

February 21, 2017

The Gallipolis City Commission met in special session on Tuesday, February 21, 2017, at 6:00 p.m. at the Gallipolis Municipal Building, 333 Third Avenue, having complied with Section 9 of the City Charter.

Commission President Tony Gallagher called the meeting to order. Mr. Wallis gave the invocation.

Upon roll call, the following members were present:

Albert "Tony" Gallagher, President
 Michael C. Fulks, Vice-President
 Steven E. Wallis, Member

W. Matthew Johnson, Member, arrived just after the minutes were approved.

Others attending were:

M. Eugene Greene, City Manager		
Adam R. Salisbury, City Solicitor		
Annette M. Landers, Auditor/Clerk/Treasurer		
Dean Wright, Gallipolis Daily Tribune		
Ronnie Lynch	Randy Breech	Dottie Chestnut
Mary Lee Marchi	Jeff Boyer	Claudia Miller
Fran McEwen	Shawn Lane	Roma Wood
Marvin Vanderberg	Cletus Harder	Connie Fields
Conner Walter	Pat Mills	Terry Danner
James Roush	Nick Morgan	Joy Elliott
Keith Elliott	Kim Canaday	Robbie Jenkins
Wendy Knox	Darius Pishvazede	Cody Caldwell

Commission received the minutes of the February 7, 2017 meeting prior to this meeting. There being no corrections, objections, or additions, these minutes were approved.

President Gallagher opened the Public Hearing on the 2017 Budget. Ms. Landers distributed copies of the summary sheets and capital expenses, transfers & advances, and salary spreadsheets to attendees. The crowd was larger than anticipated, so copies were not available to all. She offered to provide copies later for anyone who would like one. The City Manager went over the capital items to be purchased in the coming year. He emphasized the City's efforts to get away from financing these types of purchases, especially through lease-purchase financing. Since he has come into office, the City has shifted over more to outright purchases, which saves in financing costs. Ms. Landers spoke on the condition of the General Fund, which remains precarious, though in better shape than at the beginning of 2016. At the beginning of the budget process this year, the General Fund was around \$80,000 in the red, but with the help of the department heads and the court, we are now about \$26,500 in the black. Ms. Landers stressed this is not a great situation to be in, but it is better than where we were at this time in 2016. She explained that we try very hard not to overstate our revenues nor understate our expenses when budgeting. If we were to overstate our revenue estimates, it could lead to overspending our available resources. By taking this conservative approach, we are generally able to end the year with carryover balances higher than the original budget would indicate.

President Gallagher and Mr. Greene spoke of the City's efforts to reduce spending in response to cuts from the State. Over the years, we have reduced and re-assigned staff, cut operations costs, foregone

pay increases for employees, and generally taken every measure possible to provide the best service at the lowest cost to our residents.

This led into a discussion of the need for the 1% income tax increase, which is to be placed again before the voters in 2017. When asked about possible streams of revenue available to the City, Mr. Wallis explained that the two major ways we have available are either to raise the income tax or raise the property tax, both requiring a vote of the electorate. Sales taxes are not available by law to municipalities. In Commissioners' earlier discussions, it was determined that to go for a property tax would require such a high millage (around 40 as opposed to the current 1.8) as to be devastating to property owners, particularly those on fixed incomes. An increase in the income tax rate was the fairest and most reasonable route to pursue. Several officials spoke on the reductions in staffing, particularly in the Police Department (down from 16 - 18 officers in the 80's to 8 - 9) and at the Garage (down from 30 workers in the 70's to 9 today). There have been reductions in all of our departments, placing great strain on our manpower and resources as those remaining struggle to provide the same level of quality services that our residents have always enjoyed. When a resident calls for a police officer, that resident wants and expects an officer to come. Several people nodded their heads in agreement. Mr. Wallis continued by warning that residents are beginning to be impacted by the need to stack responses within the Police Department, which is a frustrating and growing problem for all concerned. There being no further questions from those attending, the public hearing on the 2017 Budget was closed.

The City Manager reported on the following:

- The City Manager and City Auditor met last week with department heads to go over their budgets one last time. Everyone seemed satisfied that their requests and any reductions made were correctly stated in the budget figures. It was a very smooth meeting resulting in a good working plan for 2017.
- EPA required us to have a mapping of all of the water and sewer lines in our system to track lead and copper. Our departments sat down and cooperatively came up with a mapping system that not only satisfied the EPA's requirement, but that the EPA has requested permission to provide to other communities as a model. We are very proud of everyone involved in this project.
- The WPC Plant has sold their old generator on GovDeals for \$15,000 and the old sludge truck for \$9,600.
- It was reported at the last meeting that money was saved on the Parkfront Project. That money will be used for a set of steps from Court Street down to the riverfront.
- Mr. Swisher and Mr. Greene negotiated with the engineering firm and contractor on the WPC Plant Project and saved \$186,000 in contingency money. This will reduce the amount we must borrow for the project.

The final topic that the City Manager brought up for discussion was the splash pad. Mr. Greene noted that this subject has split the City, with people calling him and coming to his office as recently as this morning to voice their concerns. The subject has been in front of the Park Board twice with a 4 to 1 vote in opposition. It has also been before the Historical Board with a no vote. Both boards seemed to agree that it is a good idea, just not in the City Park. He urged the Commissioners to vote on the matter and "put this to bed" so the City can move on to other problems and the public will know where we stand on the matter.

