

SARDINIA COUNCIL MEETING

May 11, 2026 7:00 P.M.

Prayer: Gary Troutman

Pledge: Mayor Dustin Puckett

Roll Call: Gary Troutman, Anna Turner, Peggy Vance, Dean Vaughn, Nick Taylor

Absent: Michael McRoberts - unexcused

Also in Attendance: Tony Baker, Solicitor, Michelle Taylor, Fiscal Officer, Venita Milburn, Clerk

COUNCIL NOTES

Council reviewed meeting minutes from April 27, 2026. *Motion to approve made by Dean Vaughn, second by Nick Taylor. Roll call all yes.*

Attachments: Meeting minutes of April 27, 2026

FINANCIALS

Council reviewed financials for February 2026, March 2026, April 2026.

Motion made to approve February financials made by Gary Troutman, second by Dean Vaughn. Roll call all yes except for Peggy Vance said no.

Motion made to approve March financials made by Dean Vaughn, second by Nick Taylor. Roll call all yes except for Peggy Vance said no.

Motion made to approve April financials made by Dean Vaughn, second by Gary Troutman. Roll call all yes except for Peggy Vance said no.

Attachments: Financials for February 2026, March 2026, and April 2026.

Mayor

Mayor Puckett thanked everyone that submitted resumes for the Village Administrator position. Mayor would like to appoint Mr. Jerry Seibert who does not live in the Village. Mr. Vaughn thought that all of council were to interview candidates, which Mr. Baker explained that the position is appointed by the mayor with approval from council. Mayor Puckett asked Mr. Seibert to introduce himself.

Mr. Seibert stated he was a resident of Hamersville for 18 years and currently is on his second term on council as President Pro Temp of that council. He got involved in government a few years back where he has been engaged in the process from beginning to end. He actively does the minutes; he has written policies and procedures and has updated the entire employee handbook. He has written ordinances and resolutions with ultimately getting them approved through council saving the village money by writing these with the sign off by the attorney. He stated that he educates

himself to do what he can to move the Village of Sardinia forward. He stated that government should be a lot easier than we make it. He also stated that it should be a lot cleaner than we make it and it should be our responsibility to make it so. Mayor Puckett asked Mr. Seibert where he worked now, which he responded B&F Concrete Pumping. Mayor Puckett stated that Mr. Seibert does not have a problem getting his hands dirty. He used to have his own business which he lost due to a divorce but currently is a trainer. Mayor Puckett asked about grant writing, which Mr. Seibert responded he has extensive experience in grant writing.

Mayor Puckett asked for a motion to hire Jerome Seibert. *Peggy Vance made the motion to hire Mr. Seibert as the new administrator for the village, seconded by Anna Turner.*

Mr. Troutman asked for discussion on the process of hiring since this is a new process for him. Proposal by the mayor with acceptance of the recommendation by council. Mr. Baker explained if this is rejected by council then back to square one. Ms. Beth Kress interrupted from the audience to ask if she could address the crowd, informed not at this time.

Mr. Nick Taylor asked if they could hear some other people that were interested in the position, which Mr. Baker responded not at this time as the mayor has recommended someone for the position.

Roll call – Ms. Vance yes; Ms. Turner yes; Mr. Troutman yes; Nick Taylor yes; Dean Vaughn no.

Mr. Vaughn then informed Mr. Taylor that this vote was for the hire of Mr. Seibert, which Mr. Taylor responded, he thought this roll call was for him being present. Mr. Taylor asked if he could amend his vote to no.

Mr. Baker stated that there would need to be a motion to rescind the vote to hire Mr. Seibert then revote.

Motion to rescind the vote made by Dean Vaughn, second by Nick Taylor.

Roll call was called again with Mr. Troutman – no; Ms. Turner – yes; Ms. Vance – no; Nick Taylor – no; Mr. Vaughn – yes. Mr. Vaughn explained to Mr. Taylor they were rescinding the vote. Mr. Vaughn also told Mr. Taylor if he said yes then Mr. Taylor should say yes.

Mr. Baker had to ask Mr. Taylor to clarify his vote to rescind which Mr. Taylor said yes. Motion carries.

Mr. Baker then informed council that we needed a motion to hire Mr. Seibert.

Motion made to hire Mr. Seibert as Village Administrator made by Peggy Vance, second by Anna Turner.

Roll call Mr. Troutman – yes; Peggy Vance – yes; Anna Turner – yes; Nick Taylor – no; Dean Vaughn – no. Motion carries.

Mayor Puckett welcomed Mr. Seibert to the Village of Sardinia as the administrator.

ADMINISTRATOR

Ms. Milburn informed council that in their packet are the new contracts from Rumpke. The Village contracts expires August 31 so council was asked to review the pricing this month. Mayor Puckett would like to make a couple calls to check other company pricing. There is one contract for a four-year period which is the first one. The second one is the same four-year period, but every resident gets a 95-gallon trash cart at no additional charge, and then the last one is a two-year contract. You will see those prices are a little higher than what the four-year contract is, so council should look at those, and we can review them next month. A decision needs to be made by the August council meeting before the contract expires. Ms. Milburn also mentioned that if council had questions or would like our representative from Rumpke, Brittany, to come here, she would do that too.

Ms. Milburn stated that there were quite a few people that came in this month after the bills went out and that stated they did not receive their utility bills in the mail. This also included the shut-off notices, so they were not happy their water was disconnected for non-payment. Ms. Milburn wanted to note that she explained to them that we have an ordinance that the bills are due on the same day every month, they are due on the 10th, that does not change.

