

City of Montgomery
City Council Work Session Minutes
July 16, 2025

Present

Brian Riblet, City Manager
Terry Donnellon, Law Director
Tracy Henao, Asst. City Manager
Kevin Chesar, Community Dev. Director
John Crowell, Police Chief
Maura Gray, Finance Director
Gary Heitkamp, Public Works Director
Matthew Vanderhorst, Community and Information Services Director
Amy Frederick, Community Engagement Coordinator
Connie Gaylor, Clerk of Council

City Council Members Present

Ron Messer, Mayor
Sasha Naiman, Vice Mayor
Chris Dobrozsi
Craig Margolis
Ken Suer

City Council Members Absent

Lee Ann Bissmeyer
Catherine Mills-Reynolds

City Council convened in Work Session for July 16, 2025 at 6:00 p.m. at City Hall with Mayor Messer presiding.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Messer asked for a roll call. The roll was called with everyone present except for Mrs. Bissmeyer and Mrs. Mills-Reynolds. Mr. Margolis made a motion to excuse Mrs. Bissmeyer and Mrs. Mills-Reynolds' absence. Vice Mayor Naiman seconded. City Council unanimously agreed.

SPECIAL PRESENTATIONS

Vice Mayor Naiman presented Todd and Colleen Valli with a Certificate of Appreciation as the 2025 Spring Season of Beauty Winners.

City Council thanked the Valli's for their dedication in maintaining a beautiful home and property.

ESTABLISHING AN AGENDA FOR AUGUST 6, 2025 BUSINESS SESSION

PENDING LEGISLATION

An Ordinance Adopting The Montgomery's Moment : 2025 Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Dobrozsi explained that information has been previously supplied on this Ordinance that, if approved, will adopt the Montgomery's Moment 2025 Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan update process began in May 2023 and involved extensive community engagement through surveys, focus groups, public events, and meetings with various stakeholders. Mr. Dobrozsi explained that The Yard Company worked very closely with staff and Council to prepare the document. He stated that the document is online for review by the public and the next step would be the update to the Zoning Code.

Vice Mayor Naiman asked if once the Plan were approved if it could be changed if there were updates.

Mr. Riblet replied that the Comprehensive Plan is similar to the Strategic Plan in that it is a visionary document that could be updated through the years if needed without having to amend the legislation.

Mayor Dobrozsi asked if there were any updates.

Mr. Riblet replied there were none.

Mayor Messer stated that the Ordinance would be added to the August 6, 2025 Business Session with adoption of the Ordinance requested at that meeting.

NEW LEGISLATION

Mayor Messer explained that there was an additional piece of legislation that was not originally included in the packet that needs to be added to the August 6 agenda. He asked for a motion to add it to the August 6 agenda.

Mr. Margolis made a motion to add the legislation to the August 6 Business Session agenda. Vice Mayor Naiman seconded. City Council unanimously agreed.

A Resolution Authorizing the City Manager to enter into an Agreement with the Sycamore Community School District Board of Education to Assign Two School Resource Officers

Mr. Donnellon read the title and explained that this legislation is being offered at the meeting as a placeholder while a confirmation of compensation with the Sycamore Board of Education to continue the School Resource Officer Program for both the High School and Junior High is obtained. He stated that the Program has been a resounding success over several years and Sycamore is interested in continuing the Program into this School Year with similar terms for the two successive School Years.

Mr. Donnellon explained the Agreement and the compensation will be finalized before the August 6, 2025 Business Session. He and staff will be working with Sycamore Schools to confirm their understanding as to the cost of a 60/40 split for the High School similar to the past Agreements, and a fixed sum for the Junior High. Council is asked to add this to the Agenda for August 6 with these terms to be finalized so that the Agreement may be in place for the start of the School Year in mid-August.

Mr. Suer stated that the families and staff at Sycamore find it valuable to have officers at both the Junior High and High School buildings. He stated that it is good to have officers onsite to handle issues and is a very worthwhile agreement.

