

November 19, 2024

The Gallipolis City Commission met in a special session on Tuesday, November 19, 2024, at 5:00 p.m. at the Gallipolis Municipal Building, 333 Third Avenue, having complied with Section 9 of the City Charter.

City Commission President Mr. Michael Fulks called the meeting to order followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

Upon roll call, the following members were present:

Michael C. Fulks, President  
William "Bill" Thomas, Vice-President  
R. William "Bill" Jenkins, Member  
W. Matthew Johnson, Member

Others attending were:

John Westfall, City Manager  
Shelly Clonch, City Auditor  
Andrew Noe, City Solicitor  
Chad Vaughn, River Cities News  
Ronnie Lynch                      Jeff Boyer                      Robbie Jacks  
Randy Breech                      Keith Elliott                      Joy Elliott

The commission received the November 5, 2024 minutes before this meeting. Mr. Johnson made a motion to approve the November 5<sup>th</sup> minutes, seconded by Mr. Jenkins. Upon voice vote, all votes were yes.

Commissioner Michael W. Brown arrived at the meeting after the minutes were approved.

The privilege of the floor was granted to Mr. Robbie Jacks, Gallia County Auditor, to discuss the significant increase in property taxes this year. His office tried to make everyone aware that it was coming and get assurances from legislators on a fix, but the fix never came. Gallia County had an average increase of 15% in property values with some counties in the state seeing up to a 44% increase. We are the lowest in the state but it still matters to Gallia County residents affected by it. Mr. Jacks encouraged the Commission and residents to contact our legislators to find a fix for this issue. If it is not fixed, we will undergo a triennial evaluation which would again increase significantly. His office has been trying to ease the burden of taxpayers by paying down the school bond levies and offering the homestead exemption for seniors, veterans, and the disabled.

Mr. Jacks said that they will now be offering citizens the ability to purchase their dog tags online. This also would allow if someone finds a lost dog and it has a tag, you can get on their website to find out the owner's information. He also mentioned the upgrade of the City's CRA that is on the agenda tonight. The Village of Rio Grande has adopted the same template and the County is managing it for them and would offer to manage it for the City also. Mr. Fulks thanked Mr. Jacks for the information.

The City Manager reported on the following:

- Governor DeWine announced today that thirteen projects across Ohio were awarded funding for water infrastructure with the City being one of them. We were awarded \$1,000,000 for our water line replacement project.
- Participated in a Zoom meeting with SOPEC concerning our electric charging stations and the tariff that was lost when it was converted to an aggregate account. SOPEC is getting the tariff reinstated and will work to possibly recollect our losses.
- Gallipolis in Lights is wrapping up decorating at the City Park in anticipation of the lighting next week.

- The engineers for the riverfront project want to come back to the park again in December to meet and discuss the project.
- The joint project between the City, County, and Gallipolis Township for the Burkhart Lane culvert replacement and road repairs will start soon as the engineer has given the go-ahead.
- ODOT has informed the City that some water lines have to be moved on State Route 7 South that are in their right of way as they have projects coming up.
- Working to get the pickleball court bid packets out by the end of the year.
- Lead and copper notices have been sent to water customers as required by the Ohio EPA. Within the next ten years, every line that we have has to be identified on our side and the customer side.
- The T-Mobile grant for the splash pad/pickleball court that we applied for had around 800 applications and unfortunately the City did not get funded.

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

- \$14,087.30 from Bob's Market for Gallipolis in Lights expenses. Inv: 10/15/24. PO: 11/4/24.
- \$3,055.50 from Celebrite Inc. for police computer software annual fee. Inv: 10/15/24. PO: 11/4/24.
- \$30,479.91 from Rumpke for October trash service. Inv: 10/16/24. PO: 11/4/24.

Dr. Thomas made a motion to approve the payments, seconded by Mr. Brown. Upon voice vote on the motion, all votes were yes.

The October financial statement was distributed at the last meeting for the Commission to review and the Auditor asked for a motion to approve. Mr. Brown made a motion to approve the October financial statement, seconded by Dr. Thomas. Upon voice vote on the motion, all votes were yes.

