements outlined by the Ohio EPA. The inspection services include construction site inspection of Best Management Practices. Warren County SWCD completes inspection services at retention and detention basins. Partnering with Warren County SWCD has given the City an opportunity to consistently meet EPA Best Management Practice regulations at the lowest cost to taxpayers. The City's amount contributes to the cost of a full-time staff member at SWCD who is available to provide these services on behalf of the City of Mason to fulfill Ohio EPA regulations. Part of their funding mechanism is a proportional State match of funds supplied by local government agencies. The 2022 Budget included the City's contribution for this program.

A motion to suspend the rule and allow for adoption after the first reading was made by Vice Mayor Nelson, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2022-105 was made by Councilmember Haake, seconded by Vice Mayor Nelson. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

COMMITTEE REPORTS – None.

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

Councilmember Bradburn and Kurt discussed waiting on a price for the streetlight project on Bethany Road. Councilmember Bradburn and Eric discussed a wing plow being authorized and ordered but waiting for delivery. Councilmember Bradburn stated benefits to streetlights along pathways in Mason and having the Engineering and Building Department staff get recommendations on streetlights along Mason-Morrow-Millgrove Road and along U.S. Route 42 near Ambleside subdivision. Councilmember Styracula said U.S. Route 42 is sparse with streetlights.

Councilmember Haake said he is a long-time resident of Mason and is also affected as a resident by Council decisions and discussions. He apologized for any stress caused by discussion of Gould property as that was never the intent. He continues to look for ways to improve the Mason community.

Councilmember Grossmann said the new dog park addition is a beautiful amenity and is grateful for Councilmember Bradburn's encouragement of the idea. She thanked the Safety Committee for a thorough overview of the Fire Department Strategic Plan. She requested a work session to discuss Chapter 125 in November in the Council Chambers. Eric Hansen said he will send proposed dates to Council for a meeting.

Mayor Spaeth emphasized the opening of the new Pawmyra Dog Park and thanked Councilmember Bradburn for his instrumental work. Councilmember Bradburn said the park is handicap accessible and other items may possibly be added in the future.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Lori Shutrump of 5347 Wheatmore Court said people wanted to support green space but was afraid of retaliation. She has concerns with donating infrastructure to the Mason Arts Council.

Char Pelfrey of 5499 Mason Road has concerns with Councils' support of the Mason Mile Project. She suggested discussion of Gould Park construction be included in a Finance Committee meeting and is hoping not to rely on legal services.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion to adjourn into Executive Session for the purpose of imminent and pending legislation was made by Councilmember Bradburn, seconded by Councilmember Styracula. VOTE: ALL YEAS. TIME: 8:38 p.m.

A motion to reconvene into Regular Session was made by Councilmember Haake, seconded by Councilmember Styracula. VOTE: ALL YEAS. TIME: 8:47 p.m.

ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Vice Mayor Nelson, seconded by Councilmember Styrula.
VOTE: ALL YEAS. TIME: 8:47 p.m.