

MINUTES
MUNCIE COMMON COUNCIL
300 NORTH HIGH STREET
MUNCIE, INDIANA 47305



DECEMBER 1, 2025

PUBLIC HEARING: 6:45 P.M., 1ST Floor City Hall Auditorium.

REGULAR MEETING: 7:00 P.M., 1ST Floor City Hall Auditorium.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: Led by

INVOCATION: Delivered

CITIZEN RECOGNITION: Councilperson Garrett postponed his recognition until the following month, as the person he intended to recognize could not attend the current meeting.

ROLL CALL:	PRESENT	ABSENT
Dale Basham (At-Large 1)	X	
Ro Selvey (At-Large 2)	X	
William McIntosh (At-Large 3)	X	
Jeff Green (District #1)	X	
Nora Powell (District #2)	X	
Brandon Garrett (District #3)	X	
Sara Gullion (District #4)	X	
Jerry Dishman (District #5)	X	
Harold Mason (District #6)	X	
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Dan Gibson (Legal Counsel)	X	

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES: A motion was made by Selvey and seconded by Basham to Adopt the Minutes from the November 3, 2025 Regular Meeting. An all-in-favor vote showed 9 yeas, 0 nays.

MINUTES APPROVED.

APPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS:

BEECH GROVE CEMETERY

Last month, the Council was made aware of two vacancies to the Beech Grove Cemetery Board of Directors. Councilperson Green requested postponing these appointments until next month to allow the opportunity to review more interested individuals. President Mason agreed and noted they will have several additional appointments to make next month at the turn of the year. Councilperson McIntosh raised a question about finding out who has lots in the cemetery, as lot ownership is a requirement for board nominees. Troy Watters, Superintendent of Beech Grove Cemetery, reported over 50,000 people own plots so a simpler way would be to contact the office manager and verify lot ownership of any potential members. Councilperson Powell suggested Mr. Watters or other board members reach out to the Council with any appointment recommendations, as they may know someone that is interested and meets qualifications.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

EAST CENTRAL INDIANA REGIONAL PLANNING DISTRICT (ECIRPD) Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A):

Kylene Swackhamer (Director of Delaware Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission) and Matthew Nichols (Project Manager, ECIRPD) presented physical copies of a slideshow presentation. The ECIRPD was founded in 2009 and aims to serve the economic development planning and grant development needs of Delaware, Blackford, Jay, and Grant counties. Since 2016, the organization has seen a 14-to-1 turnaround back into communities from grants and dues collected. The Delaware Muncie Metropolitan Plan Commission serves as the planning department for the City of Muncie and Delaware County. It houses the building commissioner, who manages zoning ordinance enforcement, permitting, and serves as the zoning administrator and flood plain manager. The Commission is designated by the Governor of Indiana as the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) responsible for federally-mandated transportation planning and project selection in the area. The Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant was established by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act which will appropriate \$5 billion over the five-year period of 2022 to 2026. ECIRPD was awarded a \$500,000 federal grant in July 2024. The goal of the initiative is to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries. \$2 billion remains available for future funding rounds which they plan to seek. The SS4A program supports the US Department of Transportation's National Roadway Safety Strategy which incorporates Vision Zero and the Safe Systems Approach. Vision Zero is defined as a safe system approach strategy intended to eliminate all severe injuries and traffic fatalities while ensuring transportation is healthy, mobile, and equitable for all. Safe System Approach involves designing a system with redundancies in place to protect everyone and mitigate inherited risk within the transportation system when crashes occur. This approach focuses on human vulnerability and mistakes and data has proven the approach successful since it originated in Europe in the 1990s. Going into further detail about the grant benefits and next steps, it was mentioned this was a two-year grant, and they are nearing the tail end of the process. A regional transportation safety action plan is anticipated to be finalized in the first quarter of 2026. The finalized plan will enable the community to seek implementation dollars for road projects and safety projects. Other benefits include enhanced mobility and connectivity, supported long-term economic growth through sustainable infrastructure, and strengthened community resilience through regional collaboration. Local leaders were asked for engagement and feedback on key safety concerns specific to their jurisdictions, opportunities for inter-county collaboration, and existing safety initiatives. A steering committee comprised of three to four representatives from the four counties (Blackford, Delaware, Grant, and Jay) is collaborating and reviewing data; three committee meetings have already been held this year. Surveys and a map for marking areas of concern are available via QR codes on a provided flyer and online.