Mr. Dobrozsi stated he felt it was a wonderful thing for schools. He remembered the relationship that retired Officer Paul Payne had with the students at the High School and it was what got many students through High School.

Bonnie Bernard, 7741 Pfeiffer Road- Ms. Bernard asked when a K9 would be added back to be utilized at the schools.

Chief Crowell replied that the City is currently looking into getting another K9.

Mayor Messer assigned the legislation to Mr. Dobrozsi.

A Resolution Accepting A Bid And Authorizing The City Manager To Enter Into A Contract With Barrett Paving Materials, Inc. To Construct The Ham-US22-15.22, ODOT Pid # 115757, Montgomery Road Resurfacing Project

Mr. Heitkamp explained that , if approved, this Resolution would authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with Barrett Paving Materials, Inc. to construct the Montgomery Road Resurfacing Project. This project would include resurfacing Montgomery Road from Pfeiffer Road to Weller Road. The contract amount would be \$935,985.00. The amount of the recommendation includes \$35,999.00 in project contingency funding, which is an amount equal to 4.0% of the Base Bid amount. As a reminder, this project is an LPA Federal Local-Let Project with the Ohio Department of Transportation. ODOT will fund 80% of construction costs for items that are ODOT eligible.

Mr. Suer stated that it appears the curb work went well and is completed.

Mr. Heitkamp replied that all curb work and curb ramps were completed by Prus Construction, and the roadway was ready for resurfacing.

Mr. Margolis asked if there would be any additional enhancements such as the signal at the entrance of Bethesda North.

Mr. Heitkamp replied there would not be that this agreement is specific to the ODOT grant program for resurfacing only.

Bonnie Bernard-Ms. Bernard asked if this project would last longer than the last and expressed her opinion on the condition of the road and the time that it has been in disrepair.

Mr. Heitkamp replied that the lifespan of the resurfacing would be between 18-20 years. He added that in order to qualify for ODOT funding, the City had to wait for the ODOT budget cycle to fund the 80% of construction cost for the items that were ODOT eligible.

Mayor Messer assigned the legislation to Mr. Margolis.

A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into Contract with Compass Minerals America, Inc pursuant to a joint purchasing bid with Hamilton County for 2025 – 2026 Deicing Rock Salt

Mr. Heitkamp explained that, if approved, this Resolution would authorize the City Manager to enter into a contract with Compass Minerals America, Inc. pursuant to a joint purchasing bid with Hamilton County for 2025-2026 de-icing rock salt. The purchase of deicing rock salt for the 2025-2026 winter season is included in the City budget in the 261.000.5380 Street Maintenance, 265.000.5380 State Highway Fund, and 266.000.5380 Permissive MVL Fund. If approved, the request would authorize a maximum purchase of 1100 tons of deicing rock salt in the amount of \$93,467.00 (\$84.97 per ton).

Mr. Margolis asked Mr. Heitkamp the amount of salt used last winter.

Mr. Heitkamp estimated that 1,200 tons was used this past winter.

Mr. Margolis asked what the total capacity for salt storage was at the public works facility.

Mr. Heitkamp replied roughly 1600-1700 tons.

Mr. Suer stated that conducting joint purchasing with Hamilton County has proven to be advantageous for the City as we are able to purchase salt at a lower price.

Mr. Heitkamp agreed with Mr. Suer.

Mayor Messer assigned the legislation to Mr. Margolis.

A Resolution Approving A Contract With Sycamore Township, Ohio To Designate The Sycamore Township-City Of Montgomery Joint Economic Development District Upon Property Located Within Sycamore Township Abutting Grooms Road And I-275

Mr. Donnellon explained that this legislation is a follow up to the Public Hearing held on July 2 in which the recommendation to create the Joint Economic Development District (JEDD) was presented and discussed with City Council. This legislation is the next step in the process for Council to approve the creation of the District and the adoption of the Contract. The Contract will be signed by Brian Riblet as City Manager, and this legislation also authorizes him to execute such additional documentation as may be necessary to implement the District. The newer statutory version requires one of the two parties to the Contract to provide Notice to the appropriate legal authorities that the Township and the City have adopted a JEDD, and our legislation authorizes our Clerk of Council to work in conjunction with Sycamore Township to certify the appropriate approvals.

