

**CITY OF MASON
COUNCIL MEETING
February 10, 2025**

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: Barbara Spaeth, Ashley Chance, Joy Bennett, Mark Haake, Scott Gibson, Josh Styrcula, and Diana Nelson.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion to approve the January 13 Council Meeting minutes was made by Vice Mayor Chance, seconded by Councilmember Spaeth. VOTE: 6 YEAS, 1 ABSTAIN (Styrcula).

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

As part of several City events in 2025, the American Legion Post 194 and VFW Post 9622 request temporary liquor permits from the State of Ohio and approval from Council to allow for alcohol on the Downtown Plaza and the Mason Municipal Campus. Profits from the sale of alcohol at City events will be split with the Mason Parks Foundation.

A motion to approve the sale of alcohol on the Downtown Plaza and Mason Municipal Campus for City events was made by Councilmember Spaeth, seconded by Vice Mayor Chance. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

The Best of Warren County Awards kicked off on January 27, sponsored by the Warren County Convention and Visitors Bureau, the awards aim to highlight all of the unique businesses, attractions and offerings in the County. The community is encouraged to come together and nominate their favorite Mason business or experience so that the City can shine a spotlight on everything Mason has to offer. Initial nominations can be made through February 10 with final voting taking place February 19 through March 5. The winners will be announced on March 14. Community members can cast their votes by visiting ohioslargestplayground.com.

The 2024 tax filing deadline is Tuesday, April 15. For residents' convenience, the City of Mason offers online tax filing, phone assistance and in-person or drop-off filing preparation. Mason residents are encouraged to contact the City of Mason Tax Office with any questions or inquiries related to the City of Mason's Municipal Income Tax. Tax staff are available by phone at 513-229-8535, by secure email accessed via the City's website, or by visiting the Mason Municipal Center, located at 6000 Mason Montgomery Road during business hours.

City offices will be closed on Monday, February 17 in observance of President's Day. Mason Community Center will be open with normal operating hours from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Mason Municipal Aquatic Center will be open with normal hours from 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

A motion to not request a hearing for a D2 liquor permit for Merci Wines, LLC was made by Vice Mayor Chance, seconded by Councilmember Styrcula. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

A motion to not request a hearing for a D5A and D6 liquor permit for American Hospitality Management INC. DBA Courtyard by Marriot was made by Councilmember Haake, seconded by Councilmember Styrcula. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

RECOGNITION OF VISITORS

Christian Mays of 3834 Ruby Drive shared concerns of medical and adult use dispensaries and zoning code updates as part of Ordinance 2025-11.

Janice Roeder of 2706 Ivy Farm Court discussed concerns of allowing dispensaries within the City of Mason.

David Williams of 3825 Brookhaven Court shared concerns related to allowing dispensaries in the City of Mason.

RESOLUTION 2025-5 RECOGNIZING FEBRUARY AS HEART HEALTH LITERACY MONTH IN MASON

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

Jennifer Heft said 2025 marks the fifth year of Mason Heart Health Literacy Month in recognition of February being National Heart Month. Heart Health Literacy Month supports Mason's commitment to building a culture of wellness where residents and employees alike have a deeper understanding of heart health but also broader knowledge about the innovations transforming healthcare that are being developed in Mason's bio hub. Throughout the month, the City will be promoting various programs and activities that revolve around heart health including educational resources, on-campus blood drives on February 10 and February 21, CPR and AED demonstrations provided by the Fire Department, a free community yoga class at Mason Community Center on February 22, heart healthy giveaways for Premier members as well promoting the innovation happening in Mason's corporate community.

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

A motion to adopt Resolution 2025-5 was made by Councilmember Haake, seconded by Councilmember Styrcula. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

**ORDINANCE 2024-101 PUBLIC HEARING (APPLICATION WITHDRAWN)
AMENDING THE ZONING CODE AND ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF MASON,
OHIO TO PROVIDE FOR THE REZONING OF APPROXIMATELY 16 ACRES FROM
R-3 (SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL) TO RES-PUD (RESIDENTIAL PLANNED UNIT
DEVELOPMENT) WITH APPROVAL OF THE CONCEPT PLANNED DEVELOPMENT
PLAN LOCATED AT THE SOUTHEAST CORNER OF MASON MONTGOMERY
ROAD AND TYLERSVILLE ROAD (HERITAGE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH)**

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

Eric Hansen said the developer has withdrawn their application after meeting with Mason residents. Since the public hearing was set, it is necessary procedurally to open the public hearing and it would be appropriate to defeat the ordinance.

