

VILLAGE OF MINSTER, OHIO
COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
Tuesday, March 17, 2026

Council Meeting: Council convened at 6:30 pm in Council Chambers with the following council members present: Travis Wilges, Trey Steele, Curt Albers, Nicole Clune, and Craig Sherman. Also, present were Craig Oldiges (Mayor), Don Harrod (Administrator), Jim Hearn (Solicitor) and Jim Cain (Fiscal Officer).

Attendance: Eric Morris, (Police Chief), The Evening Leader, The Daily Standard

Mayor Oldiges called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the February 17, 2026, Minutes: Clune and Steele motioned to accept the minutes from February 17, 2026 meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Sherman and Albers motioned to excuse council member Osterloh. Motion passed unanimously.

Visitors: Pete Falk (Minster) was in attendance for the discussion on Ordinance 26-02-01. Dave Meyer (Minster) was in attendance to discuss Operation BBQ Relief. They will be in town April 25 at Four Seasons park to feed the firefighters. They will be feeding Minster and four neighboring departments. Also in attendance was Chance Hageman, (Minster High School student) to view the operations of council.

ORDINANCE AND RESOLUTIONS:

Ordinance 26-02-01: Discussion, suspend, pass and adopt an ordinance narrowing a portion of the right-of-way of Second Street between Lakewood Drive and Hamilton Street within the Village of Minster.

A month ago, the street committee met to discuss a request submitted by the property owners whose land is adjacent to the right of way of Second Street between Lakewood Drive and Hamilton Street. The property owners are asking the village to vacate this right-of-way.

As you know, Second Street going east stops at Garfield Street, however, east of Garfield a 50-foot right-of-way remains between Garfield Street and Hamilton Street. This right-of-way exists so that Second Street can be extended through to Hamilton Street, if that was ever the desire. Originally, the right-of-way went through to Paris Street, however, this part of the right-of-way was vacated at the request of Weigandt Development so that their Park Place Subdivision could be constructed.

To give council a little history on the discussion, back in 1974 an ordinance was passed that states that Second Street is to be opened by the property owner or Village by written request only. Then in 1991 another ordinance was passed that states that Second Street is to be opened by the property owners or Village only by mutual agreement of the Village and a majority of lot owners (1 vote per lot) on Second Street between Garfield Street and Hamilton Street. So, the topic of whether Second Street should go through has been a topic of discussion for several years.

The property owners are requesting the entire right-of-way be vacated, however, if the village wants to maintain the sidewalk that goes through the right-of-way of Second Street, I suggest that the right-of-way

only be narrowed. The Ohio Revised Code does give the legislative body that ability to narrow a right-of-way.

Narrowing the right of way allows the village to keep the sidewalk in place. If the right-of-way was vacated, we would then have to get an ingress/egress easement from the property owners to maintain the sidewalk, because they would own the land the sidewalk is on. By narrowing the right-of-way, the village maintains ownership of the right-of-way portion for the sidewalk and the remaining land outside of the right-of-way becomes the property of the adjacent homeowners. My suggestion is to narrow the right-of-way from its original 50 feet to 12 or 15 feet. This allows the village to keep the sidewalk in place and have three and a half or five feet on either side of the sidewalk for maintenance of the sidewalk. At the last meeting, it was suggested that the village keep a 15-foot right-of-way as this would give five feet on each side of the sidewalk.

I have prepared the ordinance for the narrowing of the right-of-way to 15 feet, however, if council wants to vacate the entire right-of-way we can amend the ordinance at its second reading. I have also listed the ordinance as an emergency, so that after the second reading the ordinance would go into effect immediately as requested by the property owners.

A motion to suspend the three readings of Ordinance 26-02-01 and declare an emergency by Clune and Albers. Motion passed unanimously.

Wilges and Steele motioned to pass and adopt Ordinance 26-02-01. Motion passed unanimously.

Ordinance 26-03-01: Discussion, suspend, pass and adopt an ordinance adopting annual appropriations for 2025 and declaring an emergency.

