

**CITY OF MASON
COUNCIL MEETING
January 8, 2024**

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. All those present recited the Pledge of Allegiance. City of Mason Honor Guard presented the colors.

ATTENDANCE

The following members of Council were present: Ashley Chance, Barbara Spaeth, Joy Bennett, Mark Haake, Scott Gibson, and Diana Nelson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the December 11 Council Meeting minutes was made by Vice Mayor Chance, seconded by Councilmember Spaeth. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

The City has begun picking up Christmas trees and will continue throughout the month of January. Residents should place their trees at curbside for chipping and composting. Trees placed in bags at the curb will be removed by Rumpke.

Mercy Health will host several events the end of next week to commemorate the planning and construction finalization of the Kings Mills Hospital in Mason. Council members can attend the Public Grand Opening Celebration. On Saturday, January 13, a public open house will be held for the community.

On Saturday, February 10, Mason Symphony Orchestra will be performing, “Butterfly Lovers Meets Margaritaville from the East to the Caribbean” at the Great Wolf Lodge Sequoia Ballroom. Tickets are available on the Mason Symphony Orchestra’s website.

The City maintains ten tornado sirens that are tested at 12:00 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month. The City routinely inspects the sirens to maximize safety for Mason residents.

EAGLE SCOUT ADVAY CHANDRA RECOGNITION

Chief Ferrell introduced Eagle Scout Advay Chandra. Advay worked with City staff to plan the project and successfully organized a group of 24 volunteers including scouts, troop adult leaders and family members to assist with the project over two weekends. Advay and his team’s efforts minimized City resources needed to continue this program while giving the community a place to come together to help to advance the City’s overall mission for building a culture of community wellness.

Advay Chandra discussed the Eagle Scout project of planting a sunflower field at Makino Park, and thanked the City for their support of the project.

MASON K9 TEAM AWARD RECOGNITION

Chief Wells recognized Officer Nick Motley and K9 Brus for being awarded Narcotics Detection Team of the year by the National Association of Professional Canine Handlers for their success as part of two mutual aid requests by the United States Drug Enforcement Administration.

AMERICAN LEGION PRESENTATION

American Legion Commander Mark Baseman and American Legion Finance Officer presented a check to the Mason Parks & Recreation Foundation in the amount of \$16,855 for the American Legion's partnership with the City from alcohol sales from 2023 City events.

Rachel Kopfler of the Mason Parks & Recreation Foundation and Susan Murdock from the Mason Challenger League thanked the American Legion and discussed progress of the adaptive ballfields at Makino Park.

Mayor Nelson thanked the American Legion and their volunteers.

SAVE THE CHILDREN PRESENTATION

Isha Mantha shared a presentation with Council regarding the Bridge the Gap Campaign on behalf of Save the Children.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

John Looker of 111 East Main Street shared statistics of assistance to veterans for 2023 from the Warren County Veterans Services.

RESOLUTION 2024-1 COMMEMORATING THE GRAND OPENING OF KINGS MILLS HOSPITAL IN THE CITY OF MASON

Jeff Forbes read Resolution 2024-1.

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

A motion to adopt Resolution 2024-1 was made by Vice Mayor Chance, seconded by Councilmember Spaeth. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

RESOLUTION 2024-2 REQUESTING THE COUNTY AUDITOR TO MAKE TAX ADVANCES DURING THE YEAR 2024 PURSUANT TO SECTION 321.34 OF THE OHIO REVISED CODE

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

Eric Hansen said when taxes are collected by the County, the County Auditor has several months after the due date to distribute the funds owed to local governments. During this delay, the County will earn interest from funds owed to local governments. State law allows local governments to request payments of the taxes prior to the required settlement.

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

A motion to adopt Resolution 2024-2 was made by Councilmember Bennett, seconded by Councilmember Spaeth. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2023-108 SECOND READING AMENDING THE ZONING CODE AND ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF MASON, OHIO TO PROVIDE FOR THE REZONING OF APPROXIMATELY 30.13 ACRES FROM B-4 (COMMERCIAL RECREATION) TO R-1 (SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL) LOCATED ON THE EAST SIDE OF COLUMBIA ROAD, NORTH OF KINGS ISLAND AND SOUTH OF KINGS HIGH SCHOOL.