The public hearing was opened at 7:22 p.m.

The public hearing was closed at 7:22 p.m.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2024-101 was made by Councilmember Spaeth, seconded by Councilmember Styrcula. VOTE: 0 YEAS, 7 NAYS.

**ORDINANCE 2025-11 FIRST READING – TO REPEAL, AMEND AND ADD VARIOUS
SECTIONS AND CHAPTERS OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE AND SUBDIVISIONS
REGULATIONS**

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

Eric Hansen set the public hearing for March 10, 2025.

**ORDINANCE 2025-12 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO
CONTRACT WITH STRYKER CORPORATION FOR THE PURCHASE OF EIGHT (8)
PHYSIO CONTROL LIFEPAK 35 CARDIAC MONITORING SYSTEMS FOR USE BY
THE CITY OF MASON FIRE DEPRATMENT AND AUTHORIZING THE
SIMULTANEOUS TRADE-IN OF THE CURRENT LIFEPAK 15 SYSTEMS**

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

Jennifer Heft said the Mason Fire Department currently uses seven Stryker Life Pak 15 cardiac monitors and defibrillators as part of their operations that were purchased in 2014. Each ambulance and front-line fire apparatus is equipped with a Life Pak 15. The Life Pak 15 is expected to last eight years from date of manufacture, and the current devices are 11 years old and are nearing the end of their service life. After several months of research, the committee has recommended Life Pak 35 to replace the current equipment in use. Life Pak 35 allows EMS providers to evaluate a

patient's blood pressure, heart rate, oxygen saturation, and oxygen/carbon dioxide exchange. In addition, with this equipment paramedics can complete an EKG in the field.

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

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-12 was made by Vice Mayor Chance, seconded by Councilmember Bennett. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2025-13 ADOPTING CHAPTER 1302 OF THE MASON CODIFIED ORDINANCES AND AMENDING VARIOUS OTHER SECTIONS REGARDING A COMPREHENSIVE PROPERTY MAINTENANCE CODE

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

Kurt Seiler said Municipal Property Maintenance Codes are used to enforce regulations that protect the public's health, safety and welfare. Currently, City staff rely on various sections of the codified ordinances, zoning regulations and the Warren County Health Department to address concerns received regarding a lack of property maintenance. In early 2024, the Rules Committee of Council began discussions on a potential property maintenance code for the City of Mason. The Rules Committee of Council met on several occasions over the past year to discuss the implementation of a property maintenance code in the City of Mason. Kathy Ryan from Wood & Lamping revised the draft code based on Council's feedback at the work session. In addition, Kathy developed another draft that consisted of consolidating the existing regulations found in the City's codified ordinances and zoning code and updating with modernized format and language.

Jeff Forbes said the draft regulations were developed using Kathy Ryan's property maintenance expertise to consolidate the current regulations into one unified property maintenance code. This approach provides a more defensible modern format allowing for consistent enforcement without new restrictions, while also maintaining the City's complaint-based approach to property maintenance violations.

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

Council thanked the Rules Committee and staff for their work on this project.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-13 was made by Councilmember Bennett, seconded by Councilmember Styrcula. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2025-14 AMENDING SECTION 121.03 OF THE MASON CODIFIED ORDINANCES REGARDING MASON CITY COUNCIL GENERAL CODE OF CONDUCT

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

Eric Hansen said in 2022, a temporary Ad Hoc Rules committee was established and tasked with evaluating updates to Chapter 121 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Mason. The Chapter outlined the rules of City Council as it relates to council meetings, rules of procedure, disclosure of confidential information, executive session, council compensation, clerk of council duties and public participation at Council meetings. The Rules Committee was tasked with evaluating the support for creating a property maintenance code and adding provisions to Chapter 121 related to enforcement of the Council Code of Conduct. The amendment being considered provides a guideline of actions that Council can consider when concerns are raised that a member of Council's conduct has violated the Code. The Rules Committee has discussed the Code and believes that it provides appropriate intermediate steps and actions needed to uphold the integrity of the position of Council members while outlining an actionable framework when concerns are raised.