Mr. Wallis asked if this meant that the Commission would be voting to over-ride the wishes of the committees. Mr. Johnson replied that it would. The Boards are advisory in nature only. The Commission has the final authority. Mr. Johnson expressed concern that everyone interested has not had an opportunity to speak on the matter. He urged that the Commission have a meeting on the issue in a larger venue to allow more people to attend. He also wanted to delay a vote to allow all of the

He pointed out that four new people are among the six running for office in November. It is likely that this issue has encouraged some younger voices to want to become involved. Everyone agrees that this is a good idea, just the location is in contention. Perhaps the splash pad should have been marketed to the Commission and the public as a fountain. The intent was to increase foot traffic in the park, which would extend outward to the downtown area. With the Park being nine acres, they were only asking for 2,000 square feet.

Those attending being permitted to speak, Ms. Pat Mills responded that had there not been people looking out for the park over the years, no space would be available.

Mr. Greene emphasized that this is a public park. You cannot have private use in a public park. Mr. Johnson responded that the fountain would be donated to the City, similar to the stone sign donated to the riverfront a few years ago. Mr. Greene mentioned that there is another person who wants to put in a basketball court if the splash pad is approved. He also pointed out the great amount of water that would be needed to operate the attraction unless they use a closed system.

Ms. Claudia Miller noted that Willard Scott had visited the City Park many years ago and wrote of its outstanding beauty. She urged the City to capitalize on this endorsement as a draw for tourists. Another voiced concern that the park already has events practically every weekend which make it difficult for the grass to spring back. To this, someone else asked if we were now going to market the park on the basis of grass and trees.

President Gallagher asked if the Commission would end the discussion with a motion, since he could not. Mr. Wallis made a motion to concur with the recommendations of the boards to not approve the request to place a splash pad in the City Park, seconded by Mr. Fulks. Upon voice vote on the motion, Mr. Johnson voted no. All other votes were yes. The motion carried.

The City Auditor presented the following invoices over \$3,000 for approval of payment:

- \$3,091 from Southeastern Equipment for wheel axle assembly. Invoice: 1/17/17. PO: 1/18/17
- \$5,624.45 from Ohio BWC for monthly premium. Invoice: 1/27/17. PO: 2/1/17
- \$3,066 from Smartbill for custom forms & envelopes. Invoice: 1/31/17. PO: 2/2/17

Mr. Wallis made a motion to approve payment, seconded by Mr. Johnson. Upon voice vote on the motion, all votes were yes.

Ms. Landers asked the Commissioners if they had received her e-mail concerning a telephone call from the Board of Elections. Commissioners need to decide whether to hold a special election for the income tax levy or postpone it to the November election. The cost for a special election would be from \$4,500 to \$5,000 per precinct. The City has three precincts. After a short discussion, Commissioners agreed that they would postpone to November. Ms. Landers will inform the Board of Elections.

The County sent a reciprocal agreement to sign with them to agree to insure any equipment on loan from either entity to the other and to name the owner entity as "additional insured" on the policy. The City Solicitor instructed that this merely needed a motion of the Commission. Mr. Johnson made a motion to sign the reciprocating agreement with the County, seconded by Mr. Wallis. Upon voice vote on the motion, all votes were yes. Ms. Landers will forward the signed agreement to the County for their signatures at their next meeting on Thursday.

The City Solicitor reported that there has been one answer to the appropriation of the Last Chance Carryout from one of the other lien holders. He does not expect their claim to present any impediment to our case in court.

Mr. Johnson said that the Downtown Revitalization Project Group met and expressed their disappointment that they were not contacted and invited to the Planning meeting where the vote was taken on the splash pad. (Note: This was an open meeting, advertised through public media.) They plan to attend the next Commission meeting.

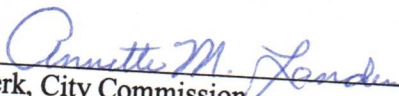
There was presented and read to the Commission for a second reading an Ordinance No. O2017-05 entitled **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING AND DIRECTING THE CITY MANAGER TO ENTER INTO A LETTER OF AGREEMENT WITH CANADAY CARE LLC FOR HEALTHCARE SERVICES FOR THE CITY OF GALLIPOLIS EMPLOYEES AND ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS.** Mr. Fulks made a motion to adopt this ordinance on second reading, seconded by Mr. Johnson. Upon roll call to adopt this ordinance on second reading, all votes were yes.

There was presented and read to the Commission for a first reading an Ordinance No. O2017-06 entitled **AN ORDINANCE TO SET APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURRENT EXPENSES OF THE CITY OF GALLIPOLIS, OHIO DURING THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2017.** Mr. Wallis made a motion to place this ordinance on first reading, seconded by Mr. Fulks. Upon voice vote to place this ordinance on first reading, all votes were yes.

There was presented and read to the Commission for a first reading an Ordinance No. O2017-07 entitled **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY AUDITOR TO TRANSFER OR ADVANCE FUNDS.** Mr. Wallis made a motion to place this ordinance on first reading, seconded by Mr. Johnson. Upon voice vote to place this ordinance on first reading, all votes were yes. Ms. Landers explained for those attending that these two ordinances were the legislation to adopt the 2017 Budget.

There was presented and read to the Commission for a first reading an Ordinance No. O2017-08 entitled **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. O2014-71, AS AMENDED BY ORDINANCE NO. O2015-04, AS AMENDED BY ORDINANCE NO. O2015-23, AS AMENDED BY ORDINANCE NO. O2015-61, AS AMENDED BY ORDINANCE NO. O2016-29, AMENDING SECTION C6, COMPENSATION FOR SALARIED EMPLOYEES, AND REPEALING PREVIOUS ORDINANCES SETTING SAID COMPENSATION.** Mr. Wallis made a motion to place this ordinance on first reading, seconded by Mr. Johnson. Ms. Landers explained that this ordinance was for the re-assignment of the baseball/softball sports coordinator. Upon voice vote to place this ordinance on first reading, 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