Customers do have the ability to have payment taken out by automatic withdrawal. Customers can call to pay by credit card, put a check in the drop box, or you can come into the office to make payment. So, we just wanted to make it very clear that the bills are due on the 10th of every month even if a statement is not received.

Ms. Vance reiterated that the statements are due whether you get the bill or not. Ms. Turner asked why the bills did not go out which Ms. Milburn responded that the statements did go out but the post office did not get them to their destination.

Mayor Puckett would like to ask council if we could knock \$5.00 off the utility bill. He stated he knows it is not much, but it is giving a little back, a little bit of something. He is requesting this instead of raising it \$5.00 this year. Mr. Baker asked if this would affect any of the repayment schedules for the principal for forgiveness of any loans that are outstanding. Ms. Turner mentioned that this was something we needed to be careful about. Mayor Puckett stated that he and Ms. Milburn had discussed this, and which Mr. Vaughn stated that Mayor Puckett and Ms. Milburn could not make that decision. There would have to be an ordinance written with any changes. Mr. Baker mentioned Mayor Puckett had put this to council but that he would like to know how it ties to any outstanding loans with the repayment schedules that have already been developed.

Ms. Milburn stated that the ordinance for the pricing for the water and sewer charges last pricing changes had 2026 as the final year. The ordinance was written for years 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, and 2026. Ms. Vance stated that this was the previous council's five-year plan. Ms. Vance asked what Mayor Puckett's proposal was. Mayor Puckett stated his proposal was to knock off just \$5.00 for water and sewer for at least one year. Ms. Vance asked if council should have a five-year plan also. Mayor Puckett stated that this is why the change was brought to the table for discussion. Ms. Vance stated financially she was not sure about the recovery and repayment on the extended loans for the sewer plant, which is the highest cost with the water cost being minimal. Ms. Vance also stated that the sewer cost and extended past loans from other administrations that strangle the residents, so 12 months times \$5.00 is a \$60.00 reduction. Mr. Taylor stated that it seems like that would add a lot of complexity to our billing cycle with them, the loans, like Ms. Vance is saying. We would have to figure out a lot. Mr. Troutman suggested that the financial committee could look at this to see what it would look like on paper. Mr. Vaughn stated if the numbers come out, it would be great to reduce the cost, but a plan needed to be in place, not to say at least a year but a set time as long as it is clear through financial information.

Mayor Puckett asked if a financial meeting should be set up. Mr. Troutman agreed that that could be done. Next year's budget is being worked on so that looking at this and how it would affect the budget. Mr. Troutman, along with the finance committee, could make a proposal to either make the reduction or what it would take otherwise. Mayor Puckett asked to be informed when the finance committee meeting was scheduled so he can sit in on it.

Ms. Vance stated, "that since we are talking about financial committee, I do want to ask that whoever oversees helping everybody understand what happens during the committee business meetings. That the public is allowed to be here, but public is not allowed to speak at those committee meetings and anybody sitting here needs to be quiet, so that the business of the village within those committees can be handled appropriately. Ms. Vance continued that anybody that wants to speak to that specific committee can request to have their name put on the agenda. Guidelines according to the meeting rules need to be reiterated also.

Ms. Milburn informed council that she had been going over a few of the zoning ordinances that we had recently updated. One is for the grass and weeds, so we were checking the first and the 15th of the month where yards were being checked. The reason that this was pulled out was the house on 115 Cherry is up for sale where the grass has not been cut. Ms. Milburn stated that she called the real estate agent today, and she said to go ahead and cut it and charge the property owner. Notices are given that the grass needs to be cut. I have seen a couple other places that need to be

taken care of, so just wanted to remind everybody that there is an ordinance about having your grass and weeds taken care of.

Ms. Milburn stated the other one is the ordinance that was put into effect was made in 2025 requiring commercial property owners to maintain and provide proof of insurance coverage to the village administrator that was supposed to be given to the village by January 31. There are a few people that have not complied with that request. The ordinance states there is \$100 fine every day when compliance is not met. For if it is not, they should get a 15-day notice, and then \$100 fine for that violation each day until compliance. Mr. Vaughn asked if this was for an operating commercial business or anything that is commercial business property. Ms. Milburn read from the ordinance that stated, "requires commercial property owners to maintain adequate insurance coverage and provide proof thereof." Mr. Vaughn repeated that "anything in the commercial zone, is what you are saying. So, those that fall under this is the one that should be challenged it is egregious and will have to be amended at some point. Ms. Turner stated that those properties should have that insurance. Ms. Vance asked if there was a motion needed to fine the people which she was informed it was already in the ordinance. Ms. Vance also asked if the motion was needed to start actually billing because apparently there had been no billing done. Mr. Vaughn asked if the notices had been sent out, which Ms. Milburn stated they had not, but this would be done so that property owners would have 15 days to comply. Ms. Vance said the last day for compliance is January 31st. Ms. Turner said commercial property owners should have insurance on their property.

Mr. Vaughn continued that there is a difference if it is a commercial property or whether it is operating a business, you should have insurance, because people are allowed on your property publicly. If it is a commercial property, but there is nobody allowed access, that's a difference that falls under egregious of a contract, because you are forcing insurance on somebody that doesn't allow access to his property.

Ms. Vance stated that after the fire in the building uptown, economic development put this in place. Mr. Vaughn interrupted to state that is what we are getting sued over. Ms. Vance stated that we were not getting sued. Mr. Vaughn asked, "Is that guy not suing us over that piece of property?" Mr. Baker responded to Mr. Vaughn that the Village has a lawsuit pending against the owner of the property. Ms. Vance stated that the property owner did not have insurance on the building so the Village had to pay the money to clean it up. Mr. Vaughn asked if the property owner had given permission to go onto the property and tear it down? Ms. Vance stated the EPA gave permission, and Mr. Baker stated that there was an order signed for the demolition that was voted on by council. Again, Mr. Vaughn asked if the property owner signed a paper to go on his property to tear the building down. Ms. Vance said the building was a danger to the community then Mr. Vaughn proceeded to say, "it was not about that, it was about procedure and we will handle that". Mr. Vaughn then said just send out the notices.

