

March 23, 2021

The Gallipolis City Commission met in virtual work session on Tuesday, March 23, 2021, at 6:00 p.m., at the Gallipolis Municipal Building, 333 Third Avenue, having complied with Section 9 of the City Charter and Emergency Ohio Sub House Bill 197.

Commission President Cody Caldwell called the meeting to order.

Upon roll call, the following members were present:

Cody C. Caldwell, President (in person)

Albert "Tony" Gallagher, Member (remote access)

T. Beau Sang, Member (remote access)

Michael Fulks, Vice President, arrived in person at 6:06 p.m.

Others attending were:

Theodore R. Lozier, City Manager (in person)

Brynn S. Noe, City Solicitor (remote access)

Annette M. Landers, City Auditor (in person)

Ronnie Lynch (in person)

The work session began with a discussion of mobile food vendors, which the City Manager said had become a hot topic. He spent some time this past week with business owners in town to discuss their concerns. Most are not 100% opposed to the vendors, but do object to the fact that they do not pay income taxes and yet consume City services.

In discussion, many ideas were discussed:

- \$150 fee, plus water & power
- \$15/day for minimum of 30 days
- A mobile food truck festival in the Riverfront area along First Avenue
- A graduated fee schedule for City residents, County residents, and those based outside
- Need to keep things simple and streamlined
- Could pattern after some other city's ordinances (Pt. Pleasant, Athens, or other)
- Need to communicate better about community events with our local merchants
- Hours of operation to allow for breakfast service or after bars close

The proposal was to change the fee from \$75 to \$125 for three days. Set up a fee structure for special events for the event sponsor, which they can pass on to the vendors, if desired. Set an extra fee for electric and water usage.

Discussion went next to the 2020 Review and discussion of SWOTs (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) that were identified at a prior work session. Of the strengths, some that were highlighted were the resilience of our employees and youth programs. Summarizing from Commission discussion, Mr. Sang listed the three top weaknesses as unemployment, infrastructure concerns, and vagrants/ homeless issues. Under opportunities, moving the airport has been abandoned by the County at this time. In order to attract new business (another listed opportunity), we would need at least 500 acres with access to water. However, there is plenty of land available close to town. The County is still working on putting together a land bank, which is another promising opportunity. The most dreaded threat identified was that of businesses shutting down and leaving. The pandemic has increased this threat.

Ms. Landers went over some of the possibilities for voter-approved revenue generation through income tax or property tax levies. Either type would require legislation beginning by June 1st and submitted to the Board of Elections by August 4, 2021. For a property tax levy, we would need the approval of four Commissioners. Some property tax levies that we might want to adopt include for parks & recreational purposes, for police salaries/operations, for maintaining & operating cemeteries. The most impactful type to adopt would be an income tax levy. An additional ½% would yield @ \$700,000/yr. Property tax levies would yield much less. For example, our 1.9 mill levy for the General Fund yields only @ \$150,000/yr. Commissioners were not enthusiastic about the likelihood of getting voter approval of any new tax levies. Mr. Lozier said that this just leaves annexation as our best opportunity for growth and economic expansion.

To encourage the prioritization and development of long-term plans, Mr. Lozier went over a list of questions to reflect on strengths to build upon, weaknesses to overcome or eliminate, opportunities to capitalize upon, and how to better prepare for threats.

There being no further business to come before the Commission, the meeting was adjourned.



Clerk, City Commission



President, City Commission