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

Councilmember Spaeth discussed the process from the Rules Committee of updating the Mason City Council Code of Conduct.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-14 was made by Vice Mayor Chance, seconded by Councilmember Styrcula. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2025-15 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE AN EASEMENT AGREEMENT WITH THE WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS AS PART OF THE MASON-MORROW-MILLGROVE SHARED USE PATH AND BRIDGE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

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

Kurt Seiler said the Warren County Engineer's Office is responsible for maintenance of the Mason-Morrow-Millgrove bridge and ultimately has determined the bridge requires replacement as deterioration will persist. While the replacement is the responsibility of WCEO, the City is interested in using the replacement project as an opportunity to widen the bridge to allow for pedestrian and bike access across Muddy Creek. The 2025 Budget included \$700,000 for construction of the new bridge and path. The project is scheduled to begin in late May 2025 and finish by September 2025. The construction will include a closure of Mason-Morrow-Millgrove Road between the City's Water Treatment Plant entrance and Mason Sports Park entrance for approximately 5 months. The detour route will utilize Columbia Road, Kings Mills, SR 741, and US-42.

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

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-15 was made by Councilmember Spaeth, seconded by Councilmember Gibson. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2025-16 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A FARM LEASE AGREEMENT FOR 2025-2029

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

Kurt Seiler said the City of Mason owns seven tracts of land that are suitable for farming and can be leased out for agricultural purposes. While Mason owns other various parcels throughout the city, most of the land is either not suitable for agricultural use or the property is exempt from property taxes and may only be used exclusively for public purposes. Bids for leasing of these seven tracts were advertised and opened on January 28, 2025 with four local farmers participating in the bid process. Lutmer Farms, LLC submitted the highest bid at a total annual amount of \$63,900. Staff recommends entering into a five-year farm lease with Lutmer Farms, LLC for the seven farming tracts.

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

Council and Kurt Seiler discussed increasing the term of the lease from three to five years and savings from the CAUV property tax.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-16 was made by Councilmember Bennett, seconded by Councilmember Styracula. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2025-17 AUTHORIZING EXECUTION OF A CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE AGREEMENT WITH THE INDIANA & OHIO RAILWAY COMPANY FOR THE SNIDER ROAD WIDENING PHASE 2 IMPROVEMENTS

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

Kurt Seiler said Snider Road Phase 2 improvements will complete the widening of the remaining two-lane section of Snider Road between US 42 and Western Row Road to three lanes. The project will include adding a center bidirectional turn lane, sidewalk, shared use path, drainage enhancements and street lighting. The City is required to enter into an agreement with the railroad for reimbursement for their engineering review of the roadway plans and coordination of construction during the widening project. Indiana & Ohio Railway Company is coordinating a project to replace the Snider Road railroad crossing with concrete tubs, like those utilized at the US-42/Tylersville Road railroad crossing. Indiana & Ohio Railway Company also plans on replacing the Western Row Road railroad crossing with concrete tubs and adding lights and gates

to this crossing. Construction of the Western Row Road crossing appears to be on schedule for replacement this year.

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

Council and Kurt Seiler discussed the timeframe of construction with Mason School's schedule.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-17 was made by Councilmember Haake, seconded by Councilmember Styrcula. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2025-18 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENGAGE THE MASON SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF AN ADDITIONAL FREE OUTDOOR COMMUNITY CONCERT IN 2025 IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$50,000

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

Eric Hansen said this is the third year that the City has partnered with the Mason Symphony Orchestra to offer orchestral experiences for the community to enjoy and expand opportunities for the community to enjoy performing arts. At the December 16 Council meeting, Council authorized Ordinance 2024-113 authorizing a partnership agreement with MSO for three concert performances throughout 2025. The Arts and Culture Committee of Council discussed at their meeting on January 30 continuing a free outdoor performance for the public. The committee recommended presenting legislation at the February 10 council meeting to authorize a not to exceed amount of \$50,000 to MSO for the organization to pursue efforts to assemble a proposal for a free summer outdoor concert.

