

**BELLEFONTAINE CITY COUNCIL
MINUTES FOR TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2026
7:30 pm**

CALL TO ORDER: Ben Stahler
PLEDGE & INVOCATION:
ROLL CALL: James *First Chair*
Lile
Palmer
Reser
Springs
Davis
Easton *Minister* All Present

CORRECTIONS/ADDITIONS: none

SUSPENSION READING OF MINUTES: Moved by Springs, seconded by James

V All Ayes

ADMINISTRATION REPORTS:

Mayor - Read a txt message from Department Head Ryan Shields concerning the Memorial Day Parade stating how proud he was of his department and the city employees who participated in the parade. It is important for our departments to be involved in community events and reflects very positively on the city as a whole. Events like the parade show another side of the people who serve the community. Especially proud of the effort our team put into representing the department. It was really encouraging to see such a large turn out from the community this year. The department is honored to receive 2nd place in the parade behind our veterans. This was fitting for the day and what it represents. Appreciates the city's encouragement and involvement in events such as this. It helps strengthen relationships within the community and between departments as well.

S/SD- The Mayor adds that it is Council as well that helps the way the departments run and how they feel. Concerning the real impact that the recent flooding had on a number of residents dealing with water in their homes, damaged property, disrupted lives and a great deal of stress and uncertainty, the city understands that for those affected, this was not just a weather event. It was personal. On behalf of the city, residents need to know that these concerns are heard and they are being taken seriously. Councilwoman Palmer and Mr. Dodds were present during the rain event on Saturday morning and witnessed these conditions firsthand. It reinforced that, while steps were taken following previous flooding events, additional evaluation and improvements are clearly necessary moving forward. The implications that complaints or concerns raised previously were ignored are not accurate. City staff have been actively reviewing drainage concerns in these areas for quite some time. Following prior events, we cleaned and dredged retention ponds, inspected infrastructure and evaluated operational improvements that could help reduce impacts during heavy rain events. These actions were taken because we recognized there were concerns that needed attention. If water is rising around your home, threatening your property or your family, you do not want to hear technical explanations or engineering discussions in that moment. You want the problem fixed. Many people have ideas and opinions about what should be done and it is appreciated that residents care enough to speak up. We also have a responsibility to make sure that whatever improvements are made are based on sound engineering, accurate analysis and solutions that will address the problem responsibly and effectively. These are major infrastructure issues, and we owe it to taxpayers to make decisions that are going to produce meaningful results. Despite these efforts, the scale of rainfall we experienced exceeded what our current system can reasonably manage in certain areas. Our community received more than five inches of rain. The reality is that no stormwater system can be designed to eliminate flooding risk during rainfall events of that magnitude. Due to the sheer volume of water, some of the retention areas were overtopped during the event. Many people have asked why we cannot release water faster to prevent this from happening. But there are EPA regulations and downstream discharge limitations that govern how much water can be released and how quickly it can be discharged. We have to balance flood mitigation efforts here with the potential impacts downstream and comply with those environmental requirements as we manage these systems. Our responsibility is to take what we learned from this event and determine

where improvements can and should be made. We intend to continue our internal review but also plan to involve third party engineering firms to conduct a broader analysis of our stormwater system in its entirety. We want outside experts to help us identify vulnerabilities, evaluate system performance and recommend practical improvements that could reduce the severity and frequency of future flooding events. The retention ponds did temporarily store and redirect a significant amount of water and in most cases the water receded from affected areas within an hour to an hour and a half after the heaviest rainfall subsided. This shows that parts of the system provided important benefits during the event but also suggests that future improvements may need to focus on expanding storage and overall system capacity, so we are better positioned to handle increasingly intense rainfall events. These are complex and expensive infrastructure issues, but we owe it to taxpayers to make decisions based on sound engineering and detailed analysis, not assumptions or emotion in the immediate aftermath of a difficult event. We will continue communicating with residents as this process moves forward. We remain committed to doing everything we reasonably can to improve infrastructure, protect property and reduce future flooding impacts. Appreciates the participation and turn out for the Memorial Day Parade. Always great to see all the people And to remember all of those who have served and made the ultimate sacrifice so that we can enjoy the freedoms we have today.

