CITY OF MONESSEN
COUNCIL MEETING WORK SESSION MINUTES
MAY 14, 2026
6:30 PM
CITY OF MONESSEN COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Call to Order

Mayor Ron Mozer called the May 14, 2026 City Council Work Session to order at 6:30 PM.

Roll Call

The following members of Council were present: Councilman Anthony Orzechowski, Councilman John Nestor, Councilwoman Karen Cosner, Councilman William Bass, and Mayor Ron Mozer. Solicitor Joseph Dalfonso stated that a quorum was present.

Opening Prayer

An opening prayer was offered by Captain Kara of the Salvation Army.

Pledge of Allegiance

Those in attendance recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment Directed to Mayor Mozer on Agenda Items Only

Earnie Telegraphis addressed Council regarding agenda items. He asked what Dennis Martinak and the Donner Avenue development planning work were bringing to the City, including whether the effort would bring capital investment or private industry to help develop Donner Avenue. He also raised concerns about tax forgiveness and blight demolition, stating that while the City had demolished many houses, replacement taxpayers or occupants had not yet been placed on the tax rolls. He stated that the City needs industry and cannot rely on grants alone for long-term success.

Old Business

No old business was listed on the agenda.

Mayor's Discussion Items

Mayor Mozer administered the oath of office to Paul Beradelli for a new term as a member of the Mon Valley Sewage Authority, effective March 26, 2026 through December 31, 2030.

Mayor Mozer reminded Council that July is the deadline month for alignment on the multimodal project, noting that a resolution would need to be passed in June. He also asked Council to begin considering possible 2027 CDBG budget items and stated that public meetings would be scheduled later in the year.

Mayor Mozer reported that he and the Solicitor attended a school district work session and presented the proposed LERTA project. He stated that the proposed LERTA term had been reduced from ten years to eight years, with a straight 12.5 percent tax step-up per year, and that a public hearing would be required before final action.

STMP Program and Donner Avenue Development Grant Presentation

Mayor Mozer introduced the Strategic Management Planning Program and Donner Avenue development planning discussion. He explained that the City had avoided Act 47 designation, had stabilized its finances, and now needed to focus on long-term sustainability, outside expertise, population decline, police services, road maintenance, fire protection, and infrastructure needs.

Dennis Martinak presented an update on the STMP project and the Donner Avenue project. He stated that his team had been developing draft recommendations, reviewing prior plans and studies, looking at downtown activity, code enforcement, the state circuit rider program, LERTA, NPP, and other state resources. He stated

that a phase one/phase two meeting would be scheduled to review findings, analysis, and draft recommendations, and that the STMP project was expected to be completed by early fall.

Regarding the Donner Avenue project, Mr. Martinak stated that his role was to prepare a study, conceptual plan, and recommendations for the site, rather than to bring capital directly. He stated that recommendations would include access to resources, stakeholder outreach, a developer and real estate contact database, market and housing analysis, and possible uses such as a spec building, mixed-use development, or light industrial development. He stated that a draft conceptual plan would be presented to Council at either the June or July work session.

Councilman Orzechowski questioned what written work product or backup documentation had been provided to Council to support invoices and expressed concern that Council had not received interim reports, notes, or supporting information before being asked to approve payment. Mr. Martinak stated that the information would be included in draft reports and agreed to provide notes and supporting information. Councilman Orzechowski also questioned an invoice calculation and asked that a corrected version be provided. He further stated that financial review discussions should include him as the Director of Accounts and Finance. Mr. Martinak stated that the financial consultant would speak with all appropriate City officials.

Mayor Mozer and Council discussed whether STMP implementation funds could support projects with immediate impact. Mr. Martinak stated that the program could support personnel or capital projects depending on priorities identified through the plan, and that Council would have input before priorities were finalized. Solicitor Dalfonso summarized that the plan would identify inefficiencies and tie recommendations to possible funding opportunities. Councilman Orzechowski stated that he did not want the result to be another study, but rather practical projects or capital improvements.

Tax Forgiveness Program and LERTA Discussion

Mayor Mozer reported that a tax forgiveness program meeting would be held in the upcoming weeks with the school district and tax forgiveness board. He stated that properties would be reviewed, progress would be evaluated, contracts would be signed where appropriate, and the intent would be to relieve old taxes where the requirements of the program were met. Mayor Mozer also discussed the broader goal of attracting business and industry to Monessen through tools such as LERTA and the Neighborhood Partnership Program.

Animal Control Discussion

Chief David Yuhasz and Officer Rebecca Schrader discussed animal control concerns. They reported issues with the current provider, including communication, follow-through, response, officer support, and concerns about kennel conditions. They stated that Hoffmans had previously provided animal control services and that its contract language appeared similar to the current provider. Chief Yuhasz stated that the Police Department wants Council input on whether to continue with the current provider or consider another animal control provider.