TOGETHERDM ACTION FRAMEWORK:

The TogetherDM Action Framework was created to build upon the foundation of the TogetherDM Comprehensive Plan for Muncie and Delaware County, completed in 2022. Kylene Swackhamer, serving as a board member of MAP (Muncie Action Plan), noted that MAP took on the project to ensure the comprehensive plan did not just sit on the shelf. The purpose of the Action Framework was to translate the TogetherDM vision into tangible action. In 2024 and 2025, MAP steering committees and task forces held meetings, conducted outreach, and utilized surveys to identify partners and collect diverse resources, skills, and perspectives regarding the items identified in the TogetherDM. Going into further detail about overarching goals and priorities, TogetherDM established three overarching goals and based on surveys, priorities were identified under each goal:

Goal #1: Improve Quality of Place.

- *Top Priorities:* Invest in street and road conditions, prioritizing conditions.
- *Top Priorities:* Modernize the zoning code.

Goal #2: Strengthen Housing Conditions and Options.

- *Top Priorities:* Increase investment in existing and appealing housing.

- *Top Priorities*: Reduce residential properties that show visible signs of disinvestment.
- *Top Priorities*: Ensure new housing strengthens neighborhoods and infrastructure and provide access to diverse housing options.
- *Top Priorities*: Require and expect high quality from private investments.

Goal #3: Expand Opportunities for Upward Mobility.

- *Top Priorities*: Increase opportunities to build skills and experience.
- *Top Priorities*: Reduce the segregation of low-income families into high-poverty areas.
- *Top Priorities*: Increase low-income housing options in high-income areas.
- *Top Priorities*: Intentional decision-making, increasing i3 test scores in community schools, and maintaining third-grade county reading scores at or above the state average.
- *Top Priorities*: Offer affordable residential opportunities in downtown Muncie and update the comprehensive zoning ordinances.

The next steps involve MAP and the Planning Commission Office taking ownership of the document to keep track of progress, set timelines and goals, and maintain a continuous feedback loop. They have established connections with numerous stakeholders, partners, and agencies that are already performing this work and plan to secure public and private investments, build on partnerships, and keep elected officials and stakeholders informed via progress reports. Reporting on this progress will be done at MAP's annual report to the community, currently scheduled for January 26, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. at Ivy Tech. Councilmembers were asked to communicate any organizations or agencies they know of that are conducting relevant work in the community but are not yet listed in the document for potential collaboration.

ORDINANCES PREVIOUSLY INTRODUCED:**ORD. 34-25 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE CITY OF MUNCIE COMPREHENSIVE ZONING ORDINANCE FROM THE SPLIT ZONE OF THE R-3 RESIDENCE AND R-4 RESIDENCE ZONE TO THE R-3 RESIDENCE ZONE ON PREMISES LOCATED AT 100 N. HODSON AVE.**

A motion was made by Basham and seconded by Green to Adopt. Questions called. A roll call vote showed 9 yeas, 0 nays. ADOPTED.

ORD. 35-25 AN ORDINANCE FOR ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS (MUNCIE POLICE DEPARTMENT).

A motion was made by Powell and seconded by Basham to Adopt.

President Mason confirmed with Councilpersons Dishman and Basham if they were aware of any new/additional information regarding this. Both respond no.

Chris Deegan, Deputy Police Chief, was present to answer any questions. He also mentioned having a discussion with Mr. Nichols who just made the presentation about road safety to see how they could further assist each other. Councilperson Powell requested he explain where this money is coming from and what it is going to be spent on. Deputy Chief Deegan confirmed the funds are coming from the cash balance in public safety tax dollars (Public Safety LIT). The appropriation is intended for capital equipment to purchase four hybrid Ford police vehicles and shore up the Public Employee Retirement Fund (PERF) line item for the remainder of the year due to stable staffing levels. The funds are specific to the Police Department (Public Safety LIT) and are not taking away from other departments.

Councilperson Basham thanked Controller Craig Wright for providing a monthly budget performance report so they can keep track of percentages spent in all the line items. Questions called. A roll call vote showed 9 yeas, 0 nays. ADOPTED.

ORD. 36-25 AN ORDINANCE FOR ADDITIONAL APPROPRIATIONS (FIRE DEPARTMENT – EMS).
A motion was made by Basham and seconded by Green to Adopt.

Dan Burford, Fire Chief, stated the request is to cover overtime expenses for the rest of the year and the purchase of an ambulance. The funds are in the Fire Department's Fund, which comes from EMS billing

revenue and the fire protection contract with the Center Township Trustee's Office. Specific amounts requested include \$329,521 for vehicles (a fully equipped ambulance, including a new power loader and power cot). The new ambulance would be based at Station #1, Station #3, or Station #7, depending on vehicle conditions and mileage.