- Law -** A month ago Council had a request for proposed legislation for golf carts which under Ohio law are low speed and under speed vehicles along with other vehicles and the licensing thereof. Draft legislation has been delivered to Councilwoman James for further discussion and asked that her committee meet again to discuss questions, etc. This has been drafted for Council at their request. Announcement in the next couple weeks to discuss this issue.
- Auditor -** State Auditors were in this morning and will be here all week. A team of six were here doing the field work and previously started the audit at their site. Should be wrapped up in a couple of weeks and a report will be provided.
- Police Chief -** Not present
- Fire Chief –** Engine 21 was in service last week and within a couple of hours was put to work. The new hire has completed his 1st week. He was put on a 24 hour shift right away. New hires usually are put on a 40 hour work week for inboarding but this was not possible with the busy week. Things will be completed during the first part of his shift in the coming weeks. New medic that was purchased in 2023 should be finished by the end of July.
- Engineer-** Not present
- Utilities-** Not present
- Parks & Rec-** Not present
- Economic Dev-** Not present
- Downtown Dir-** Pineapple Palooza is Saturday, June 6th from 2:00 pm to midnight. From 2:00 to 8:00 pm will be family centered events with vendors and food trucks. The headlining concert will start at 8:00 pm. There will be road closures at Main, Opera, Chillicothe and Columbus. On the agenda this evening is a resolution (R26-27) to install a vintage phone booth downtown. Mr. Dodds adds that Amber Palmer is now posting road closures on the website.

REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES:

- Finance –** Explained resolutions and ordinances on the agenda.
- Rules -** No report
- Safety -** No report
- Utilities -** No report
- Streets -** Explained resolution on the agenda.
- Sidewalks, Curbs & Parks -**No report
- Audit –** Will meet with the auditors later in the week. Notice will be sent.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM CITIZENS: Matt Bogan, 1605 Raymond Ave., here to address water concerns. Glad to see that Mr. Dodds was out there to see it. The water was over his knees in the backyard, water in the street and between houses. Looking forward to a long term resolution.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES:

1. ORDINANCES FOR 1ST READING

R26-24 A. A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY OF BELLEFONTAINE TO MAKE APPLICATION TO THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, OFFICE OF AVIATION, FOR AN OHIO AIRPORT IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM GRANT FOR SFY 2027. **FINANCE**

Adoption- Moved by Springs, seconded by Davis V All Ayes

R26-25 B. A RESOLUTION ACCEPTING THE OHIO AIRPORT MATCHING GRANT CONTRACT FOR FUNDING THROUGH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, OFFICE OF AVIATION, TO REHABILITATE AIRFIELD LIGHTING AT BELLEFONTAINE REGIONAL AIRPORT AND AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR AND/OR SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR TO EXECUTE ALL DOCUMENTS RELEVANT TO THIS PROJECT. **FINANCE**

Adoption- Moved by Springs, seconded by Davis V All Ayes

26-26 C. AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE PURCHASE OF CERTAIN REAL ESTATE LOCATED AT 112 N. ELM FOR FUTURE MUNICIPAL NEEDS AND PURPOSES AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. **FINANCE**

3RR- Moved by Springs, seconded by Davis V All Ayes
Passage- Moved by Springs, seconded by James V All Ayes
Adoption- Moved by Springs, seconded by James V All Ayes

R26-27 D. A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF THE CITY OF BELLEFONTAINE PERMITTING THE INSTALLATION OF A VINTAGE PHONE BOOTH IN THE PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY LOCATED AT 144 S. MAIN ST. IN THE CITY OF BELLEFONTAINE. **STREET**

Adoption- Moved by Lile, seconded by Palmer V All Ayes

2. ORDINANCES FOR 2ND READING

26-22 A. AN ORDINANCE MAKING SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS AND AMENDING THE PERMANENT APPROPRIATIONS ORDINANCE FOR PURPOSES OF CAPITAL EQUIPMENT AT MYEERAH AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. **FINANCE**

3RR- Moved by Springs, seconded by James V All Ayes
Passage-
Adoption-

3. ORDINANCES FOR 3RD READING

26-20 A. AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE SERVICE-SAFETY DIRECTOR AND MAYOR ON BEHALF OF THE CITY OF BELLEFONTAINE TO SELL THAT CERTAIN CITY OWNED REAL ESTATE KNOWN AS THE ARMORY PURSUANT TO SECTION 721.28 OF THE REVISED CODE AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY. **FINANCE**

Adoption- Moved by Springs, seconded by James V Ayes, Easton-no

COMMUNICATIONS FROM CLERK: none

COMMUNICATIONS FROM COUNCIL: President Stahler - Council photos will be June 9th, time to be determined.

ADJOURNMENT – 7:56 pm moved by Lile, seconded by Palmer

Bonnie Campbell, Clerk of Council

Ben Stahler, President of Council