

City of Montgomery
City Council Business Session Minutes
April 2, 2025

Present

Brian Riblet, City Manager
Terry Donnellon, Law Director
John Crowell, Police Chief
Kevin Chesar, Community Development Director
Maura Gray, Finance Director
Gary Heitkamp, Public Works Director
Matthew Vanderhorst, Communications and Information Service Director
Paul Wright, Fire Chief
Connie Gaylor, Clerk of Council
Amy Frederick, Community Engagement Coordinator

City Council Members Present

Ron Messer, Mayor
Sasha Naiman, Vice Mayor
Lee Ann Bissmeyer
Craig Margolis
Catherine Mills-Reynolds
Ken Suer

Council Members Absent

Chris Dobrozsi

City Council convened in Council Chambers at 6:06 p.m. with Mayor Messer presiding.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Messer explained that the roll has been called at the Public Hearing held prior to the Council Business Session and that Mr. Dobrozsi had been excused for his absence.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Staff provided an update on the 2022-2026 Strategic Plan focusing on the progress of each goal from 2022 to current day as well as discussing what was to come throughout the remainder of 2025.

NEW LEGISLATION

Mayor Messer explained that since all legislation has been made available to the public before this evening's meeting he would like a motion from Council to accept the legislative Agenda and read all legislation by title only.

Mr. Margolis made a motion to accept the legislative Agenda and read all legislation by title only. Vice Mayor Naiman seconded. City Council unanimously agreed.

An Ordinance Authorizing And Regulating Under-Speed, Low-Speed And Utility Vehicles

Vice Mayor Naiman read the title and moved for passage of the first reading of the Ordinance. Mr. Margolis seconded.

Vice Mayor Naiman explained that correspondence from Law Director Terry Donnellon was shared that explained this updated version of the Ordinance authorizing and regulating Under-Speed/Low-Speed Vehicles. She explained that included in the updates was clarification regarding the streets upon which the vehicles may be operated has been clarified in this revised version, as well as clarifying the appropriate safety equipment required by the State of Ohio. Finally, to answer questions concerning the applicability of our Traffic Code, subsection 3(D) has been updated to acknowledge that all traffic laws applicable to all motor vehicles are applicable to these same vehicles.

Vice Mayor Naiman asked if there were any updates.

Mr. Donnellon replied there were none.

Mrs. Mills-Reynolds stated that she appreciated the changes but still had one item to ask clarification for. She stated that she seen the definition of a "Gator and a Golf Cart" and wanted to confirm if Gators would not be allowed on the roads.

Mr. Donnellon replied they would not because they could not pass the inspection required.

Chief Crowell clarified that if the vehicle complies with the State of Ohio's applicable statutory requirements and includes appropriate seat belts for the operator and each passenger that it could be permitted but that a lot of adjustments would have to be made for a Gator, utility vehicle, to meet those requirements, so he did not expect that to be likely.

Mrs. Mills-Reynolds stated that she would like to see language added in the future that would instruct drivers of these types of vehicles to stay in the right lane.

Mr. Riblet explained that he would not recommend that being added to the Ordinance or as a restriction as it would be very hard to enforce and control. He explained that he thought if the Ordinance were approved that when the program was rolled out FAQs could be distributed along with recommended guidelines to educate drivers on proper etiquette when traveling on a 2 and 4 lane road.

Vice Mayor Naiman asked if there was more subjective language that could be used by law enforcement in fact there was a golf cart impeding traffic.

Chief Crowell explained that these types of vehicles are described and included in other Sections of the Code.

Mrs. Mills-Reynolds stated that she understood about the car seat rules for children but questioned whether there are laws around animals being secured in a golf cart.

Chief Crowell stated that he did not know that there was anything like that.

Mr. Riblet stated that this was another thing that could be addressed in the FAQs. He stated like requiring the carts to be in the right lane, this would be another thing that would be hard to restrict or enforce. He mentioned the number of pets that are seen riding in cars unrestrained.

Mrs. Mills-Reynolds explained she was concerned whether an animal got out of the cart and was struck by a car.

Chief Crowell explained that under the Code that an animal would be considered part of the vehicle load and it would be a citable offense if it jumped out of the vehicle.

Vice Mayor Naiman stated that she felt there are more animals that get hit by cars running from their yard than would be jumping or falling from a golf cart.

Mr. Suer stated that he felt this was an interesting experiment. He emphasized that he felt it would work as long as people behave responsibly and follow the guidelines. He stated that we could see how it goes for the first year or two and if there were too many problems that this could be reconsidered. He stated that other communities are allowing golf carts, and it is working so he has no reason to think it would not work in Montgomery as well.

Mr. Margolis agreed that if people adhere to guidelines it should work. He stated he does not know anyone who is interested.

Vice Mayor Naiman asked what the timeline will be to allow for community feedback.

Mr. Riblet explained that an article will go in the May Bulletin asking for feedback by the end of May. He stated that the second reading of the Ordinance would be at the May 7 Business Session and the final reading at the June 4 Business Session.

Vice Mayor Naiman asked how getting feedback from the bulletin will work for residents.