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

Mayor Nelson discussed the Arts and Culture Committee bringing more arts to the community and building the partnership with MSO as part of the City's summer events.

Councilmember Haake discussed the benefits to the community of hosting outdoor concerts.

Councilmember Spaeth, Vice Mayor Chance, and Councilmember Styrcula discussed the recommendations of the Finance Committee and future MSO fundraising.

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-18 was made by Councilmember Haake, seconded by Councilmember Bennett. VOTE: 3 YEAS, 4 NAYS (Gibson, Styrcula, Spaeth, Chance)

ORDINANCE 2025-19 DECLARING CERTAIN CITY EQUIPMENT AND PROPERTY AS SURPLUS PROPERTY AND AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO DISPOSE OF SAID EQUIPMENT AND PROPERTY

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

Jennifer Heft said the City periodically disposes of surplus city property through auction. This surplus is generally comprised of vehicles and equipment that no longer serve a useful purpose in delivering public services. Included in the surplus equipment is a 2014 police cruiser outfitted for a K9, 1983 Ford Backhoe, 1993 Case Tractor, 2006 Ford F350, and a 2004 Ford F150.

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

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-19 was made by Councilmember Styrcula, seconded by Councilmember Bennett. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2025-20 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A CONTRACT WITH WARREN COUNTY ENGINEER'S OFFICE FOR THE PURCHASE OF ROCK SALT

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

Jennifer Heft said historically, the City has partnered with the Southwest Ohio Purchasers for Government (SWOP4G) purchasing program to buy rock salt for snow and ice removal operations along with the Warren County Co-operative agreement for rock salt as an additional option for obtaining rock salt at the lowest price possible. In order to move forward with the program, the Warren County Engineer's Office is requesting a formal commitment from each jurisdiction for their participation in the program. After bids are received and approved, additional legislation will be presented to Council for the actual purchase of approximately 5,500 tons of rock salt for the 2025 – 2026 winter season.

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

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-20 was made by Vice Mayor Chance, seconded by Councilmember Styrcula. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

ORDINANCE 2025-21 AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO EXECUTE VARIOUS EASEMENTS AND LEASE AGREEMENTS WITH PUBLIC UTILITIES AND SERVICE PROVIDERS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CINCINNATI OPEN TENNIS CAMPUS

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

Eric Hansen said as construction continues on the Cincinnati Open Tennis Campus, the City recently received requests for various easements from utility providers in order to advance the project along and complete improvements and upgrades in time for the expanded tournament in 2025. This ordinance allows the City Manager to execute these easements without bringing each individual request before City Council to not delay construction.

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

A motion to adopt Ordinance 2025-21 was made by Councilmember Haake, seconded by Councilmember Styracula. VOTE: ALL YEAS.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilmember Haake said Downtown Committee met to discuss updates from the MADE CDC, Mason Mile master plan, this year's Market on the Mile, E. Main Music Fest, and Mason Mile Rocks. Councilmember Haake discussed an effort through Mason Kiwanis of becoming a "Bee City."

Councilmember Spaeth said Safety Committee met to discuss the Mason Fire Department Strategic Plan.

Councilmember Bennett said the Public Services Committee met and reviewed a traffic study related to the Foxfield Drive extension and discussed the design of the project.

Councilmember Styracula discussed the Welcome Home Parade & Ceremony taking place on Saturday, April 5 commemorating the 50th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War.

Mayor Nelson said the Small Business Committee sent out a letter to the small businesses and updated the City's website with information resources for small businesses. Mayor Nelson provided an update from the Warren County Small Business Development Center.

Mayor Nelson said the Arts Committee met and discussed bringing arts activities to Mason, arts grants, and an arts park.

OLD AND NEW BUSINESS

Mayor Nelson discussed an order from the Budget Office of the White House regarding a temporary pause on all activities related to the disbursement of all federal financial assistance and impacts on grant funding for municipalities.

Councilmember Bennett discussed Mason for Mason hosting a community picnic at Pine Hill Lakes Park on August 2.

ADJOURN

A motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Gibson, seconded by Councilmember Spaeth.
VOTE: ALL YEAS. TIME: 8:25 p.m.