

May 20, 2014

The Gallipolis City Commission met in special session on Tuesday, May 20, 2014, at 6:00 p.m. at the Gallipolis Municipal Building, 333 Third Avenue, having complied with Section 9 of the City Charter.

Commission President Steven Wallis called the meeting to order and gave the invocation.

Upon roll call, the following members were present:

Steven E. Wallis, President  
James Jay Cremeens, Vice-President  
Michael W. Brown, Member  
Albert "Tony" Gallagher, Member  
W. Matthew Johnson, Member

Others attending were:

Randall J. Finney, City Manager  
Adam R. Salisbury, City Solicitor  
Annette M. Landers, City Auditor/Clerk/Treasurer  
Amber Gillenwater, Gallipolis Daily Tribune  
Ronnie Lynch            Clinton Patterson            Sara Siekierski  
Ashton Berdine

Commissioners received the minutes of the May 6, 2014 meeting prior to this meeting. There being no corrections, objections, or additions, these minutes were approved.

*Privilege of Floor* was granted to Ms. Sara Siekierski, Deputy Refuge Manager, with the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge division of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. The Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge manages twenty-two islands along a 362 mile stretch of the Ohio River from Pennsylvania to Kentucky. They are interested in teaming with the West Virginia Land Trust, represented by Mr. Ashton Berdine, in acquiring ownership of Gallipolis Island, with the intent to rehabilitate the island and make it a part of their refuge. She said that Gallipolis Island is important as habitat for several species of mussels and fish. Ms. Siekierski explained that the earlier effort to acquire the island did not go through because the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service is not allowed to acquire a partial interest in property and the other owner, Mr. Michael Hoeft, was not interested in transferring his ownership interest before. He is now interested in donating his interest to these government agencies. Therefore, they are now trying to re-energize the project.

This was followed by a lengthy discussion regarding the restoration efforts to be made (mainly the placing of dykes on underwater shelves), funding available to the WV Land Trust, and timing of the transfer to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (after restoration efforts, which should take around seven years). Once the land is part of the Ohio River Islands National Wildlife Refuge, it will be for wildlife first, with some day use for hiking and photography, with perhaps some hunting and fishing, as allowed by law. There will be no overnight use and no structures or trails to maintain. They expressed interest in perhaps installing an information area on city-owned property along the adjacent riverbank. If for some reason the restorations efforts do not come to fruition after seven years, the land will revert to the City. Mr. Cremeens made a motion to direct the City Solicitor to prepare an ordinance to donate our interest in Gallipolis Island to the W.V. Land Trust, seconded by Mr. Brown. Upon voice vote on the motion, all votes were yes. The City Solicitor will coordinate with Mr. Berdyne in getting the necessary documents.

The City Manager reported on the following:

- Mr. Swisher has initiated a program of load testing the emergency generators of the City. So far, the ones at the sewer plant and the fire department failed and are being fixed. They haven't tested at the water plant yet. As bad as this is, it is preferable to find out and make repairs before an emergency.
- Rates are expected to go up when the contract with VESI for electric aggregation expires in August. Mr. Finney has contacted two other brokers and plans to contact a third to try to negotiate the best rate possible in what is currently a very volatile market. He hopes to have something to report at the next meeting.
- Mr. Finney and Mr. Swisher met with E.L. Robinson today about the amphitheater project. They plan to go out for RFQ's from engineering firms before selecting an engineer for the project.
- Smartbill says they can send out a newsletter with our monthly utility bills. Mr. Finney would include items of local interest, such as upcoming events, along with utility department announcements and alerts.
- At the recent LEPC meeting, they discussed pooling resources to contract with a single company (Everbridge) for reverse dialing alerts to citizens. The City may go with this as well because of potential cost savings.
- Judge Margaret Evans has informed Mr. Finney of a symposium on opiates that will be held in Columbus on June 30<sup>th</sup>. She would like for the City Solicitor and one of the Commissioners to attend.
- The Memorial Day parade is scheduled for Monday.
- There is an OVRDC meeting set for Thursday. President Wallis asked if he was supposed to be on that because he has been receiving mail. Mr. Finney said that the Commission President is the designated member, but the City Manager was appointed by the Commission as his alternate to attend in his place and represent him at the meetings.
- Plans are moving forward for installation of the Haskins Park ball cage.
- The Spruce Street Lift Station Project bid opening was today. There were no bids submitted, which means that the project will need to be re-bid after a re-evaluation.
- There is a River Recreation Festival Committee meeting for emergency planning set for tomorrow at Buffalo Wild Wings.

