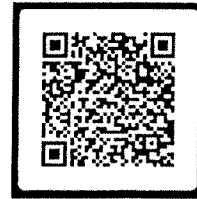


MINUTES
LAND AND TRAFFIC COMMITTEE
MUNCIE COMMON COUNCIL
300 NORTH HIGH STREET
MUNCIE, INDIANA 47305



JULY 23, 2025

PUBLIC MEETING: 7:00 P.M., 1ST FLOOR CITY HALL AUDITORIUM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT

ABSENT:

| | | |
|----------|--|---|
| CHAIR: | Williams McIntosh (At-Large) Appt. 01/01/2025 – 12/31/2025 | X |
| MEMBERS: | Nora Powell (District #2) Appt. 01/01/2025 – 12/31/2025 | X |
| | Sara Gullion (District #4) Appt. 01/01/2025 – 12/31/2025 | X |

DISCUSSION:

CITIZEN CODE ENFORCEMENT CONCERNS:

Chair Wiliam McIntosh opened the meeting. The meeting was called due to numerous citizen concerns regarding code enforcement in the City of Muncie.

Ralph Privett, Vice-President of the Granville Neighborhood Association, stated that while a city ordinance exists for parking violations, he has been told for the past two years that it cannot be enforced because it was sent back to City Council for revision. However, City Council reportedly knows nothing about it being sent back. He cited issues with boats, trucks, and trailers parked in front yards, and has been consistently told the code was rescinded.

Parking Enforcement Officer Darrin Clark responded that some vehicles seen were parked on gravel, which is permitted. However, he acknowledged cases of vehicles clearly parked in front yards without gravel, less than six feet from the house, causing ruts. The parking ordinance (referenced as Sec. 155.30) states that parking areas are limited to the rear and/or side of the yard, with no parking allowed in front yards except for permitted easement areas. A front yard is defined as the space from the front wall of the house/structure to the lot line on each side, and by the street right-of-way.

POLICE DEPARTMENT'S ROLE:

Officer Darrin Clark clarified that code enforcement is split; the Building Commissioner has a role, and the Police Department handles parking matters. Abandoned Vehicles are handled under state code (I.C. 9-13-2-1) because the city ordinance pertaining to abandoned vehicles was lost due to "home rule" issues. The state code defines an abandoned vehicle as one left on public property illegally, without moving for 24 hours, constituting a hazard, or if it is at least three model years old, inoperable, and left on private property visible from public property for more than 20 days (vehicles covered by tarps are considered visible). All abandoned vehicle reports should go to the Police Department. Improper Parking (parking in front yard, too close to fire hydrant, etc.) fall under city ordinance (Chapter 77 of the parking code). These reports go to both the Police

Department and the Building Commissioner. Officers of either entity will investigate calls, and if a violation can be enforced, they will do so. Parking on the street is generally permitted if there is 10 feet of clearance on the other side of the car, unless "no parking" signs are present. Parking with two wheels off the street in a front yard is considered parking in the front yard. The Police Parking Division Hours are Monday through Friday, 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at 765-747-4883. Currently, individual emails are being used with efforts to streamline abandoned vehicle tip submissions on the police department website. While photos of illegal parking are helpful for tips, they are not sufficient for issuing tickets and officers must personally observe the violation. If calls are made after hours, the dispatch center will make a note and forward it to the parking division the next day.

Regarding Mr. Privett's complaints, Parking Code Enforcement did some research and determined that in the previous year, three tickets for front yard parking were issued on January 9th, and another on February 7th, specifically in the Dunn, Barr, Pine, and Westwood areas. There is a significant focus on parking issues around the Ball State University campus. All parking problems, including abandoned vehicles, handicap spot violations, blocking driveways/alleys, whether on the street or in a yard, should be reported to Police Parking Enforcement. For persistent issues or questions, the Police Chief's office can be contacted at 765-747-4822.

BUILDING COMMISSIONER'S ROLE:

Richard Rawlings, Building Commissioner, explained his office handles trash and debris, unsafe houses, and general building matters. Trash and Debris includes unbagged trash, general trash, and uncut grass (12 inches or taller). It also covers items like logs or wood stacked against fences. To report these types of violations, citizens should call the Building Commissioner's office with the address and someone will be sent to issue a notification/tag providing 10 days to clean up the violation. If not cleaned, a fine is issued, and the case is sent to the City Lawyers to file for court. For uncut grass, after 10 days, the city may mow the lawn. An administration fee of \$100 is charged, plus an hourly rate (estimated \$50-60/hour, averaging \$300 for a yard), which is then added to the homeowner's taxes. This typically does not go to court. There are limitations and the office cannot address hoarding or debris located inside a house, only outside. Citizens can send photos with dates and times of violations to assist code enforcement: rawlings@muncie.in.gov or Hannah Collins at hcollins@muncie.in.gov or call 765-747-4862.

SANITARY DEPARTMENT'S ROLE:

Jason Donati, Superintendent, clarified the Sanitation and Recycling Department works collaboratively with the Building Commissioner and Health Department. The issues they deal with are illegal dumping, improper placement or overflowing trash carts ("toters"), standing water in toters due to broken lids, tires, and even instances of feces. MSD has four code enforcement officers who investigate issues. Any issues can be reported via an online form on their website or by calling their main office at 765-747-4865 (with an extension prompt for code enforcement). The primary goal is corrective action by working with homeowners to address problems rather than immediately issuing fines. Ordinance dictates that trash toters must be placed out by 7:00 A.M. on trash day and returned to the house or out of sight by 7:00 P.M. on trash day; they should not be left out for multiple days. Unbagged Trash is another common issue that causes litter. The department handles large items, especially during Ball State student cleanouts and works with property managers to manage excessive items left on curbs. The bulk truck (a.k.a. grapple or Peterson truck) collects brush piles (guidelines: no longer than 8 ft, no bigger than 6 inches in diameter, stacked on the curb for access, not leaning against anything) and large furniture (like mattresses or couches). Items NOT picked up are construction material (which should be taken to East Central Recycling), and debris from contracted work (like tree cutting by a hired service, remodel debris) as this is a residential service. The grapple truck runs on residents' regular

trash days; items must be out by 7:00 A.M. Items such as appliances, TVs, or other electronics require a call to the main number to request a ticket for a stake bed truck pickup. These items can also be taken to East Central Recycling for free. Items must be laid flat on the curb to allow access for the truck and should not block mailboxes or be under low power lines/tree limbs. Discussions have been held about creating a pamphlet or brochure titled "Who to Call" that would list different scenarios and issues, along with the correct City department and contact information. The goal would be to make it available in the City Hall lobby and on various city/department websites to improve citizen understanding of where to direct their concerns.

ADJOURNED:

A motion was made by Powell and seconded by Gullion to Adjourn. A vote by acclamation showed 3 yeas.
ADJOURNED.



William McIntosh, Chair of the
Tax Abatement Committee
Muncie Common Council



Belinda Munson, Muncie City Clerk
of the Muncie Common Council

Committee meetings of the Muncie City Council are streamed on the City of Muncie Facebook page and archived on its YouTube page:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/people/City-of-Muncie/100069317225158/>

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@city.of.muncie>

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