Ms. Milburn went on to the next topic, which was a question about the ordinance 1336-25 for Mae Street. Ms. Milburn informed council she went back and listened to the original read for this ordinance. It was on December 9, 2025. The recommendation was made to change Mae Street from a request that the mayor got because the delivery trucks could not make the turn on Mae Street without getting stuck. This is not a two-lane street, but a two-way street, which is different. From Tri County to the alley, is a two-way street. Being a two-way does not need a width requirement, as the two-lane street requires. The ORC 723.01 states that the municipal corporation shall have the power to regulate the use of streets, except for provided in section 5501.49 and it continues saying that the legislative authority of a municipal corporation, which is the village, shall have the care, supervision, and control the public highway, streets, avenues, alleys, sidewalks, public grounds, and viaducts within the municipal corporation.

ORC 723.02 states that the legislative authority of the municipal corporation may open, straighten, alter, divert, narrow, or widen any street, alley, or public highway within the limits of the municipal corporation. The legislative authority shall provide for such improvements by ordinance, which was done.

ORC 723.05 states that when in the opinion of the legislative authority there is good cause for vacating or narrowing a street or alley, or any part thereof, and that such vacation or narrowing will not be detrimental to the general interest. It may, by ordinance and without petition, vacate or narrow such streets. The change in Mae Street with Ordinance 1336-25 was done as required by law. The public safety committee at that time recommended that the street be made a two-way, just for 535 feet, so that the trucks leaving the auto body shop will not get stuck in that curve. There were three readings with the first being December 9, 2024, second reading January 13, 2025, and the third reading was on February 10, 2025.

Mr. Vaughn was curious as to how many other streets there are that are two-way, but not two lanes, and questioned which ones they were. Ms. Vance replied that there was Alley Street, the one that runs next to the pizzeria. Mr. Vaughn stopped Ms. Vance to clarify he was asking about streets not alleys. Ms. Vance stated that according to the mapping office that there was not much difference between a street and an alley. Mr. Vaughn stated that there was that we can give an alley away but not a street.

Ms. Vance stated there is plenty of two-way streets. One is right next to Gary's Coffee Shop. That is a two-way street, correct? It is open-ended on both ends. It is two-way. Sometimes you must wait your turn, because that is what makes it a two-way street, because it's not wide enough for two vehicles to pass side by side on both sides of his place. Mr. Vaughn stated that that street had a lot of potholes which Ms. Milburn informed that the street guys have been out putting gravel in those around the Village. Ms. Vance asked Mr. Vaughn if he had been checking which he answered affirmatively then stated he would handle it with OSHA. Mr. Vaughn also said that there were seven streets.

Ms. Milburn moved on to the next topic, which was the replat for 121 Mae Street. The home was being sold so a survey was done for the sale. The replat needs to be signed by the fiscal officer and the mayor. Mr. Baker asked if there was any change to the plot itself, which Ms. Milburn responded no.

Ms. Milburn stated that the American Legion did call to inform the Village of the Memorial Day parade that will be on May 25 with the line up at 9:30 a.m. Ms. Milburn did let them know when they called that at this time there are no officers that could help with traffic, so I believe the fire department said that they would help with blocking the streets.

Next was Sue McKinley with information on America 250:

"First, thank you for allowing me to come and speak with you all. My name is Sue McKinley. I am the chair of the American 250 Celebration in Brown County this year. As we all know, we are celebrating 250 years of freedom. So, I wanted to bring a banner that we would like to have hung in your village, hopefully like the second week of June through the fourth of July. It is advertising our event, which will be on the fourth of July at the Brown County Fairgrounds. It is a day-long event, and it is county wide. On July 6, you can take the banner down and throw it away or you can keep it and do anything you want to, but we are not doing this a second time. I also want to pass out some flyers to you for advertising. So, taking place on the fourth of July, we will start out with the parade. The parade will begin at 10 o'clock in the morning. Obviously, it is going to take a little bit different route this year, because downtown Georgetown is torn up. They are going to start at the old hospital parking lot. They will go north on Home Street, west on State Street, and south on South Main. So, the South Main part of it is the same as the fair parade. The day will consist of car shows starting in the morning, and the Veterans Administration is taking care of that for us. We have four concerts going on throughout the day, three of them will be Age Lincoln, Vinyl Countdown, Chucky's in Love, and then the headliner is Noah Smith who will take place at 8 o'clock that night. We have the Clydesdales coming, and they will be offering rides in their wagon around the fairground. And I want to preface all of this: everything is free. There is no charge to get in. There is no charge to attend any of the concerts. The only thing you will pay for is food and drink, which is all. All the games are free; all the prizes you win are free. It is a family event, and we want to provide for everybody. There will be a little steam engine that

is going to come and go around the fairground to give rides to everybody. We have all kinds of games and contests going on, bullfrog dummy contests, chicken races, face painting, petting zoo. We have the live statues coming, massive fireworks at the end of the evening, and they will be from the back of the fairground over the fairground, so you will probably be able to see them just about any place that you decide to park yourself. We have a cake auction, a hog calling contest, a husband calling contest, bicycle decorating contest, costumes, stick horse races, all kinds of old-fashioned games, three-legged races, etc. etc. The Liberty Band will be there. We have the cloggers coming. Then we have all kinds of booths, and right now we have about 29 organizations and villages that have signed up for booths. The Sardinia Historical Society is going to have a booth there. I believe Sandy Purdy is taking care of that for you guys, so you will be represented there also. There will be a civil war reenactment set up, just everything you can possibly think of is going to be there.