Ms. Clonch stated that she received a letter from the Ohio Department of Commerce that all class C & D liquor permits in the City expire on 02/01/2025 with permit holders to file renewals online. The City can request a hearing on a renewal if there is an issue and the Police Chief said that he doesn't know of any need for one. Mr. Johnson motioned not to request a hearing on any of the liquor permit renewals, seconded by Dr. Thomas. Upon voice vote on the motion, all votes were yes.

Ms. Chris Love with the Gallia County Family and Children and First Council contacted Ms. Clonch about the Commission appointing a replacement for Mr. Frazee on their board. Mr. Fulks attended the meeting last Tuesday to represent the Commission, but a permanent appointment is needed. Their meetings are held on the second Tuesday of every odd month at 10 a.m. at the Gallia County Health Department with the next meeting being January 14, 2025. The Commission must decide on an appointment by that date as this is a mandated replacement.

There was presented and read to the Commission as a second reading Resolution No. R2024-17 entitled **A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE GALLIPOLIS RAILROAD FREIGHT STATION MUSEUM'S APPLICATION TO THE OHIO FACILITIES CONSTRUCTION COMMISSION FOR THE CULTURAL & SPORT FACILITIES GRANT FOR A REHABILITATION & CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT.** Mr. Brown made a motion to adopt the resolution on the second reading, seconded by Mr. Johnson. Upon roll call to adopt the resolution on the second reading, all votes were yes.

There was presented and read to the Commission as a second reading Ordinance No. O2024-40 entitled **AN ORDINANCE IMPLEMENTING SECTIONS 3735.65 THROUGH 3735.70 OF THE OHIO REVISED CODE ESTABLISHING AND DESCRIBING THE BOUNDARIES OF A COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT AREA IN THE VILLAGE OF GALLIPOLIS, GALLIA COUNTY, DESIGNATING A HOUSING OFFICER TO ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM, AND CREATING A COMMUNITY REINVESTMENT HOUSING COUNCIL AND A TAX INCENTIVE REVIEW COUNCIL.** Mr. Johnson made a motion to adopt the ordinance on the second reading, seconded by Dr. Thomas. Upon roll call to adopt the ordinance on the second reading, all votes were yes.

There was presented and read to the Commission as a first reading Ordinance No. O2024-41 entitled **AN ORDINANCE LIMITING THE NUMBER OF ADULT USE CANNABIS OPERATORS PERMITTED WITHIN THE CITY OF GALLIPOLIS PURSUANT TO SECTION 3780.25 (A) OF THE OHIO REVISED CODE**. Mr. Johnson made a motion to place the ordinance on the first reading, seconded by Dr. Thomas. Mr. Brown asked if someone wanted to put an operation like this in the City and where. The City Manager replied that someone is looking at leasing a building by the Silver Bridge Plaza. He knows that they are filling out the permits and have said that it is very controlled. Mr. Johnson stated that it is the most restricted business in the State of Ohio right now and would bring 40 more jobs to the City. They are under 24-hour surveillance and have security during operation hours. Dr. Thomas asked if this was all under the Ohio Revised Code and Mr. Noe stated that adult-use cannabis operators are allowed to operate under ORC and the section in the ordinance tonight allows the municipality to limit the number of operations in the City limits to one operation. It is also state law for 500 feet isolation distances from schools, churches, public parks, etc. Chief Boyer stated that there are pros and cons to everything but at least this is heavily regulated by the State. He has no issue with it and down the road, it can be great financially for the City. Mr. Westfall said that the City would receive 3.6% of gross sales and possibly another 1% for public safety and awareness training. Mr. Johnson said they are projecting approximately \$22,000 in sales a day. Upon voice vote to place the ordinance on the first reading, Mr. Johnson, Dr. Thomas, Mr. Jenkins, and Mr. Fulks voted yes, and Mr. Brown voted no.

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

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk, City Commission

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
President, City Commission