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News Journal

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Council approves police union contracts

Mark Caudill
Mansfield News Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Mansfield City Council has approved collective bargaining agreements with both units of the police department.

Following a 35-minute executive session at their April 7 meeting, members unanimously approved three-year contracts for the blue unit, or patrol officers, and the gold unit, or command-level supervisors such as sergeants, lieutenants

The mayor said the new deal does not look substantially different than the last one. The contract will run from Jan. 1, 2026, to Dec. 31, 2028.

and captains.

Both unions for FOP Lodge 32 approved the new contracts by wide margins, but because they have not signed the contracts, Mayor Jodie Perry was limited in what she could say after the

meeting.

"I think that this was a really good example of the union and the administration working together to try to find some common areas," she said. "I think it provides a good increase in pay for our offi-

cers.

"The administration was able to get some things that were really important to our side, making sure that we continue to have a really positive working relationship with the FOP."

Perry said she appreciated the support of council, which approved the collective bargaining agreements by a 6-0 margin. Council members Cheryl Meier and Aurelio Diaz were absent.

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Trooper Jason Beck of the Mansfield post of the Ohio Highway Patrol releases an owl he rescued along the roadway of U.S. 30. JASON J. MOLYET/NEWS JOURNAL

Owl takes flight after a month of medical care

Lou Whitmire
Mansfield News Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

After almost a month of medical care at the Ohio Bird Sanctuary, a large adult barred owl was released April 7 off Laver

Road to a fanfare of volunteers and the trooper who rescued her.

Trooper Jason Beck of the Mansfield post of the Ohio Highway Patrol opened her crate to set the bird free.

Beck was called to U.S. 30 near U.S. 42 on March 9 after a passerby saw an

injured owl. He picked her up and put her in his cruiser's back seat.

"Luckily, Trooper Beck was available and nearby to check out the area. The owl, an adult barred owl, was on

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Solar group asks voters to vote 'no' on an energy ban

Zach Tuggle
Mansfield News Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Volunteers with the No Ban on Property Rights campaign gathered April 7 outside the Richland County Board of Elections to celebrate the first day of early voting.

Their message to electors was that a "no" vote on the referendum to ban "future large-scale solar and wind development" would pave the way for future alternative energy projects in Richland County, according to a news release provided by Tracy Sabetta, a consultant for the initiative.

In July 2025, commissioners voted to prohibit the construction of industrial solar fields in unincorporated areas of 11 Richland County townships: Bloominggrove, Franklin, Jackson, Jefferson, Mifflin, Monroe, Perry, Plymouth, Sharon, Troy and Weller.

Such projects are still legal in the county's other townships, as well as all incorporated areas (like cities and villages).

The referendum to reverse that ban will appear on ballots across Richland

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