Other things that we are doing throughout the year that I want to make you aware of, we are going to do what is called a driving tour. The driving tour will highlight all of the buildings, homes, and sites that have some kind of relevance to Brown County now. It may just be an empty lot, because whatever was there is gone, but it may have been the first piano factory in Brown County.

Ms. McKinley said, "It will also incorporate all of the cemeteries, all the century farms, all the covered bridges, all the murals, all the historical markers, locations of churches, all the schools, and of course, the mail pouch barn, and I just found out this past week that the Foresight Mail Pouch Barn, that is on State Route 125 is the only one left in the country, really, and it's a real tobacco barn. I need people from Sardinia to step up at the plate a little bit and start getting some information for us about any historical landmarks around here that you know of that took place in this building or this house. What we'll do is, we'll have a little picture of that, we'll have a couple of lines about what it was, where its location is, strictly driving, nobody's to get out of their vehicles and walk up and knock on doors or anything like that, and that will be broken out by locations and zip codes. It will also be on our website, but we will have a printed booklet that you can take, keep in your vehicle, and or keep at home, and look for it. We did what Hush Hush goes to the movies. We celebrated that last month, and we showed the second half of Grant's memoirs, and it was very well received. We had a sixth-grade essay and poem contest with the sixth graders throughout the county participated in that. We planted a tree called the Heritage Tree Planting, and that took place just before the fair last year. That tree is located in the fairgrounds, just as you turn off 125 and go through the old rock pillars, it is on the right with a big sign in front of it. Then on June 25th of this year, we will be hosting a concert at Green Acres, which is on State Route 505 outside of Hamersville. The Cincinnati Pops will be there, and it is \$15 a ticket, and if you are interested, get online and get your tickets, because they are going to go fast, and I think it is limited to maybe 200 to 225 people.

Ms. McKinley continued saying, "they will have an abundance of food trucks and beer gardens on site. We'd love to have more participants in the parade, so if anybody's interested in having a booth or interested in being in the parade, if you go to our website, you will find the forms to fill out to submit and get back that back to us. We are still looking for volunteers. We are also looking for an organization that wants to make a little bit of money and oversee the parking. If you have an organization that wants to do that, we'll be happy to talk to them and see what we can work out."

Next speaker was Shauna Weiss of Hope and Promise who was on the agenda.

Ms. Weiss wanted to share some of the things that that Hope and Promise did. "We developed a Facebook page. We were rated by Facebook warriors, but we put announcements on there, things that were going on the village businesses, and church events and local information. We purchased new speakers and repaired the church bells at Cornerstone Church, and Steve did that for us. We really appreciate Steve, he did a good job. We purchased some planters for the village. Now I'll get to that in a minute because there's controversy on these planters. We organized and implemented the farmers' markets and did not charge vendors. We encouraged vendors to bring local goods, baked goods, and things like that. It was, as you would say, a fun time, or a good time had by all. The goal was to bring our community together, and as I look

around the room, there were a lot of people here who attended those, and we have a lot of members here that were members of Hope and Promise. Even though the board voted four zero to suspend Hope and Promise, I will tell you, none of us were really, really too happy about it, because we felt like we were doing good things. We had good people doing good things. Some of the other things that we did: cleaned up the corner by the flagpole, and the lot on the corner where the old hotel used to stand, and that Sardinia Hope Church owns the corner lot, and I want to thank them. They were great to Hope and Promise. They showed up, they helped us. We were happy to bring port-o-lets in. We needed a place for people to utilize the bathroom, the church came to me and said, "You know, you're spending money on this, it was \$105 for port-o-lets to bring in, and the church said, "Don't do that, we'll get a volunteer, they'll come and sit in the church, people can use our bathroom", which I thought was very kind. We decorated the village Christmas tree, and Christmas decorations are in the basement of the village hall as we speak right now. Hope and Promise, every year, purchased the tree until this past year. The past year, we kind of felt like in the village needed a little skin in the game, and I talked to Amy, and she said the Village would buy the tree.

With the pause of Hope and Promise, I say "pause of Hope and Promise", it is a stop for me, I loved what we were doing. I thought we were doing great things. I ran a business for 30 years, and let me tell you, I have never encountered such nasty people in my life. We have a great town here, but we have 10 or 15 people that do not want to see Sardinia go forward. I went to some of the people who had made donations and asked them, would you like the donations back? One of them is Dusty Faul. He responded on Facebook, and I called him. I did not have his phone number, and Dusty had given us two picnic tables to use at the farmer's market. We had no place where people could sit to eat a hamburger, hot dog, or anything like that. He said I have two picnic tables. He said just use them. I said, okay. When I talked to him and I did talk to him. I am a professional. I do not do business on Facebook. I don't believe in running people down on Facebook, which I'm going to get to in a minute. And I'm an adult. I do not communicate with people like I'm an adolescent. I'll tell you that right now. And for anyone who's sitting here, you must know when you put something on Facebook, it's there forever, it's on your permanent record.

As my mother would say, when I would stay home from school, you have got to go to school, you miss school, it's on your permanent record. Well, Facebook's on your permanent record too, and can always be retrieved. So, some of the things that Hope and Promise did, we did the blessings of the backpack, summer ice cream party with free Graeter's ice cream, I had somebody stand in the middle by everybody standing there eating the free ice cream, saying I hate Sardinia. Can you believe it? Isn't that nasty? I mean, I think that's just downright nasty.