At the end of last year, Council passed an interim budget until final numbers for 2025 could be compiled. The ordinance under consideration tonight is for the final budget for the remainder of 2026. This year's total annual appropriations are \$38,821,195.00.

In your packet is a copy of the ordinance. We will briefly go over and hit the highlights of the budget at the meeting. However, so that we can conclude the budgetary process for this year and get everything submitted to the budget commission of the county as soon as possible, we would like to suspend, pass and adopt the budget at this meeting.

A motion to suspend the three readings of Ordinance 26-03-01 and declare an emergency by Albers and Steele. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion to pass and adopt Ordinance 26-03-01 by Wilges and Clune. Motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 26-03-01: Discussion, suspend, pass and adopt a resolution transferring funds and declaring an emergency.

During the annual appropriations process, there are several transfers that need to be made to get money into various accounts. This year is no different, as there are fourteen transfers that need to be made as part of the budgeting process. These transfers are as follows:

- ✓ \$680,000.00 from the General Fund to the PWD Accounts
- ✓ \$130,000.00 from the General Fund to the Pool Accounts

- ✓ \$700,000.00 from the General Fund to the Capital Improvement Account
- ✓ \$550,000.00 from the General Fund to the KWH Tax Account
- ✓ \$2,000,000.00 from the General Fund to the Capital Improvements Account
- ✓ \$100,000.00 from the Capital Improvement Fund to the Industrial Park Account
- ✓ \$280,000.00 from the Capital Improvement Fund to the Northeast Development Accounts
- ✓ \$25,000.00 from the Capital Improvement Fund to the Sanitary Sewer Replacement Accounts
- ✓ \$86,846.19 from the Northwest Development to Capital Improvement Accounts
- ✓ \$341.87 from the Police Department Renovation Fund to the Capital Improvement Accounts
- ✓ \$200,000.00 from the Water Fund to the Water Plant Renovation Fund
- ✓ \$325,000.00 from the Wastewater Fund to the WWTP Debt Service Fund
- ✓ \$4000,000.00 from the Wastewater Fund to the WWTP Upgrade Fund
- ✓ \$500,000.00 from the Electric Fund to the Electrical System Upgrade Accounts

In order to allow these transfers to occur, council should suspend, pass and adopt this resolution.

Wilges and Steele motioned to suspend the three readings of Resolution 26-03-01 and declare an emergency. Motion passed unanimously.

Sherman and Steele motioned to pass and adopt Resolution 26-03-01. Motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 26-03-02: Discussion, suspend, pass and adopt a resolution setting a date, time and place for a public hearing to consider an amendment to the official zoning map of the Village of Minster and declaring an emergency.

On February 25th, the village of Minster Planning Commission held a public hearing to consider an amendment to the official zoning map of the village submitted by David and Tina Meyer. The Meyers seek to change the zoning of an area on South Garfield Street from Third Street to Fourth Street from a General Commercial (C-2) district to a Single and Double Family Residential (R-1) district. At the end of the public hearing, the Planning Commission voted to deny the zoning change and to leave the area zoned as a commercial district.

According to the zoning code, within ten days after the public hearing, the planning commission shall submit to the village council a recommendation of approval, denial, or some modification of the

proposed change or amendment. The Planning Commission is recommending to the Village Council that the amendment request be denied.

Upon receipt of such recommendation concerning a change, the village council shall by resolution set a time for a public hearing of the proposed change or amendment, The resolution before you, does just that. Once a date and time is chosen by resolution, a public notice and letters must be sent to all property owners within the area notifying them of the public hearing. In addition, the Village Fiscal Officer shall cause to be prepared and placed on file in the Village office, at least fifteen days prior to such public hearing a copy of any ordinance proposed to be enacted in the event the recommendation of the planning commission was followed. Once the public hearing is held, Council has thirty days to adopt or deny the recommendation of the planning commission.

The prepared resolution sets a public hearing to consider the recommendation of the planning commission for May 6, 2026, at 6:30 pm in the village council chambers.

Steel and Clune motioned to suspend the three readings of Resolution 26-03-02 and declare an emergency. Motion passed unanimously.

Sherman and Wilges motioned to pass and adopt Resolution 26-06-02. Motion passed unanimously.