Council discussed response times, dangerous dog calls, medical emergencies involving animals, prior use of Hoffmans, no-kill versus non-no-kill concerns, reporting requirements, contract termination language, and the need for monthly or quarterly reports to match animal control activity against invoices. Mayor Mozer asked whether officers could visit kennels, review conditions, and gather information on animals claimed, transferred, adopted, or euthanized. Chief Yuhasz stated that Officer Schrader could conduct visits and prepare a report. Councilman Orzechowski asked for numbers to support any change in provider. Councilman Nestor thanked Chief Yuhasz and Officer Schrader for bringing the issue forward.

Cleaning Services Discussion

Mayor Mozer discussed cleaning services for City Hall and the Police Station. He stated that the individual cleaning the facilities had been working under Coverall Cleaning Services but was now associated with Little Lady Bug Cleaning Services, LLC. He stated that the quality of service had been good and that the cost appeared to be the same. Solicitor Dalfonso stated that the City would need to review the current agreement, term, cancellation provisions, payment terms, and any proposed new agreement before changing providers.

Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program Grant

Motion by Mayor Ron Mozer to approve City of Monessen Authorized Official Resolution No. 15 requesting a Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program Grant from the Commonwealth Financing Authority to be used for park maintenance and repair of recreation equipment and site development within the City of Monessen Park, in the requested grant amount of $150,000, with the required match to be provided as permitted under the grant program.

The motion was seconded.

Council discussed the proposed playground equipment project, including the condition and age of existing playground equipment, accessibility needs, the estimated project size, possible in-kind match through City labor and equipment, support materials, and the urgent submission deadline. Councilwoman Cosner stated that updated and accessible playground equipment would benefit children, families, and use of City parks.

Roll Call Vote

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William Bass ..... Yes
Anthony Orzechowski .... Yes
John Nestor ..... Yes
Karen Cosner ..... Yes
Ron Mozer ..... Yes
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Motion Passed 5-0

Councilman Anthony Orzechowski, Director of Accounts and Finance

Motion by Councilman Anthony Orzechowski to pay the following invoices from the General Fund in the amount of $23,348.95. All invoices were attached to the agenda as Attachment A.

The motion was seconded by Councilman John Nestor.

Roll Call Vote

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William Bass ..... Yes
Anthony Orzechowski .... Yes
John Nestor ..... Yes
Karen Cosner ..... Yes
Ron Mozer ..... Yes
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Motion Passed 5-0

Motion by Councilman Anthony Orzechowski to pay the following invoices from the Recreation Account in the amount of $698.24. All invoices were attached to the agenda as Attachment B.

The motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote

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William Bass ..... Yes
Anthony Orzechowski .... Yes
John Nestor ..... Yes
Karen Cosner ..... Yes
Ron Mozer ..... Yes
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Motion Passed 5-0

Motion by Councilman Anthony Orzechowski to pay the following invoices from the Parks Fund in the amount of $2,782.11. All invoices were attached to the agenda as Attachment C.

The motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote

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William Bass ..... Yes
Anthony Orzechowski .... Yes
John Nestor ..... Yes
Karen Cosner ..... Yes
Ron Mozer ..... Yes
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Motion Passed 5-0

Motion by Councilman Anthony Orzechowski to pay the following invoices from the Liquid Fuels Fund in the amount of $21,634.22. All invoices were attached to the agenda as Attachment D.

The motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote

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William Bass ..... Yes
Anthony Orzechowski .... Yes
John Nestor ..... Yes
Karen Cosner ..... Yes
Ron Mozer ..... Yes
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Motion Passed 5-0

Motion by Councilman Anthony Orzechowski to approve the transfer of $74,766.27 from the General Fund to the Payroll Account for payroll expenses for the May 7th payroll allocation.

The motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote

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William Bass ..... Yes
Anthony Orzechowski .... Yes
John Nestor ..... Yes
Karen Cosner ..... Yes
Ron Mozer ..... Yes
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Motion Passed 5-0

Motion by Councilman Anthony Orzechowski to transfer $2,200.00 from the General Fund to the Healthcare Fund.

The motion was seconded by Councilman John Nestor.

Roll Call Vote

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William Bass ..... Yes
Anthony Orzechowski .... Yes
John Nestor ..... Yes
Karen Cosner ..... Yes
Ron Mozer ..... Yes
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Motion Passed 5-0

Motion by Councilman Anthony Orzechowski to approve Sewer Rehabilitation Project Phase 3 and Payment Requisition and Certificate No. 43 in the amount of $396,397.43. The payment included Phase 3 work performed by W.E.C. Engineers, Inc. from March 28, 2026 through May 1, 2026 in the amount of $32,429.03, invoices from Insight Pipe, LLC for work performed from April 1, 2026 through April 30, 2026 in the amount of $331,442.08, and two invoices from MCSP for CSX permitting in the amount of $5,624.40.