We've honored our first responders. We organized the Easter egg hunt in collaboration with the library. We've had a lot of great collaboration ideas and worked with other groups. We volunteered with the American Legion, placing flags and wreaths on graves. We volunteered to assist residents during village cleanup days. We organized walks throughout Sardinia. Gary, you were on a lot of walks, as Peggy was. We provided bouncy houses for the kids; that's about 300 bucks if you did that. Invited local singing groups, helped paint the interior of Village Hall. I am not a painter, but I helped paint, Peggy helped paint, Amy helped paint and saved the village, quite a bit of money there. We helped local families provide Christmas for their kids. We helped with the Christmas parade with the Sardinia Fire Department. We sponsored a fundraiser for Carter Scheider. If you remember Carter, he's a graduate of our local Christian school, and so we had a fundraiser for him during one of the farmers markets, which I thought was great. In addition to the monies that I had mentioned before that we had provided, we did also donate \$500 for the Veterans banners to the American Legion. We donated \$240 to Sardinia History Club for cemetery monument cleaning they did last year, and they did a great job in the cemetery. The History Club also hired a man who came in and did stone restoration, because we had the Sardinia cemetery in the back that had 12, I think, Veterans back there, so we helped them with that.

So those are just some of the things that Hope and Promise has done. I also had attended some of the 250 meetings with Sue, had coordinated with our fire department, the history club, the American Legion, and some other groups to go

participate in the 250 and we would each take a couple of hours because when you start early to go to 10:00 at night, that's a long time, so we were trying to do that. I mean, this is the 250th and I think this is all about history, and they have a lot to say, and they have a great group. Due to the pause of Hope and Promise, all of that is canceled. Sardinia will not be represented except through our history group, and so when you go to the 250 make sure that you go to their booth. Sandra Purdy is in charge, and they do a wonderful job. So, I want to make sure that they know we support them.

Something I do want to talk about a little bit, just to give you all history, here is some of this stuff that is happening. I get on Facebook to stay up with my family to see what's going on, sorority sisters, and things like, see, just kind of what's happening. Sardinia Community Facebook page is run by a local person who is co-owner of the Celtic Cottage. I wanted to go over this because I think it is important. I don't personally believe Facebook was ever designed to be mean and cruel to people, but six days ago on the Sardinia page it was put on there about the flowerpots being removed from the village. If you recall, there were two flowerpots that sat in front of the benches over by the flagpole. There was a flowerpot that sat next to Jacob's Ladder, and there was one that was over on the corner next to the Underground Cafe. Okay, now I am retired. I probably have more time than most people, but every year I have gone and gotten these flowerpots, either at or near the end of winter, taken them home, painted them, and brought them back and put flowers in them. So that's exactly what happened. Of course, the people that are complaining aren't here, that's usually the way it goes. The flowerpots were removed mid-January. There were two left in town. The two that were taken were all beat up and needed to be painted again; the two good ones I put in front of the Underground Cafe, and I asked Ashley to put flowers in them. In fact, right now there are two ferns in them. So, I took the other two home. The other two were in bad shape. So, I took a rubber mallet, I beat them out. I started to paint them. They still don't look good. So, it gets put on Facebook asking who removed who removed these things? Well, I removed them from the middle of town, they weren't taken, they were taken to be painted, they were taken to have some maintenance done on them. Two were still there, the other two looked so bad I wouldn't put them back, but we can do that, it doesn't make any difference. But I had a lot of people commenting about these flowerpots and all this kind of stuff, and it always kind of blows my mind that people never pay attention to anything until they want to gripe about something. Okay, so the flowerpots, like I said, were removed mid-January, and six to eight days ago they started complaining on Facebook about them missing. Now we have a garden club, Dusty has given them flowerpots from Village Hall and the flowers are very pretty. They're there by the flagpole. They look very nice and I hope that the garden club is successful, because you know, I think we need beautification here in Sardinia. What bothers me about this is with these flowerpots and with this bike rack, which I'm going to get to, people complained, I say they just crucified me over this, and there was not a call made to Village Hall that our pots were missing or that the bike rack was missing. There was not a call to the sheriff's department that this was missing. I think most of the people here know me. If they don't, they could have called Venita and said, Venita, the pots are missing, the bike racks missing. Who takes care of what Shauna does? Well, here's Shauna's number, that would have been than the adult thing to do, instead of splattering it all over Facebook.

So anyway, the bike rack, let me give you a little history of the bike rack. I am a bicycle rider, okay? I have an electric bike, and I used to ride a lot here in Sardinia. In fact, I would go out Purdy Road, come around, come into town, get off my bike, check the mail, that kind of stuff. So, I was riding my bike, I came into town, we had a bike rack up here, right by the flagpole. I come, I pull in here, no bicycle rack. Well, what happened to the bike rack? I asked Amy, what happened to the bike rack? She informed me that the Village had taken it to the park. I decided to buy a bike rack. Friend of mine said, Go to the vocational school. So, I called the vocational teacher, John Adams, I guess not the president. And so I talked to him, and he asked if you can go out and draw me a picture. So I didn't draw it, I went off the internet, found a picture of bike rack, but I also went in and made some revisions on this bike rack, because the bike I ride, like a mountain bike, has wider tires, so I wanted to make sure that whatever we got would be appropriate for all bicycles. So, I get this right, send him a note, I take it over there. He looks at me, goes, "Yeah, we can do that. I said, "How long? He said, "No, I know a couple weeks. They were quick. They did a great job. There were two kids that worked on, apparently. One was Samantha Baldwin's son, and another young fellow. They were very nice kids. I met them. This bike rack is heavy. So we