Mr. Riblet replied the link to provide feedback on the website would be included or residents could call City Hall.

Mrs. Bissmeyer asked what typical feedback for something like this would be.

Mr. Riblet replied that he wasn't sure as we haven't recently asked for this kind of feedback. He stated he anticipated it would be negative feedback mostly as typically people do not reply if they agree with something. He asked City Council to consider how the feedback would affect their final decision. He stated it is hard to say how many replies might be received.

Mrs. Bissmeyer stated that she thought people would be grateful for this and would be well behaved.

Mr. Riblet stated that with a deadline of May 24, people would have almost a month to respond to share their thoughts about golf carts.

Mayor Messer stated that he did not see seat belts as a requirement on the BMV checklist attached with the legislation.

Chief Crowell explained that what was provided in the packet was the BMV general form but that the police will add the seat belt requirement to it if the Ordinance is approved.

Mrs. Mills-Reynolds asked if staff would notify the Golf Cart dealer on Montgomery Road, Devers, to know about the requirements as people would likely visit them if interested in purchasing a golf cart.

Chief Crowell replied that it was in the plan to let them know.

Mr. Riblet added that most new golf carts already have seat belts installed.

The roll was called and showed the following vote:

AYE: Bissmeyer, Mills-Reynolds, Messer, Naiman, Suer, Margolis	(6)
NAY:	(0)
ABSENT: Dobrozsi	(1)

A Resolution Of The City Council Of The City Of Montgomery, Ohio Declaring Support For The Preservation Of The Federal Tax Exemption Of Municipal Bonds

Mr. Suer read the title and moved for passage of the Resolution. Mr. Margolis seconded.

Mr. Suer explained that information has been previously supplied on this Resolution that, if approved, will acknowledge the City's support to continue to recognize the tax exemption of municipal bonds. As Congress reshapes the Tax Code, we want to be sure this source of financing for public projects is protected. Mr. Suer added that many communities find this as an important source for financing.

Mr. Suer asked if there were any updates.

Mr. Donnellon replied there were none.

The roll was called and showed the following vote:

AYE: Mills-Reynolds, Messer, Naiman, Suer, Margolis, Bissmeyer	(6)
NAY:	(0)
ABSENT: Dobrozsi	(1)

A Resolution Accepting A Bid And Authorizing The City Manager To Enter Into A Contract With Prus Construction Company For The Montgomery Road Curb And Curb Ramps Replacement Project

Mr. Margolis read the title and moved for passage of the Resolution. Vice Mayor Naiman seconded.

Mr. Margolis explained that information has been previously supplied on this Resolution that, if approved, will authorize the City Manager to enter into Contract with Prus Construction to construct the Montgomery Road Curb and Curb Ramps Replacement Project. The resurfacing of Montgomery Road between Pfeiffer Road and Weller Road is scheduled to occur this Fall. To prepare the roadway for this resurfacing work, this project will remove and replace concrete curb at select locations, along with the removal and replacement of fourteen (14) curb ramps to bring them into ADA compliance. It is requested that the project be approved in the amount of \$169,224.00, which is the amount of the Base Bid plus a 10% contingency.

Mr. Margolis asked if there were any updates.

Mr. Heitkamp replied there were none.

Mayor Messer asked when it is expected that the work would begin.

Mr. Heitkamp replied that he anticipated it as early as May.

Mayor Messer stated it would be good for the public to see improvements beginning.

The roll was called and showed the following vote:

AYE: Messer, Naiman, Suer, Margolis, Bissmeyer, Mills-Reynolds	(6)
NAY:	(0)
ABSENT: Dobrozsi	(1)

A Resolution In Support For The Ohio Communities Coalition And The Public Awareness Of State Issue 2 Renewal For The State Capital Improvement Program On The May 6, 2025 Statewide Ballot

Mr. Suer read the title and moved for passage of the Resolution. Mrs. Bissmeyer seconded.

Mr. Suer explained that information has been previously supplied on this Resolution that, if approved, endorses the City's support to the Ohio Communities Coalition which is conducting a public awareness campaign regarding State Issue 2 to renew and extend the State Capital Improvement Program. Mr. Suer stated that this is important for Montgomery to support, and he feels other communities have a stake in this as well. He said that collective support will keep the program in place.

Mr. Suer asked if there were any updates.

Mr. Donnellon replied there were none.

The roll was called and showed the following vote:

AYE: Naiman, Suer, Margolis, Bissmeyer, Mills-Reynolds, Messer	(6)
NAY:	(0)
ABSENT: Dobrozsi	(1)

An Ordinance Authorizing Huntersknoll Court Stormwater Sewer Project Public Improvements

Mr. Margolis read the title and moved to suspend the second and third readings of the Ordinance. Vice Mayor Naiman seconded.

Mr. Margolis moved for passage of the Ordinance. Vice Mayor Naiman seconded.

Mr. Margolis explained that information has been previously supplied on this Ordinance that is part of the assessment process reaffirming our authorization for the Huntersknoll Court Stormwater Sewer Project. The last step in the process will be adopting an Ordinance for the specific assessments, which fortunately came in even lower than the estimated assessments included in the Resolution of Necessity.