Ordinance 26-03-02: Discussion, acceptance of bids, suspend, pass and adopt an ordinance awarding the bid for the Fourth Street Brick Repair Project and declaring an emergency.

On February 26th, the Village opened the bids for the Fourth Street Brick Replacement Project. This project is to replace the bricks on the section of Fourth Street that goes over the canal. The engineer's estimate for the project was \$188,765.00. Only one bid was received and that was from Fenson Contracting:

Fenson Contracting	\$226,000.00
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This bid is approximately \$37,000.00 higher than the estimate. A bid must fall within twenty percent of the estimate to be accepted, and this bid barely falls within that twenty percent threshold. In this year's appropriations, we budgeted for the project in the capital improvement fund.

Fenson Contracting has completed other work for the village, and we find them a reputable company. Fenson is going to subcontract the brick work out to Decorative Paving Company who have extensive experience laying brick pavers.

If council wants to move forward with the project, they will need to accept the bid by passage of a motion, and then pass the ordinance awarding the bid to Fenson Contracting.

Steele and Wilges motioned to accept the bid from Fenson Contracting. Motion passed unanimously.

Having only received one bid, the project was not awarded and Council asked that the project be readvertised for bid.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

STREETS: Met 2/20 and discussed topics including: developing a capital improvement plan through 2031, 2026 minor street resurfacing, a request to eliminate parking on S. Lincoln Dr. and concerns about slowing traffic at 66 and 119 W.

SAFETY: None

PARKS: Met 2/23 and discussed several topics including: the upcoming land exchange with the school, Paris St. Park parking lot project, upgrades to the pool and the elevator install and renovations to the library.

PERSONNEL: Met 2/23 to discuss seasonal help and an inquiry from a local student about an office internship.

UTILITIES: Met with Danone and discussed their future plans and expansions and how that will affect our utilities and EPA regulations at the Waste Water Plant.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: CIC met 3/17 and discussed the sale of 9 acres in the industrial park.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT: None

FINANCE/AUDIT: Met 3/10 to discuss final appropriations and budget for 2026.

OLD BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion and motion to approve invoices over \$3,000.00.

In your packet is a list of invoices that are over \$3,000.00. The list below are purchases that were authorized by the Administrator by the Ordinance that council passed authorizing the Administrator to make purchases up to \$25,000.00. However, the State Auditors have told us that any purchase over \$3,000.00 must be approved by Council utilizing this method. The purchases are as follows:

APOLLO CAREER CENTER	\$ 5,200.00	CDL THOBE
BAKER AND ASSOCIATES	\$ 19,905.00	PUMP WWTP
DESIGN2WELLNESS	\$ 9,333.61	WORKOUT EQUIPMENT PD
911 FLEET AND FIRE EQUIPMENT	\$ 4,857.68	TURNOUT GEAR
		MOVE GENERATOR AT PUMP HOUSE
BAUMER CONSTRUCTION	\$ 4,600.00	4 SEASONS
ESRI	\$ 4,104.00	LICENSE RENEWAL
UNITED SYSTEMS AND SOFTWARE	\$ 5,956.70	ERW AND WALL MT. WATER PLANT
COUNTRYSIDE CONSULTING	\$ 4,680.00	FERTILIZER AND SPRAY
COURTNEY AND ASSOCIATES	\$ 10,500.00	UTILITY RATE CONSULT
FERGUSON WATERWORKS	\$ 5,125.00	VALVE TOPS FOR KURF CUTTING
CHEMICAL SERVICES	\$ 8,787.00	WATER CHEMICALS
IRBY	\$ 4,275.00	CRIMPING TOOL
PAB CONSTRUCTION	\$ 30,811.11	N. HAMILTON ST.
MINSTER BANK	\$ 6,975.86	LOAN PAYMENT
NUVONIC	\$ 13,676.62	WWTP REPAIR PARTS
		MONTHLY MAINTENANCE AND
WINNERS COMPUTER	\$ 3,185.14	SUPPORT
HAWKINS INC	\$ 4,297.85	POOL CHEMICALS
MESCO ELECTRIC SUPPLY	\$ 3,590.83	DUGOUT HEATERS
		SANITARY AND STORM SEWER ALBERS
PAULUS EXCAVATING	\$ 21,447.50	AND 66
PAULUS EXCAVATING	\$ 4,045.00	STORM MANHOLE INSTALLATION
PAULUS EXCAVATING	\$ 4,167.50	SANITARY SEWER REPAIR

