

February 17, 2026

The Gallipolis City Commission met in a special session on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, 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 C. Fulks called the meeting to order, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence to remember those less fortunate.

Upon roll call, the following members were present:

Michael C. Fulks, President
Michael D. Carter, Member
Dennis L. Kirby, Member

William "Bill" Thomas, Vice-President, arrived during the privilege of the floor.

Others attending were:

John Westfall, City Manager
Shelly Clonch, City Auditor
Andrew Noe, City Solicitor
Chad Vaughn, River Cities News

Ronnie Lynch	Betty Jo Carter	Joy Elliott	Keith Elliott
Terry McKinniss	Faith McKinniss	Brent Coburn	Lynne Frazier
Erin Williams	Kylan Williams	Laken Williams	Jim Osborne
John Thomae	Jonathan Elliott	Michelle Blaine	MT Blaine
Marvin Ours	Justin Rice	Ginger Wysong	

The commission received the minutes from February 3rd before this meeting. Mr. Carter made a motion to approve the February 3rd minutes, seconded by Mr. Kirby. Upon a voice vote to approve the minutes, all votes were yes.

The privilege of the floor was granted to Mrs. Betty Jo Carter, who requested that the Park Board be reinstated or organize a park committee. There has been so much vandalism, especially to the bandstand, and she is worried about losing our historical status. She would like to see cameras put up to deter or catch those who are doing it. Also, in the last 9 years, there have been 23 trees lost in the park, with 6 trees planted last year through donations. Ms. Carter suggested the use of volunteers who could even fix holes in the park to prevent injuries. Mr. Fulks said we could definitely look into it.

Also requesting the privilege of the floor was Mr. Jim Osbourne and several other residents in attendance who live on Hedgewood Drive. Mr. Osbourne said the road has been in bad condition since 1977 and continues to deteriorate, with it now being the worst it has ever been. He has to drive on the sidewalk, which is also deteriorating, to keep from damaging his vehicle in the large potholes that have formed. Temporary repairs have been done over the years, only to return to the same deplorable conditions after a short time. He understood that a grant had been applied for, but they need a temporary fix now. The City Manager confirmed that an OPWC emergency grant of close to \$1 Million had been applied for, and we are waiting to hear if it is awarded. He said he can talk to the County Engineer about ideas for a temporary fix. The residents of Hedgewood Drive expressed that they pay taxes and need a safe street to drive on. Mr. John Tomae said that not only is the street damaged, but also properties are getting damaged because of the water runoff from Oakwood Drive, and this problem will continue until that is fixed. President Fulks stated that once the weather breaks, they will see if they can come up with something to at least get a temporary fix.

The public hearing on the 2026 budget was opened for discussion. The City Auditor, City Manager, and City Commission met with the Department Supervisors to discuss needs within their departments. Ms. Clonch stated the total proposed expenditures for 2026 are \$18,797,777, and this includes large projects such as the water line replacement, PFAS design, and the purchase of a fire truck. After discussions with the State Auditor's office, we do not have to keep the financials for the Riverfront on our books, as the cash flow for this project is through Ironton-Lawrence Community Action who will be audited on this project. The water line project expended \$2,835,801 as of December 2025, and a proposed \$6,029,847 will be expended in 2026 to finish out the project with repayment of the loan beginning in 2028.

The splashpad we are looking at purchasing will cost approximately \$165,000, with \$100,000 of that coming from ODNR, and the City will have to match the \$65,000. We are still working to get donations toward this. The City Manager has applied for several grants, such as street paving, a slaker, and repairs to Hedgewood Drive. The appropriations will have to be amended when we know if they are awarded and the amounts. We are also starting a WPC Reserve fund and putting \$25,000 a year into that to have funds set aside in case of large repairs for the Wastewater Plant. The City Manager said that we do need to continue to look at water and sewer rates.