The motion was seconded by Councilman John Nestor.

Roll Call Vote

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William Bass ..... Yes
Anthony Orzechowski .... Yes
John Nestor ..... Yes
Karen Cosner ..... Yes
Ron Mozer ..... Yes
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Motion Passed 5-0

Motion by Councilman Anthony Orzechowski to approve Change Order No. 7 for the City of Monessen Owner's Project MON 2022-05 for Sewer Rehabilitation Project Phase C for a decrease in the contract amount owed relative to adjustments to the original agreement in the amount of $75,903.12.

The motion was seconded.

Roll Call Vote

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William Bass ..... Yes
Anthony Orzechowski .... Yes
John Nestor ..... Yes
Karen Cosner ..... Yes
Ron Mozer ..... Yes
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Motion Passed 5-0

Motion by Councilman Anthony Orzechowski to approve the Strategic Management Planning Program/Five Year Financial Management Plan Grant invoice in the amount of $3,950.40 for billings for the period of August 1, 2025 to February 20, 2026 for Martinak Planning and Consulting, LLC.

The motion was seconded by Councilman John Nestor.

Roll Call Vote

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William Bass ..... Yes
Anthony Orzechowski .... Yes
John Nestor ..... Yes
Karen Cosner ..... Yes
Ron Mozer ..... Yes
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Motion Passed 5-0

Motion by Councilman Anthony Orzechowski to approve the Donner Avenue Infrastructure and Site Preparation Planning Study invoice in the amount of $6,200.00 for billings for the period of September 1, 2025 to February 20, 2026 for Martinak Planning and Consulting, LLC.

The motion was seconded by Councilman John Nestor.

Roll Call Vote

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William Bass ..... Yes
Anthony Orzechowski .... Yes
John Nestor ..... Yes
Karen Cosner ..... Yes
Ron Mozer ..... Yes
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Motion Passed 5-0

Belleweather Purchasing System Discussion

Councilman Orzechowski discussed the City purchasing system and asked whether Council intended to enforce the purchasing policy and related documentation requirements. He stated that some purchase orders or invoices were being submitted with insufficient description, missing invoices, missing purchase information, or missing quotes. Council discussed the need for better documentation, the role of the requisition process, the $250 approval threshold, situations where three quotes may not be practical, use of COSTARS or existing vendors, and the responsibility of each department head to ensure that requests are documented before payment.

Councilwoman Cosner stated that if the City has a system and policy in place, the City should follow it, even if implementation is initially difficult. Mayor Mozer stated that department heads have responsibilities within their respective departments and that Councilman Orzechowski has authority to hold items when documentation is not sufficient. Councilman Orzechowski emphasized that the money being spent is taxpayer money and that after-the-fact purchases should not be allowed to bypass the process.

The agenda also listed discussion of correction and improvement of the insurance and card reporting system for retirees. Councilman Orzechowski stated that he wished to table the next item.

Councilman John Nestor, Director of Public Safety

Councilman Nestor deferred his formal report to the next Council meeting. He recognized National Police Week, May 11 through May 17, and thanked the men and women of law enforcement for their service and sacrifice, including Chief Yuhasz and the Police Department.

Councilman Nestor reported concerns from residents regarding lights at the boat launch and in City Park. Mayor Mozer stated that the lights are West Penn Power lights and asked that work order numbers be provided so the matter could be escalated through the appropriate liaison. Councilman Nestor also reported that mud was covering a handicap parking space or area at the boat launch and asked whether the Fire Department could assist by hosing down the ramp area before anticipated Memorial Day use.

Councilperson Karen Cosner, Director of Parks and Public Property

The agenda listed discussion and report items for Parks and Public Property, including repair ideas for the walking track, a reminder of a Town Hall Meeting to be held Thursday, May 21 from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM in City Hall Council Chambers for residents affected by the upcoming Marion Avenue Storm Water Sewer Project, Clean Up Day for Tyrol Boulevard and surrounding areas on June 13 from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM, Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Grant submission for City Park related repairs and enhancement, and upcoming Music in the Park needs and request for volunteer assistance.

The available transcript provided for this draft ended as Councilperson Cosner was being called upon. These items are included here based on the agenda and should be revised if additional recording or notes confirm the specific discussion.

Councilman Bishop William Bass, Director of Streets and Public Improvements

The agenda listed items for discussion and report to the City of Monessen. The available transcript provided for this draft did not include any further Streets and Public Improvements report after Councilperson Cosner was called upon.

Adjournment

There being no further business captured in the available transcript, the meeting was adjourned. The adjournment time should be confirmed from the full recording or meeting notes before final approval.

Respectfully submitted,

Terry Taylor

City Clerk, Terry Taylor

Mayor, Ron Mozer