go over get the bike rack, bring it to the village. I asked Amy if I could have two parking spaces by the flagpole, and she said, well, we have the beauty shop, we have the post office, we have Jacob's Ladder, we have a lot of people that park over there. Amy offered the space that's closest to the benches. I said, that's great. So, I measure the width and the length of the space, because I have developed this two-sided bike rack, which means you park double the bikes that you can on a single rack. So, we put the bike rack in place. I come to town every once in a while, and the bike rack would be moved, might be up on the sidewalk, might be over there in the lot where the old hotel was. So, then winter comes. I go to town to go to the post office. No bike rack. Streets have been clean. I have a photograph of where the bike rack sat here, right next to the benches, right across from Jacob's Ladder, and where the bike rack was after the streets were plowed. Buried with salt and everything. I talked to Amy, and Amy said, I've already talked to the village guys that did the snow, and she said I told them they're going to have to take the bike rack down to the plant, fix it, and repaint. She thought it was wrecked, it wasn't, but it was all scratched up, and of course there was a lot of salt and snow. So they took it down to sewage plant and repainted it then they brought it back. When I was here the other day, right after I took the pots, I walked over the bike rack. It's all rusty, so I have had somebody with a trailer to come and get the bike rack so I could strip it down and paint it again then bring it back to town.

Well, I get all this stuff on Facebook about these comments. My son made this bicycle rack, he should be able to donate it to the village. You didn't pay anything for it. Okay, here is the kicker on paying the amount for this bike rack, so I said to the teacher, I asked if this was a school project. The kids do this all the time. I said, what do I owe you for this bike rack? The teacher just laughed, and he said, well, these kids, they drink a lot of Mountain Dew. He said, "Get them a case of Mountain Dew. I said, "Really? He goes, yeah, so okay, I took him two cases of Mountain Dew. The bike rack will come back to Sardinia when it gets finished.

But my message, and my whole message, is there is a tremendous lack of respect for each other, and I think for people who live in a village, who are both friends and neighbors, to get on and put some of this nasty stuff on Facebook is pretty outrageous. So, I started looking. Now I am thinking, you know, I do not like this. This is defamation. So, I started looking, and I am thinking there's three types of defamation. Think about what you write on Facebook. There is libel, slander, and defamation per se, those are the three types, and the key elements of defamation, and all of those fit what was written on these Facebook pages; about starting Hope and Promise and me. False statements were made and reported to be fact. They were false statements. There was no fact. For those of you who know about yellow journalism, this is yellow journalism, which is sensationalism. The statements that were published, communication to at least one other person. Well, what people don't realize when they post on Facebook is you're putting it out there for everybody to see, and then the other thing is the speaker was negligent or active and made with malice and intent. Well, that was pretty malice stuff that they say would cause damage to the subject's reputation. Well, I've had a couple people who have said I cannot believe that they wrote that about Sardinia Hope and Promise, what are they thinking?

We've had things that Sardinia Hope and Promise did. We have done things with money; we were not a real organization originally. We have some people who are haters, and the haters have a group of people here in the village that they have taken on, and originally Sardinia Hope and Promise was started by Jim Schroeder, who was a local attorney, former mayor here. He came to me and he said, 'Shauna, he said I'm going to be mayor, would you take Sardinia Hope and Promise? I said, 'Sure, yeah, I'll do. I'd love to. So, Hope and Promise, if you know where the Underground Cafe is, was formerly Jim's office. He had all his mail sent there, so his address was on our Facebook page, that's where it all started.

I get people on Facebook. Oh, you know, now Jim Schroeder is involved. Oh, and now Hope and Promise is being run by the Underground Cafe. No, it is not.. We had posted on there this address too. We always had our meetings, our Hope and Promise meetings, here. Always, in fact, my big complaint, and anybody here that is a Hope and Promise member can tell you, my biggest complaint, being a former teacher, we did not have a whiteboard. If you notice, there are two white boards there. Those two whiteboards have been donated. One is to be put out here, which I think there should be

one. When you have a meeting, you want to be able to put some things down. And then Perry, our chief of police, pray to God, he comes back, had wanted one. I said, yes, you can put one in there. We put one out here. Well, neither one of them are up yet, but that's the intent, or that was the intent.

So, then it was, well, you know, your address is town hall, so what are you doing in town hall? Well, you know, it is the address, so that all that kind of craziness started. Then I said okay, we will now pay so I go to the post office to get a post office box. We get one piece of mail a month, the bank statement. But now we are going to pay \$89 for a post office box, because somebody complains that the mail came here. Venita had a little clip out there when the statement came, she would clip it up then let me know the bank statement was here. Well, so now \$89 down the drink which could have helped somebody or something.

I just got... we got tired of it. That's the bottom line. We just got tired of it. I love Sardinia. I will do for you. Congratulations. I will try to, if you need anything, we'll be there. The council does the same thing. Dusty, you have my blessing because you got a difficult job, but, as I said before, we have a great group of people here, we have founding families here. Then we've got some that just don't want to play by the rules, they don't play by anybody's rules. So that's it for Hope and Promise. Enjoy your summer, find something to do. Thank you.

Ms. Milburn did a quick update on the police investigation that they found nothing. She read a statement from the LESO which said, "On April 3, 2026, Gina Fodor and I met with Amy Mason at the Sardinia Police Department to review the LESO 1033 equipment. We conducted an inventory of controlled property obtained by the program and found no discrepancies. However, we could not inspect the drones as they were locked in a separate room that Ms. Mason could not access. This was signed by Brian Pfeffer, State Coordinator, for the LESO program. They could not get the key to work at the time they were here.