Mr. Donnellon stated that, if passed, the JEDD itself will take effect 31 days after Notice is provided to the legal authorities, and as our Resolution will take effect immediately, the JEDD itself will be in effect sometime in September. He explained that staff will work with Sycamore Township and RITA to implement the tax structure for the District. Council may be asked to appoint a Board Member once the District has been approved by the County and/or the State. The Contract allows us to appoint one Board Member to the District.

Mr. Dobrozsi stated he was supportive of the JEDD. He stated that it enhances the city's relationship with Sycamore Township and brings in a little money to the city.

Vice Mayor Naiman stated that she felt the most important aspect of this was the relationship with Sycamore Township.

Mr. Suer stated he felt it was a worthwhile thing to do and could lead to a partnership with Sycamore Township on other projects.

Mr. Margolis echoed the other Council members' sentiments.

Mayor Messer stated he felt it was a win-win for everyone.

Mayor Messer assigned the legislation to Mr. Suer.

A Resolution Authorizing The City Manager To Enter Into A Contract With App Architecture for the Architectural And Interior Design Services Associated With The Montgomery Safety Center Addition/Renovation Project

Mr. Riblet explained that, if approved, this Resolution would authorize a contract with App Architecture for architectural and interior design services for the Safety Center addition and renovation project. He explained that on February 10, 2025, the City of Montgomery issued a Request for Qualifications for Professional Design Services for the Montgomery Safety Center Renovation/Addition Project and received a total of (8) submissions.

Mr. Riblet explained that the Safety Center Steering Committee consisting of staff and Council Members, Suer, Dobrozsi, and Margolis met on March 6 to review the submissions and selected Verdantas, MSA, and App Architecture to participate in an in-person interview process. Interviews were conducted on April 8, 2025, with the Steering Committee selecting App Architecture as the vendor of choice to begin negotiations on a proposed agreement. The agreement will include a complete renovation of the existing 17,300 SF building and will also include an addition of approximately 8,000 to 10,000 SF. The original proposal from App Architecture was a lump sum total of \$970,500 and staff was able to negotiate this total down to lump sum base bid of \$810,850. Included in the proposal are several alternate items that the Steering Committee will have to evaluate and potentially include as the project proceeds, therefore, the Resolution Request is for an amount not to exceed \$875,000 which includes the base bid of \$810,850 and \$64,500 for alternate services if needed.

Mr. Dobrozsi stated that the Safety Center was in much need of a complete overhaul to provide space for staff and also for protection of police vehicles.

Vice Mayor Naiman agreed that the project was long overdue.

Mr. Suer explained that in comparison to the time in which the Safety Center was built, today there is a different set of conditions at the Safety Center with a full time fire department and additional personnel. He stated that the facility needs to be modernized to meet current standards. Mr. Suer explained that the firms that were interviewed provided valuable insight into the deficiencies of the building and what is needed to make the facility meet industry standards.

Mr. Margolis stated that the building had served staff well until 2016-2017, at which time it began to see challenges. He stated that the fire department bunk room was way to small. He thanked Mr. Riblet for all his efforts in negotiating the contract costs.

Mayor Messer stated that the City had the greatest Fire and Police staff, and this project would provide them with the tools to continue greatness.

Mayor Messer assigned the legislation to Mr. Margolis.

An Ordinance To Amend Appropriations For Current Expenses And Other Expenditures Of The City Of Montgomery, State Of Ohio, During The Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2025

Ms. Gray explained that as a companion piece to the previous legislation, it is necessary to amend the current appropriations by \$875,000.00 to accommodate expenditure projections for the design work on the Safety Center renovation project. She explained that the FY 2025 Budget included a total appropriation of \$32,615,579 as passed on December 4, 2024, per Ordinance #10, 2024. Ordinance 8, 2025 was passed on June 4, 2025 increasing the 2025 appropriation by \$2,957,141.56 in various funds. This current request is an increase to the appropriation of the Fire Levy Fund \$875,000.00. This change is due to the necessary design services for the renovation of the Safety Center to be completed by APP Architecture.