ANIXTER INC	\$ 9,812.53	NEW 3 PHASE METERS
CHOICE ONE ENGINEERING	\$ 3,100.00	N. GARFIELD WATER AND CURB
RUHENKAMP BORING AND TRENCHING	\$ 10,448.98	BORING ON 1ST ST.
SUNBELT SOLOMON	\$ 9,421.00	TRANSFORMERS

A motion to approve invoices over \$3,000.00 by Clune and Wilges. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and motion to approve the February 2026 Income Tax Report as submitted by the City of St. Marys.

The City of St. Mary's is reporting that we received \$396,503.05 in income tax dollars for the month of February 2026. This brings us to a total of \$734,306.11 for the first two months of the year. Council usually accepts the report from the City of St. Mary's by the passage of a motion.

A motion to accept the Income Tax Report submitted by the City of St. Mary's by Steele and Sherman. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and motion to seek bids for the Paris Street Park Parking Lot Renovation Project.

Previously, the park committee met to review the plans for the reconstruction and addition to the parking area at Paris Street Park. This would involve the construction of additional parking areas to the north and west of the existing parking lot and the renovations to the existing parking areas. Upon their review, it was their recommendation that the village should seek bids for the project. Choice One is in the process of putting bid documents together we are ready to seek bids. The estimated cost of the project is \$460,701.00.

I will have drawings at the council meeting, in case anyone wants to review them. If the full council accepts the recommendation of the park committee, we will advertise the bid notice and post it on our website. To seek bids a motion authorizing us to do so would be needed.

Steele and Wilges motioned to seek bids for the Paris Street Park Parking Lot Renovation Project. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and motion to seek bids for the 2026 Minor Street Resurfacing Project.

A couple of weeks ago, the street committee held a meeting to discuss the Minster Street Resurfacing Program for 2026. In looking at various streets in the community and taking into consideration the budget appropriations of \$300,000.00, the committee has recommended that the following streets be considered for resurfacing this year.

Melcher Street	Crestview Drive
Webster Street from Fourth to Third Street	Line Drive
Miami-Erie Drive	Alley between 3rd and 4 th Streets and between Hanover and Frankfort Streets
Alley Between 1 st and 2 nd Street and between Main and Garfield Streets	Alley between 5 th and 7 th Streets and between Main and Lincoln Streets

The estimated cost for repaving all for the streets and alleys is \$294,150.70. We budgeted \$300,000 for minor street resurfacing plus an additional \$50,000.00 from the permissive license fee fund.

If the recommendation is accepted by Council, a motion to seek bids would be necessary. If this occurs, we will put the bid packets together and set a date for a bid opening.

Albers and Sherman motioned to seek bids for the 2026 Minor Street Resurfacing Project. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and motion to remove Jeremy Gruss from introductory status to full time permanent status with the Minster Police Department.

Patrolman Jeremy Gruss has completed his six-month introductory period with the police department. Patrolman Gruss has completed the department's field training and has demonstrated the ability to proficiently handle his duties and responsibilities. Chief feels that Jeremy's experience has provided him with a strong foundation in law enforcement operations, professional conduct and procedural understanding. Jeremy has also demonstrated a high level of competence and confidence in his role and has consistently shown excellent job awareness and a clear understanding of both legal standards and best practices in policing.

It is the recommendation of Chief Morris that Jeremy be removed from his introductory period and be appointed as a full-time permanent employee with the Department. In association with this move, Chief Morris is recommending that Jeremy be moved to Step 8 in the Police Officer 1 Pay Range at \$30.98 an hour.

For Jeremy to be removed from introductory status and be appointed as a full-time permanent officer with the department, the mayor would need to make that recommendation, and council would need to approve the recommendation by passage of a motion.