The City Auditor presented for acceptance the donations for January, February, March, and April. Mr. Johnson made a motion to accept these donations, seconded by Mr. Brown. Upon voice vote on the motion, all votes were yes.

Ms. Landers also went over a report of the First Half 2014 Tax Distributions and Special Assessments collected and remaining uncollected. Although there are a large number of special assessments remaining on the County Auditor's books, we have collected approximately \$140,000 just in delinquent water/sewer accounts through this process over the past few years. Mr. Finney asked if the Ohio Attorney General's Office would assist in collecting these debts. Ms. Landers answered that they do not collect on delinquent water and sewer accounts, presumably because municipalities have other recourse in collecting these bills, namely by making special assessments against property taxes.

Mr. Gallagher praised the City Manager and City Commissioner Matt Johnson for the work they did all day Saturday, preparing for the Electric River 5K Race. He congratulated all involved on a job well done.

Mr. Johnson commented that the event turned out well, with some behind-the-scenes problems, but really very little for a first effort. There were 459 participants and some very neat photos of the event posted

to Facebook. They plan to have a meeting to evaluate what went right and wrong with the event. The residents along First Avenue, as well as the general public, were very interested in and supportive of the event. Mr. Finney commended Shari Rocchi on a fine job organizing the event. Mr. Brown commented that he has heard only positive comments from residents. Mr. Johnson thanked Mr. Finney and the Police Department for their support.

Mr. Brown stated that some residents are interested in having another city-wide yard sale, especially in light of the delayed newspaper announcement of one in May. Mr. Finney and Mr. Johnson both favored the idea, saying that the yard sale brings shoppers into town. Mr. Finney suggested placing a banner in the City Park to advertise the event. Mr. Johnson suggested trying to get it onto a local lighted billboard. After consulting their calendars, the weekend of June 27<sup>th</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> was suggested.

Mr. Wallis asked about the ethics training that the County is offering. Mr. Finney offered to hold our own training sometime before or after a meeting. The Commissioners seemed interested in that. Mr. Finney also told the Commissioners that the slip on State Route 588 is on the request list for possible CDBG funding.


Mr. Wallis also brought up the work a resident is doing along the 900 block of First Avenue. Mr. Finney said that he has warned the resident to be careful not to affect city-owned property there. Mr. Brown noted that the Corps of Engineers is also looking into the work being done there.

There was presented and read to the Commission for a second reading an Ordinance No. O2014-28 entitled **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENT WITH THE GALLIA COUNTY VETERANS COMMISSION FOR AN AGREEMENT TO GUARANTEE MAINTENANCE FOR THE VETERANS MONUMENTS IN THE GALLIPOLIS CITY PARK.** Mr. Brown made a motion to adopt this ordinance on second reading, seconded by Mr. Cremeens. Upon roll call to adopt this ordinance on second reading, all votes were yes.

There was presented and read to the Commission as an emergency an Ordinance No. O2014-29 entitled **AN EMERGENCY ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. O2010-77, AS AMENDED BY ORDINANCE NO. O2011-01, AS AMENDED BY ORDINANCE NO. O2011-79, AS AMENDED BY ORDINANCE NO. O2013-21, AS AMENDED BY ORDINANCE NO. O2014-04, AS AMENDED BY ORDINANCE NO. O2014-20, AMENDING D2(B), POSITIONS AND SALARY RANGES, MAINTENANCE EMPLOYEES, AND REPEALING PREVIOUS ORDINANCES SETTING SAID COMPENSATION.** Mr. Brown made a motion to adopt this ordinance as an emergency, seconded by Mr. Cremeens. Mr. Finney commented that the change was to the mechanic's pay to allow us to hire the new mechanic at \$19/hr. He added that the new mechanic has some computer experience. Upon roll call to adopt this ordinance as an emergency, all votes were yes.

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

  
Clerk, City Commission

  
President, City Commission