Mayor Messer assigned the legislation to Mr. Suer.

ADMINISTRATION REPORT

Mr. Riblet reported the following items:

- A Council Business Session is scheduled for Wednesday, August 6 at 6:00 p.m.
- The Financial Planning Committee will meet Monday, August 4 at 4:30 p.m. The Law and Safety and Planning, Zoning and Landmarks Committees have cancelled their meetings for the month of August.
- Currently the Government Affairs Committee has agenda items for August 11. The Parks and Recreation, and Public Works Committees do not have agenda items. Mr. Riblet stated he will provide an update at the August 6, 2025 Business Session.

Operations at the City

- A huge thank you to all staff and Council for our BAMSO and July 4th Parade and Festival. It couldn't have gone any better!
- Mr. Heitkamp reports that Brandicorp/Gordian continue to make great progress on the Montgomery Road at Cross County Highway Roundabout Monument. The foundation work is complete, and the next number of concrete pours will be for the 4 reinforced concrete columns. The cap will follow.
- Straight Edge Construction continues to make progress on the Forestglen Sidewalk project. They are a smaller crew; thus, work is being done at a somewhat slower pace, however they indicated that they will be complete by the contract completion date of mid-September.
- The City will hold two Open Houses for public comment on the proposed Hopewell Cemetery Expansion project on Wednesday, August 13 and Thursday, August 21 here at City Hall. Both Open Houses will be held from 5:00-7:00 p.m. Representatives from KZF Design and staff will be present to answer questions and obtain feedback.

- Mike Downey, the brother of Pat Buschmann of American Legion NE Post 630, has offered to come to Hopewell Cemetery to perform headstone cleaning for graves of veterans. He will be in town on Monday, July 28 to meet with public works staff to begin this project. Mr. Downey is doing this at no charge to the City as a labor of love for veterans. He is a Coast Guard veteran himself.

Events

- The City will be wrapping up our July events with Bastille Day this Saturday beginning at 4:00 p.m.
- City Council Appreciation Lunch for Staff is Friday, August 1 at Terwilliger Lodge from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
- Community Wide Garage Sale- Saturday, August 2 from 9:00 am to 1:00 p.m.

Mr. Riblet requested an Executive Session to consider the appointment, employment, or compensation of a public employee or official.

LAW DIRECTOR REPORT

Mr. Donnellon provided an update on House Bill 96, the State Budget bill that included many Governor vetoed items. One of the most concerning ones for municipalities related to providing County Budget Commissions with more authority to reduce voter-passed property tax millage. Mr. Donnellon explained that while property tax reform is desired this type of reform would have a negative effect on how schools and local governments are funded and would have ripple effects on economic development tools funded through property taxes. He stated that there are rumors that an attempt to override the veto may be coming. He stated that he would continue to work with our Lobbyist and OML to monitor the Bill and will update Council when more information is available.

Bonnie Bernard-Ms. Bernard stated that she felt there was a lot of fluff in schools. She stated that Sycamore Schools has torn down a lot of buildings and they need to focus on long term use of their buildings.

CITY COUNCIL REPORTS

Mrs. Bissmeyer

Mrs. Bissmeyer was absent from the meeting.

Mrs. Mills-Reynolds

Mrs. Mills-Reynolds was absent from the meeting.

Mr. Dobrozsi

Mr. Dobrozsi thanked staff for all their work on the July 3 & 4 events.

Mr. Dobrozsi reported on the following:

The Sister Cities Commission is working on Bastille Day. They have 16 restaurants participating. The City has also obtained new credit card machines which will make it easier in purchasing drink tickets.