Councilperson Selvei inquired about promoting the current hiring process. Chief Burford advises the Fire Department is currently taking applications until December 31. Promotion involves social media and a promotional video expected to be completed soon. The Department currently has about 55 applications, noting that this number is down from previous years (149). Chief Burford confirmed he would email the Council a flyer to aid in promotion. Regarding conversation about getting more potential applicants, Chief Burford promised to actively reach out to individuals who applied during the last process but were not hired or did not pass the written or physical exams.

Councilperson Garrett shared a personal experience regarding the importance of the power cots for patient comfort and safety, specifically noting how it eliminated lifting injuries for responders. Questions called. A roll call vote showed 9 yeas, 0 nays. ADOPTED.

ORD. 37-25 AN ORDINANCE FIXING THE SALARIES FOR ALL ELECTED OFFICIALS OF THE CITY OF MUNCIE, INDIANA, FOR THE YEAR 2026.

A motion was made by Powell and seconded by McIntosh to Adopt. Craig Wright, City Controller, was present to answer any questions. Questions called. A roll call vote showed 9 yeas, 0 nays. ADOPTED.

ORD. 38-25 AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE 16-25 FIXING THE MAXIMUM SALARIES OF EACH AND EVERY APPOINTED OFFICER, EMPLOYEE, DEPUTY, ASSISTANT, DEPARTMENTAL AND INSTITUTIONAL HEAD OF THE CITY OF MUNCIE, INDIANA, INCLUDED HEREIN FOR THE YEAR 2026.

A motion was made by Green and seconded by Selvei to Adopt. A motion was made by Gullion and seconded by Powell to Amend striking the reference of ordinance 16-25 in the title. It incorrectly referred to being an amendment to ordinance 16-25 which it is not. A vote by acclamation showed 9 yeas, 0 nays. AMENDED.

Craig Wright, City Controller, was present to answer any questions. Councilperson Powell asked why salary ordinances were listed for the Animal Shelter Assistant Director and Deputy Mayor if those positions were not budgeted for. Mr. Wright explained that the salary ordinance sets the maximum salary and does not necessarily reflect the current budget. Powell voiced concern that the salary ordinances on several positions (Animal Shelter, Beech Grove, Human Rights, Assistant Prairie Creek Director) were all above the maximum amount budgeted in Ordinance 30-25 (the 2026 City budget). She had specific concern because they had the same discussion last year that just because the salary ordinances were the maximum amounts didn't necessarily mean they were going to be paid that amount, yet, we ended up paying every single one that specific higher amount and in some cases over that amount. Her biggest concern is the Assistant Prairie Creek Reservoir Director with a salary ordinance being \$5,615 over budget. She just wanted to seek assurance that salaries would not exceed the adopted budget amounts. Powell's next question is regarding the Street Department and who the Supervisor of Streets is. Mr. Wright explained Adam Leach is the City Engineer and Donnie Wright is the Street Supervisor. Mr. Leach is contracted through his engineering company and does not receive a paycheck from the City of Muncie. Questions called. A motion was made by Gullion and seconded by Garrett to Adopt As Amended. A roll call vote showed 8 yeas, 1 nay (McIntosh). ADOPTED AS AMENDED.

ORD. 39-25 AN ORDINANCE FIXING THE MAXIMUM SALARIES OF EACH AND EVERY MEMBER OF THE MUNCIE FIRE DEPARTMENT OF THE CITY OF MUNCIE, INDIANA, FOR THE YEAR 2026.

A motion was made by Powell and seconded by Green to Adopt.

Dan Burford, Fire Chief, is present to answer any questions. He explained this is a salary ordinance that reflects the raises that were put into the 2026 budget. Questions called. A roll call vote showed 9 yeas, 0 nays. ADOPTED.

Councilperson Powell asked for clarification from Legal Counsel since the Police Department salary ordinance was not filed and questioned if its absence before January 1 would cause an issue, despite money being incorporated via appropriations. Attorney Gibson advised the Council incorporated money for it and he is not sure why it wasn't filed. He assumes the Administration would continue to pay the employees with those appropriations but ultimately that is a question for State Board of Accounts (SBOA). Powell was always under the impression they had to be adopted before December 31.

NEW ORDINANCES:

RESOLUTIONS:

OTHER BUSINESS:

Ellen Whitehead expressed deep disappointment and confusion over the Council's rejection of Ordinance 40-25 in November, which aimed to ensure that the signature on any ordinance or resolution is used with the full knowledge and consent of the sponsoring councilmember. She stressed that integrity and transparency should not be a partisan issue, especially given Muncie's history of public trust concerns toward City government. She urged the Council to revisit the proposal and reintroduce it in January.