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

Kurt Seiler introduced City Planner, Jordie Bacon. Jordie said the subject properties are approximately 30.13 acres in size and are located on the east side of Columbia Road, north of Kings Island and south of Kings High School. The area was previously owned by Kings Island and is vacant land at the northernmost edge of the amusement park, behind Great Wolf Lodge. The land is currently zoned B-4, Commercial Recreation, which allows entertainment and amusement park uses. The proposal is to rezone the land to R-1 zoning, which permits construction of schools and public institutions.

The Public Hearing opened at 7:40 p.m.

Greg Sears of 5854 Buckingham Lane said the property is important to Kings Local Schools as the district is currently working on a master planning process in effort to relieve growth challenges.

The Public Hearing closed at 7:42 p.m.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2023-108 was made by Vice Mayor Chance, seconded by Councilmember Bennett. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2023-109 SECOND READING APPROVAL OF A MAJOR MODIFICATION TO A CONCEPT PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR THE TOWER PARK DEVELOPMENT LOCATED AT 710 TYLERSVILLE ROAD (TOWER PARK)

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

Kurt Seiler introduced City Planner, Jordie Bacon. Jordie said the Concept Plan proposed for this development has been revised multiple times due to specific site constraints, limitations of the site, and market conditions. The most recent Concept Plan was approved for the site in 2020, but due to changing market conditions and costs of development, the developer was unable to construct the buildings as approved. The applicant is requesting additional square footage for the self-storage buildings to make construction of the project more financially feasible.

The Public Hearing opened at 7:46 p.m.

Molly Stagney and Matt Albert of 5957 Thornberry Court shared a presentation with concerns of the impact the project is having on their neighboring property. Molly Stagney shared concerns of the visibility barrier from the residential properties on Thornberry Court in relation to the project and modifications currently in place.

Clement Sheridan of 6285 Thornberry Court discussed concerns of the lack of landscaping and the buffer from the project to the neighboring properties. Clement asked City staff about the timelines for any future construction of the proposed project.

Jose Castrejon from McGill Smith Punshon shared photos of the plans for increased landscaping for the project, the buffer to the adjacent properties, and the proposed adjustments to building sizes in the concept plans.

Jose Castrejon and Council discussed types of additional landscaping material for the project.

Mark Jackson of 6900 South Gray Road discussed history of the project and the current proposed plans.

Molly Stagney and Matt Albert of 5957 Thornberry Court discussed the need for increased landscaping to creating a visual buffer to the project from their property.

Jose Castrejon explained their plan for additional plant material and the timeline of growth of those materials.

Councilmember Spaeth discussed having the developer meet with the residents to provide updates on current plans for the project and the approval process for concept plans.

Councilmember Bennett discussed approvals for conditions to projects.

The Public Hearing closed at 8:21 p.m.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2023-109 was made by Councilmember Spaeth, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: 5 YEAS, 1 NAY (Bennett).

ORDINANCE 2024-1 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A PRE-ANNEXATION AGREEMENT WITH ERIC ENTWISLE

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

Kurt Seiler said the property is located at 3490 Bunnell Road, located north and east of Avalon Subdivision. They currently have well water and would like to convert the house to a public water supply. The City's standard pre-annexation agreement requires the owner to pay 150% of standard sewer and/or water rates until such time as the property is annexed. The agreement also requires them to petition for annexation of their property within two months of receiving notice from the City or risk termination of service.

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

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2024-1 was made by Vice Mayor Chance, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2024-2 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH STAUFFER SITE SERVICES, LLC, FOR THE GRIZZLY GOLF COURSE HOLE 9 CART PATH BRIDGE REMOVAL & STORM SEWER INSTALLATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$142,560

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

Kurt Seiler said part of the designed improvements for hole 9 includes removal of the cart path bridge, installation of approximately 145 feet of storm sewer and reducing the footprint of the existing pond near the green by partially filling it in. The existing cart path bridge is original to the course and has exceeded the 50-year life cycle for exposed steel truss structures. The wood deck is original and is also in need of replacement. Stauffer Site Services, LLC was the lowest and best bidder and has successfully completed similar projects for the City and The Grizzly. The 2024 Capital Budget included \$150,000 to construct The Grizzly golf course hole 9 cart bridge removal and storm sewer project.