Mr. Baker, Solicitor, updated on the Sheriff's investigation: May 1st the mayor met with the sheriff of the county, received a report from them that their investigation that began on 3/9 had concluded. In it, was identified, I will say four main issues and then sort of underneath each four separate sub issues. I guess it's the best way to explain it. The first of the issues was a bond. Two separate bonds that were paid through mayor's court were brought into the police office, the clerk's office, on two different occasions, one being September 26, 2025, and one being December 21, 2025. That bond that was brought in on September 26, 2025, was found to have been properly paid. Nothing criminal in nature occurred, and everything was accounted for. The bond that was brought in, or alleged to have been brought in, on December 21, 2025, there is no such CAD activity, meaning no one was pulled over that day by the officer that alleged that, and no bond was posted. No record of a bond so this was found to be unfounded by the Sheriff's Department, and it was closed of nature.

The third sub-issue was a report that there was a vehicle that was sold to Doss Automotive, is a village box truck. Initially, it was reported that that box truck was sold for \$8,000 and that of that \$8,000 Venita was given credit for \$4,000 to buy a vehicle from Mr. Doss. Upon conducting this investigation, Mr. Doss revealed records to the sheriff's department, along with the villages that were received under subpoena, and the send over the trade-in, I should say that box truck was \$4,000. Mr. Doss never sold any vehicles to any members or employees of this building or the village municipal services, and that was found to be unfounded by the sheriff's department, and that was closed as of the end of this investigation.

Next, it was a complaint that there were Russellville computers, the village of Russellville computers in the village of Sardinia cruisers, and at the water facility, I think that was found to be administrative in nature. There's no criminal activity that can be attached to that. That was closed as of that. I further referred that directly to Kathleen, who has started her investigation, undertook the rest of it, I should say. There was a complaint that the Ohio Department of Public Safety Law Enforcement Support Office, so LESO, via the DOD, the Department of Defense, 1033 program sheriff's

department said that was administrative in nature. There is nothing criminal that can be attached to that. They closed their investigation, as Venita said. There was a private audit conducted via LESO program and the Department of Defense with a private contractor. They found no discrepancies, everything was accounted for and. We were cleared as to what we've run through our 1033 program.

Lastly, there was an allegation that there was an improper use of the LEADs system. The sheriff investigated that all uses of the LEADs system, or at least as alleged, I should say, were found to not be criminal in nature, that they were done pursuant to valid investigations, and that case was closed.

Lastly, Prosecutor Corbin reviewed all of these, the entirety of the report, and echoed the sentiments of the investigator, the detective, and no criminal charges would be forthcoming. All of this, including this report, was referred to Ms. Bailey. I uploaded to her secured link with all of the videos that were attached to these complaints, along with other videos that had been filtered to me, either through officers, and the mayor had some in his possession. Everything that I know of, I forwarded to her and I uploaded to her. She began, or is undertaking, that investigation this week. I should hear something back, I would think by the end of the week I will have further report on that as time allows for her to do her thing, and that is it. So, the sheriff's office has cleared their end of things with our investigation.

Mr. Vaughn asked that the report showed no evidence of theft, which Mr. Baker responded that is what it says. Mr. Vaughn then asked about Village property being used to dig a pond at Amy Mason's home. Response from Ms. Milburn was that there was a shooting range that was made out there. Mr. Vaughn wanted to know if this was ever shared with the Sheriff's. He did state that Dusty had known about this for some time because they had discussed it previously. Ms. Milburn explained the property obtained by Chief Perry is the property of Chief Perry according to the LESO program. Mr. Vaughn asked Mr. Baker if he knew anything about this, or if it was brought to council and voted on or just done.

Ms. Turner wanted to ask a question. She said we had a lot of disruption with this new council, and what about these allegations? Who brought these allegations up against Brian Perry and Venita, and what happens to them now? Because there is nothing to substantiate those claims.

Mr. Baker said that there is nothing to criminally substantiate. Mr. Baker continued saying that we finish our end of the rest of the investigation, if that investigation bears the same proof that this one did, then council would have decisions to make on reinstating the officers. After Miss Bailey completes her investigation, we would have decisions to make, assuming that it echoes what the sheriff found. Council would have a decision to make on bringing back Chief of Officer Ingle or Officer Brown or Officer Smith, the other officer who resigned. Then I think Chief would have recommendations and or his own actions that he would have to take at that point.

Ms. Turner stated because it is a criminal action when you defame someone's character, and it is not found to be true. Mr. Vaughn stated absolutely, yes. Mr. Baker stated It is not criminal, like defamation is not, it's a civil action, but it could be an officer that did that, it could lead to discipline for that officer. Ms. Turner said that it is a fact and asked how far we are with the investigation.

Mr. Baker responded, "I reviewed this after Dusty brought it to my office. It was Friday, May 1st that you brought it, and dropped it off to me. I took it, I reviewed it, I compared it to everything that I had. I forwarded everything to Miss Bailey. I had to go through and upload, what took me almost four hours to review, at different times, two separate times. All the videos, the pictures, the statements that were written, and other allegations that have filtered down to me via the officers. I uploaded all that to Miss Bailey, and now she has started that. I just completed the upload of the videos today.

It took a long time to upload all the videos on a secure connection, but it's all completed. She's going to undertake it and complete her investigation. She said that she'll have a communication with me by the end of the week.

Mayor Puckett asked if she would be speaking to anyone this week. Mr. Baker responded Yes, as her schedule allows, too. I mean, she's got court things like that, so she has reached out to, I'm assuming, Officer Brown, Officer Smith, Chief, Officer Engle, forgive the young Officer Price. Then I don't know if she'll reach out directly to any members of council or not, that I don't know, I didn't get the answer to that. But anyone else identifying information that has forwarded information to her and I know that there are private individuals that have done that too. She should reach out to them, I would assume.