The Arts Commission is finalizing the details for a Fall Food Tour in September. They are also setting all the Live at the Uni Concert Series dates. He explained this year registration would be done event by event rather than registering for all dates at one time. He explained this is an effort to ensure that people can get into the concert they will actually attend and deter no-shows. Mr. Dobrozsi also praised the Arts Commission for their Ferris Bueller float in the July 4th Parade. He stated that it was very entertaining and creative.

Mr. Dobrozsi reminded Council that the annual Council Staff Appreciation Pizza Lunch is scheduled for Friday, August 1 at Terwilliger Lodge. He requested that another Council member help him to pick up items at Kroger and to meet at Terwilliger Lodge at 10:40 on that Friday. He explained that he would work with Ms. Gaylor on the setup and other preparations.

Mr. Dobrozsi stated that while on a family trip to Washington D.C., he met with Congressman Greg Landsman to thank him for his support of the City.

Vice Mayor Naiman

Vice Mayor Naiman thanked staff for facilitating a wonderful July 3rd BAMSO concert and July 4th celebration.

Vice Mayor Naiman stated that she would be out of town from July 26 to August 9.

Mr. Suer

Mr. Suer stated the Landmarks Commission met and approved three projects.

Mr. Suer also complimented staff of the July 4th events and how well attended all the events were.

Mr. Margolis

Mr. Margolis echoed Council members on the wonderful July 4th events. He stated that he could see the influence of Julie Machon in all the events.

Mr. Margolis reported on the various meetings he had recently attended including the Ohio Public Works Commission, Hamilton County Addiction Response Coalition, and the Hamilton County Emergency Management Agency.

Mr. Margolis reported that the Environmental Advisory Commission participated in the Evergreen Presbyterian Church Earth Care Festival.

Mayor Messer

Mayor Messer stated how special it was to recognize four Vietnam Veterans at the July 3rd BAMSO concert. He praised Mary Jo Byrnes and Julie Machon for making these recognitions possible. He stated how wonderful the entire July 4th celebrations were.

MINUTES

Mr. Margolis moved to approve the July 2 Public Hearing and Business Session minutes as written. Vice Mayor Naiman seconded. City Council unanimously agreed.

MAYORS COURT REPORT

Mayor Messer explained that the June Mayors Court report was included in the packet and asked for a motion to disburse the funds collected.

Mr. Margolis made a motion to disburse the June Mayors Court Collections in the amount of \$10,545. Mr. Dobrozsi seconded. City Council unanimously agreed.

375 **OTHER BUSINESS**

376
377 **New Liquor License**—Chief Crowell explained that staff had received a notice from the Ohio Division of Liquor
378 Control for a transfer of an existing liquor permit from Mehul Enterprises LLC to Best Indian LLC dba Tandoor
379 India Restaurant, 8702 Market Place Lane. He stated the request was due to a change of ownership of the restaurant
380 and he had no issues of concern. He recommended that there is no hearing needed.

381
382 Mr. Margolis made a motion not to request a hearing on the requested liquor permit. Vice Mayor Naiman seconded.
383 City Council unanimously agreed.
384

385 **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

386
387 Mayor Messer asked for a motion to adjourn into an Executive Session to consider the appointment, employment
388 or compensation of a public employee.
389

390 Mr. Margolis made a motion to adjourn into an Executive Session to consider the appointment, employment or
391 compensation of a public employee. Vice Mayor Naiman seconded.
392

393 The roll was called and showed the following vote:

394
395 AYE: Dobrozsi, Messer, Naiman, Suer, Margolis (5)
396 NAY: (0)
397 ABSENT: Bissmeyer, Mills-Reynolds (2)
398

399 City Council adjourned into Executive Session at 7:10 p.m.
400

401 City Council reconvened into Public Session at 7:15 p.m.
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403 **ADJOURNMENT**

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405 Mayor Messer asked for a motion to adjourn.

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407 Mr. Margolis moved to adjourn. Vice Mayor Naiman seconded. City Council unanimously agreed.
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409 City Council adjourned at 7:15 p.m.
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414



Connie Gaylor, Clerk of Council