The General Fund had a carryover of \$979,581.29, which is a little less than last year, but we are still waiting for \$100,000 that was advanced for the pickleball court project to be sent to us from ODNR. The General Fund has come a long way from where it was eight years ago. The 2026 proposed budget includes a \$.50 raise across the board for employees, and there is legislation on the agenda tonight to amend the compensation ordinance.

Ms. Clonch said that since they did not get to meet much on the budget and it felt rushed, they could hold another budget work session before the final second reading vote. The Commission agreed to come up with a date and time. There being no questions from the Commission or the public, the 2026 public hearing on the budget was closed.

The City Manager reported on the following:

- There were a lot of challenges this month in keeping roads and sidewalks clear from the ice and snow. Crews have also been dealing with several water leaks.
- The sea wall at the riverfront project is taking shape and moving along, with only a little slowdown due to the weather. He is still having bi-weekly meetings with engineers and contractors on the project. The Commission received a copy of a possible change order for the parkfront to raise a water line that is down too deep at 10 feet. It needs to be raised in case of a repair so as not to tear up the bank if they had to fix it. This change order would cost \$81,000.
- Materials, such as paint, are being ordered to get started on preparing the pool for opening. He wants to get the splashpad bid out and the equipment ordered.
- Thanked all of the employees who have been working out in the weather and for all the hours put in and the work they have done.
- Mr. Keith Elliott has a recommendation for an appointment to the Volunteer Fire Department. After appointing an investigating committee and receiving a favorable report, he is recommending the appointment of Ms. Brea Elliott to the Gallipolis Fire Department. Mr. Carter made a motion to appoint Ms. Elliott as a Volunteer Firefighter, seconded by Mr. Kirby. Upon a voice vote on the motion, all votes were yes.

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

- \$29,146.14 from Arcadis for the water line replacement project. Inv: 1/8/26. PO: 2/5/26.
- \$67,295.25 from Arcadis for the water line replacement project. Inv: 12/16/25. PO: 2/5/26.
- \$292,938.57 from CJ Hughes for the water line replacement project. Inv: 12/11/25. PO: 2/5/26.
- \$4,324.23 from the Bureau of Workers Comp for monthly premium. Inv: 1/30/26. PO: 2/5/26.
- \$3,059.32 from Citco Water for a 4" macro coupling. Inv: 1/14/26. PO: 1/15/26.

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

The Commission received the January 2026 financial statement in their packets prior to this meeting, and Ms. Clonch asked for a motion to approve. Mr. Kirby made a motion to approve the January 2026 financial statement, seconded by Dr. Thomas. Upon a voice vote on the motion, all votes were yes.

Mr. Carter stated that the state highway sign on State Route 588 coming into town has been knocked down again, and he would like to see the speed limit reduced there. Mr. Fulks said that, unfortunately, that would be something the state would decide since it is a State Route.

There was presented and read to the Commission as a first reading, Ordinance No. O2026-02 entitled **AN ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE O2024-03, AS AMENDED BY ORDINANCE O2025-11, SETTING COMPENSATION FOR MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS**. Dr. Thomas made a motion to place the ordinance on the first reading, seconded by Mr. Kirby. Upon a voice vote to place the Ordinance on the first reading, all votes were yes.

There was presented and read to the Commission as a first reading, Ordinance No. O2026-03 entitled **AN ORDINANCE TO SET APPROPRIATIONS FOR CURRENT EXPENSES OF THE CITY OF GALLIPOLIS, OHIO, DURING THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 31, 2026**. Mr. Carter made a motion to place the ordinance on the first reading, seconded by Dr. Thomas. Upon a voice vote to place the Ordinance on the first reading, all votes were yes.

There was presented and read to the Commission as a first reading, Ordinance No. O2026-04 entitled **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE CITY AUDITOR TO TRANSFER OR ADVANCE FUNDS**. Mr. Kirby made a motion to place the ordinance on the first reading, seconded by Mr. Carter. Upon a voice vote to place the Ordinance on the first reading, all votes were yes.

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



Clerk, City Commission



President, City Commission