Alex Kubler also urged reconsideration of Ordinance 40-25, calling the partisan nature of the rejection nonsensical for a common-sense change to filing procedures. He states that residents expect councilmembers to act independently of the Mayor's Office.

Sara Vitale agreed with the previous speakers, finding the partisan rejection of Ordinance 40-25 confusing and surprising, and requested the Council bring the ordinance back to demonstrate commitment to transparency and the citizens.

Linda Hansen, League of Women Voters of Muncie-Delaware County, stated that Ordinance 40-25 failed by a party-line vote of 5-4 with Councilpersons Dishman, Selve, Garrett, Basham, and Green voting no. She confirmed the ordinance was prompted by Resolution 17-25 from the October meeting which utilized Councilperson Basham's signature from a prior/withdrawn resolution without his knowledge. She emphasized that allowing others to use a member's signature without the knowledge is an abdication of responsibility, and the League urges the Council to revisit the issue.

Mike Sullivan supported the call for transparency and asked for reconsideration of Ordinance 40-25. He suggested the Council explain their reasoning when they vote to enhance community understanding.

Jeanetta Pressley discussed issues concerning areas with her medical alert service dog, Bernard, who is trained to alert for seizures. Bernard is a licensed out of Medical Mutts Service Dogs located in Greenwood, Indiana. She was recently kicked out of a new convenience store near Batavia and 8th Street, where police were called and the employee refused service. She has been approached 3 times by employees at Walmart South on Tuesday, November 25, regarding Bernard's size. It is important to note that Bernard is a St. Bernard which is a large dog breed and he would help break her fall if she had a seizure. Bernard wears a bandana showing a medical symbol stating "medical service dog." Councilperson Selve promised to speak with Pastor Mitchell, President of the Human Rights Commission, to send out an educational letter to businesses regarding service animal rules, similar to one previously sent in years past.

Beth Mesner, Riverside Normal City Neighborhood Association, requested a status update on tabled Ordinance 29-25 which was to eliminate parking on University Avenue from The Village to Wheeling Ave. Councilperson Green, who tabled the ordinance, stated it will likely be brought up next month. Messner then questioned why center-line striping had been completed on University Avenue in a manner that did not appear to accommodate current legal parking on the south side of the street, suggesting the Administration was moving forward with bike lanes without Council approval.

Councilperson Gullion was hopeful to ask the Administration that question this evening but they have already left the meeting. Councilperson Powell recalled being asked that question by Heather Williams so emailed Donnie Wright, Street Supervisor, who said they were "just striping the centerline as of now but pending approval of Ordinance 29-25 removing parking, we would then add the bike lane markings." That email was sent on November 13. Messner asked when curbing would be completed on three blocks between Reserve and Dicks Street. Recently, the Street Department dumped dirt in the gutters, forcing people exiting parked cars to step into 4-5 inches of mud. Council noted they would have to check with the Street Department.

Seth Rawlings mentioned that the Indiana House of Representatives announced a redistricting map that is detrimental to Muncie, as it carves out Muncie and Albany and aligns them north toward Angola and Elkhart County. He urged councilmembers and the public to contact their representatives (Sue Errington, Elizabeth Rowray, JD Prescott) and Senator Scott Alexander to vote no on the legislation.

Daisy Dale questioned if the Mayor had made his 3 appointments to the Opioid Fund Advisory Committee. Councilperson Gullion responded yes, the Mayor has made those appointments.

Councilperson Basham reminded everyone that Light Up Muncie is scheduled for Thursday night, 5:00 P.M. to 8:00 P.M. A lighted Christmas parade begins at 5:30 P.M. at City Hall and moves through Downtown to Canan Commons.

S.A. Darby, student at Muncie Central High School, requested assistance and endorsements for a mock presidential election in her AP Government class.

Councilperson Green urged the community to adopt shut-ins, particularly the elderly, during the Christmas season and throughout the winter to check in on them, take them meals, or help with tasks like shoveling snow. Promote investment of time to the lives of others.

ADJOURNED:

The next regular City Council Meeting is scheduled for Monday, January 5, 2026 at 7:00 P.M. A motion was made by McIntosh and seconded by Powell to Adjourn. A vote by acclamation showed 9 yeas, 0 nays. ADJOURNED.



Jeff Green, President of the
Muncie Common Council



Belinda Munson, Muncie City Clerk
of the Muncie Common Council

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