Mr. Margolis asked if there were any updates.

Mr. Donnellon replied there were none.

The roll was called and showed the following vote:

AYE: Suer, Margolis, Bissmeyer, Mills-Reynolds, Messer, Naiman (6)

NAY: (0)

ABSENT: Dobrozsi (1)

An Ordinance Accepting Publicly Dedicated Easement Rights And Public Improvements For Stormwater Improvements From Various Property Owners In The Huntersknoll Court Stormwater Sewer Project Area

Mr. Margolis read the title and moved to suspend the second and third readings of the Ordinance. Vice Mayor Naiman seconded.

Mr. Margolis moved for passage of the Ordinance. Vice Mayor Naiman seconded.

Mr. Margolis explained that, if approved, this Ordinance accepts the plat for the as-built stormwater improvements in the Huntersknoll Court Stormwater Sewer Project Area. The plat both accepts publicly dedicated sewer lines specifically depicted on the lots in question, but it also vacates an older public sewer line which is no longer in use. Also, there is a revision to the Ordinance accepting the Public Improvements and easement rights for the Huntersknoll properties. The revision has been made to allow the Ordinance to be more easily recorded once it has been approved.

Mr. Margolis asked if there were any updates.

Mr. Donnellon explained there were none.

Mr. Margolis stated he felt this was a wonderful project.

Mr. Suer stated that this project was an excellent example of a stormwater issue being dealt with effectively. He praised Mr. Heitkamp and staff for great work in working with the residents to solve a problem they were having with their stormwater.

Mayor Messer asked if there would be a strain with the heavy rains that the area has been experiencing.

Mr. Heitkamp replied that the heavy rain that we have been receiving in short hours will test our systems. He added that crews have been sent out to critical locations to ensure there were no debris or blockages in anticipation of flooding.

The roll was called and showed the following vote:

AYE: Margolis, Bissmeyer, Mills-Reynolds, Messer, Naiman, Suer	(6)
NAY:	(0)
ABSENT: Dobrozsi	(1)

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

Mr. Riblet gave the following report:

- City Council Work Session is scheduled for April 16, 2025 immediately following a Public Hearing scheduled at 5:45 for consideration an Expansion of Conditional Use/Final Development Plan Approval regarding Sycamore High School.
- The Volunteer Walk of Fame induction ceremony is also scheduled for Wednesday, April 16 at 5:30 p.m. Richard White with the BZA is the only person to be inducted into the Walk of Fame this year. It is anticipated that the ceremony will be held in Montgomery Park weather permitting. If there is inclement weather, the ceremony will be held here in Council Chambers.
- The Financial Planning Committee is scheduled to meet on Monday, April 7 at 4:30 p.m. The Law and Safety and Planning, Zoning, and Landmarks Committees have cancelled their meetings for the month of April.
- The Government Affairs Committee will meet on Monday, April 14 at 4:30 p.m. The Parks and Recreation and Public Works Committee have cancelled their meetings for the month of April.
- On Tuesday, April 8, interviews will be conducted with three firms for the Safety Center Addition/Renovation project. If those interviews go well, it is anticipated that there could be legislation presented to City Council to reach an agreement with the successful firm.

Human Resources

- Police Officer positions – Background investigations for two candidates are being conducting. There are two open positions to fill.
- Firefighter/Paramedic positions – the written and agility test portions of the Civil Service examination process are scheduled for April 9. Seven applicants are registered for this testing. There are two firefighter/paramedic positions to fill.

Events

- As a reminder, Amy Frederick shared an invitation from Nicholas Dunigan, a recent 2025 MCLA graduate and Fifth Third employee, to tour the Fifth Third Private Bank in Montgomery this Thursday. Nicholas invited the 2025 class, City Council, Senior Staff, and Amy Frederick to this event to say Thank you to the City for hosting MCLA. Light bites and refreshments will be served.
- The Third Annual Mental Health Fair will be held this coming Saturday, April 5 at Twin Lakes. The Fair will run from 9:00 to 11:30 and will host 34 vendors.
- Next Wednesday, April 9 the Beautification and Tree Commission is hosting an event at Terwilliger Lodge from 7-9 p.m. "Backyard Birding" Part I. Part II is scheduled for October 15.

MINUTES

Mr. Margolis moved to approve the March 19, 2025 Public Hearing and Work Session minutes as written. Mrs. Bissmeyer seconded. City Council unanimously agreed.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mrs. Mills-Reynolds thanked Public Works for the great job they did with the Spring brush collection at her home.

Mr. Suer shared a conversation he had with a resident who was very appreciative of the help she received from Laura Braun in the Finance Department when she came to City Hall to file her income taxes. The resident stated that Ms. Braun was so friendly and helpful.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

There was no request for an Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Messer asked if there were anything further to discuss in Public Session. As there was none, he asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Margolis moved to adjourn. Vice Mayor Naiman seconded. City Council unanimously agreed.

City Council adjourned at 7:13 p.m.



Connie Gaylor, Clerk of Council