Clune and Sherman motioned to remove Jeremy Gruss from introductory status to full time permanent status at Step 8 with \$30.98/hr pay. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and motion to purchase two 1500 KVA three phase pad mount transformers.

With Spring Creek Building Supply building in the State Route 66 Industrial Park, the village needs to install the electrical service to that building. Spring Creek is looking at two 2000-amp services for the building, which will necessitate two 1500 KVA transformers. While we have two transformers in stock, using them will deplete our reserves, thus necessitating the purchase of two new 1500 KVA transformers.

John Neuman has received quotes on the purchase of new transformers, with the lowest quote being from Sunbelt Solomon. They have quoted a cost of \$62,800.00 a piece for the transformers. We have budgeted for this expense in the 2026 appropriations. If council wants to move forward with the purchase they can do so by passage of a motion.

Wilges and Steele motioned to purchase two 1500KVA three phase pad mount transformers. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and motion to support Auglaize Inspiring Mental-Wellness.

Lets Back the Blue of Auglaize County is hosting an event supporting the mental health and wellness of first responders and front line workers. They have asked for our support in this event. Lets Back the Blue has been very generous to our Police Department.

Steel and Wilges motioned to support the event at the Silver Level of \$2500.00. Motion passed unanimously.

Discussion and motion to employ Jim Dues and Rich Prenger for seasonal mowing.

The Parks Department will need to fill two open seasonal mowing spots this year. Jim and Rich have submitted their applications and would be a good fit for the department.

Albers and Clune motioned to hire Jim Dues and Rich Prenger as seasonal mowers. Motion passed unanimously.

ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

- 1) The Minster-Jackson Township Fire Department was awarded a Small County Volunteer Fire Department Grant in the amount of \$45,484.00. This money will be used to purchase a rescue tool (jaws of life), some hose and confined space equipment for the department.
- 2) The working group for the multi-use trail from Minster to Ft. Loramie met on Tuesday, March 3rd to continue discussions on installing the path. Both the Heritage Park District and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources have indicated that work should begin on the trail in April or May. The Village has started to haul in stone for the project and will have a stockpile ready for when work begins.
- 3) D.L. Smith, the contractor that was awarded the minor sidewalk repair project has indicated that they will begin work the week of March 23rd. They will also be repairing the sidewalk at the intersection of State Route 119 West and State Route 66 that was torn out due to some utility work and some sidewalk at the Four Seasons Park that was removed with the well field generator building work.
- 4) PAB Construction continues to work on the North Hamilton Street Project. PAB has installed all the underground utilities and is in the process of excavating for the installation of the new street base.
- 5) The electrical department has been trimming trees throughout the village. Trees that are in the electrical lines or close to them have been trimmed back so that they do not come in contact with the electrical lines.
- 6) All the village electrical trucks have undergone dielectric testing this past week. All the trucks passed. Rubber goods are scheduled to undergo their testing within the next couple of weeks.
- 7) Three phase meter testing is scheduled to begin sometime in April. The village conducts testing of all three phase meters annually to ensure that they are recording accurately.
- 8) The village had limited damage last Friday due to the high winds. The Village experienced a short power outage due to some limbs coming into contact with power lines in the alley behind the Marathon station on South Main. We also experienced flickering lights throughout the day due to the wind affecting AES transmission lines. Finally, the electrical department had one pole snap in the alley behind North Frankfort Street, and the administration building lost its canopy over the drive-thru.
- 9) The Village continues to monitor the discussion at the state level regarding the elimination of property taxes and how that elimination may impact the village's finances.

A motion to approve invoices totaling \$1,735,703.86 by Sherman and Albers. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion to approve receipts of \$1,375,161.78 by Albers and Clune. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion to enter executive session by Wilges and Steele at 7:48 to discuss the sale and purchase of land with no action. Motion passed unanimously.

A motion to exit executive session by Steele and Sherman at 8:08. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn was made by Albers and Steele at 8:09pm. Motion passed unanimously.

Craig Oldiges, Mayor

James Cain, Fiscal Officer

Recorded & typed by James Cain