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

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2024-2 was made by Vice Mayor Chance, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2024-3 ACCEPTING THE STATE OF OHIO GRANT, AUTHORIZING RELATED REIMBURSEMENT AGREEMENT

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

Eric Hansen said in October 2022, Beemok Capital acquired the rights to the Western and Southern (W&S) Open from the United States Tennis Association. Shortly after, the company began evaluating opportunities for keeping the tournament at its current home in Mason or relocating it to Charlotte, North Carolina. Mason, along with Warren County, Regional and State advocates launched a successful campaign to retain the legacy of the W&S Open and as a result it will continue to be held in Mason for at least another 25 years. Through the efforts of Senator Wilson and Representative Adam Matthews, \$22,500,000 in the form of a grant to assist in retaining the tournament in Mason was included as part of the 2024/2025 State of Ohio operating budget. Through the Ohio Department of Development, this grant will be used to help with the costs of the project toward facilities, expanding player accommodations, enhancing fan experience and increasing needed infrastructure. Mason, as the recipient and holder of the grant, will work with the tournament owner, Beemok Capital, on fund management and distribution as the project commences over the next two years.

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

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2024-3 was made by Vice Mayor Chance, seconded by Councilmember Haake. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2024-4 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A SERVICE AGREEMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$8,000 WITH THE MASON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

Jennifer Heft discussed Ordinance 2024-4 and 2024-5. In 2020 the City redeveloped its policy related to contributions to non-profit organizations. Under this approach, funds are provided to an organization in exchange for services provided that constitute a valid public purpose and result in a demonstrable benefit to the City of Mason. Typically, the one dollar for every two dollars raised match remains a standard. The City has partnered with the Mason Historical Society since 1993 and the Warren County Humane Association since 2002. Both service agreements assist with providing services not provided by the City and help develop community programs and partnership opportunities.

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

Councilmember Spaeth discussed the opportunities available for residents at the Mason Historical Society.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2024-4 was made by Councilmember Spaeth, seconded by Councilmember Bennett. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2024-5 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANGER TO ENTER INTO A SERVICE AGREEMENT IN THE AMOUNT OF \$8,000 WITH THE WARREN COUNTY HUMANE ASSOCIATION

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

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

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2024-5 was made by Vice Mayor Chance, seconded by Councilmember Bennett. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilmember Bennett said the Park Advisory Board met and discussed the City's holiday events and the Mason Community Calendar.

Councilmember Spaeth said meetings for the Safety Committee and Rules Committee will be scheduled.

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

Council thanked staff for their efforts putting up holiday lights in Downtown Mason and the addition of lights on East Main Street.

Councilmember Spaeth congratulated Officer Nick Motley and K9 Brus for being awarded Narcotics Detection Team of the year.

Mayor Nelson discussed Home Rule Authority and upcoming grant opportunities.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

John Looker of 111 East Main Street discussed House Bill 90 and the reduction in property taxes to disabled veterans.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: DISCUSSING DETAILS OF SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE PROTOCOLS

A motion to adjourn into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing details of security arrangements and emergency response protocols and consider confidential information related to the marketing plans, specific business strategy, production techniques, trade secrets, or personal financial statements of an applicant for economic development assistance or to negotiations with other political subdivisions respecting requests for economic development assistance provided that conditions of 121.22G A and B are both met and was made by Councilmember Haake, seconded by Vice Mayor Spaeth. VOTE: ALL YEAS. TIME: 9:03 p.m.

A motion to reconvene into Regular Session was made by Vice Mayor Chance, seconded by Councilmember Gibson. VOTE: ALL YEAS. TIME: 9:35 p.m.

ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Spaeth, seconded by Councilmember Bennett. VOTE: ALL YEAS. TIME: 9:35 p.m.