Mr. Taylor asked I have a question. "Forgive me, I'm new and I don't understand, but would the Bureau of Criminal Investigations be getting involved, or not? I don't understand how officer on officer stuff is handled, and I just assumed it was that. If I'm wrong, please correct me."

Mr. Baker responded, "I think BCI has elected not to get involved because our county law enforcement agency undertook investigation, or at least an investigation as to specific acts. There are things that may not have been identified in that sheriff's investigation, like a pond, apparently dug on somebody's property."

Mr. Taylor stated, "I heard rumors of a ticket quota and all that stuff, I don't know anything." Mr. Baker responded, "I think that's what Ms. Bailey is undertaking." Mr. Taylor said okay. Mr. Baker said, "I can only forward what's been given to me, what's been given to the mayor, and then anybody else. I know there are private individuals that have reached out and forwarded information to her, other than that, if she asked me, I would go looking and if she asked me, I will put her in contact with anyone that she's not been able to have contact with. I'm just here to facilitate."

Mr. Taylor asked that BCI elected not to because there is an ongoing investigation underway. Mr. Baker clarified that Mr. Taylor was asking about BCI which he stated BCI, I think probably will not get involved because the sheriff has cleared those criminal allegations.

Mr. Taylor apologized for the disruption.

Mr. Vaughn then asked "Something else that's off the record. We had to talk to Dusty, so who all has a key to this building that can come in at any time? Ms. Milburn responded that she had a key, Michelle has a key, and Dusty has a key. All the other access has been turned off. Mr. Taylor asked if council members got keys which he was informed they did not.

Mr. Vaughn at some point. Are they going to update? I know we got a grant to make upstairs a public space. It is a public space, and so we can let people in for that. Is that what it is? Ms. Milburn responded that they came here and requested access. Mr. Vaughn said "Okay? It has to be scheduled. Ms. Milburn responded yes so that I can get them access. Mr. Vaughn replied, "Okay, but anybody can come in and request to schedule for the public space, okay? Correct. I was curious of how that worked up there." Mr. Baker did ask about the space which he was informed by Ms. Milburn it is a workspace that GRIT set up for people to come to use for work, applying for jobs, etc. using the internet.

Ms. Turner then said. "I'm glad this is coming to some sort of some closure on this with the police, because there should be some repercussions about these people who make accusations, and they're not true, they're not founded right?"

Mr. Baker responded to Ms. Turner, "Well, I mean, like I said, the criminal side of the investigation that was undertaken has been unfounded. No charges will be filed. The rest of it, I hope to have. I don't expect her to have the full report to

Mr. Vaughn stated he would be scheduling an Economic Development meeting but was not prepared at this time to schedule.

Mr. Troutman spoke before moving from finance. The money that's designated for police salaries from the general fund has reached the limit, but there's still money in the police fund that's not set in the system. That's going to be a question later, but if it continues at the current rate, there's going to be a shortage of that first number. This is the amount that that needs to be moved. Ms. Taylor explained it is in the same general fund but needs to be moved to another line. Mr. Troutman explained that the budget is about \$63,062 with \$61,000 being spent.

Ms. Taylor informed council that there was a need for \$121,144.04 just to do payroll, OPERS, and Medicare. She indicated this needed to be moved from the capital outlay in the general fund to the police. It is the same fund, but it has to be rising in general. Mr. Troutman mentioned that there is \$40,000 he is not sure of. There is money in the general fund that was designated for the police, but it is not set up that way. Ms. Taylor stated that there is money in fund 2901 but it has not been used because police payroll comes out of the general fund. She said she would go back to last year to see how it was done. Ms. Taylor stated if the money is moved it will break the police department. Mr. Troutman stated that the money was for the year which should be used first.

Mr. Baker asked if this was from a levy which Ms. Milburn responding that there was no levy. Mr. Troutman believes this money is from the State.

Ms. Vance spoke referencing the EIJFED funds when they have to take money from one appropriated account to the other one. It has to be in relation to the fund that you are falling short in. You can't just take it from wherever you want to be. So, you said something about the capital outlay, can it legally be borrowed from there?

Mr. Baker told council if the money was from a levy or state money that it is statutorily governed on how the money can be used. He believes that this is either state or other money, could be income tax money but if it is grant-based it has to be used for specific police grants.

Ms. Vance suggested that Ms. Taylor call Jill Hall, the auditor, to get more information. She also suggested using Jamye as a resource to get clear guidance. Mr. Baker then asked Mr. Troutman to clarify it was \$40,000. Mr. Troutman responded affirmatively with clarification that a percentage comes out of this and percentage comes out of the general fund which was his understanding.

Mr. Vaughn then asked if the police ticket money goes into the general fund. Then take it back out of the general fund to pay the police, basically paying themselves. I would understand then the police ticket money goes into general fund. Mr. Troutman told Mr. Vaughn that this cannot be done. Ms. Taylor explained it's general. Then you take output, give it to police the way it is right now. They don't do that because it's already in general. Ms. Taylor also explained that the police brought in much more than their payroll is. Mr. Vaughn said, "Yes, they brought in a lot more money than for payroll."

~~Mr. McRoberts~~ *Mr. Vaughn* asked what the amount was that the police had brought in the last few months. Ms. Taylor responded that it was 72 something. Ms. Vance made it clear that much of this was from 10-year-old past tickets which she praised the administration for. Mr. Vaughn asked what percentage of those were past due which Ms. Milburn did not have the exact percentage at the time of this meeting. Mr. Taylor asked if this was the majority over 50%? Ms. Milburn informed council she would check. Ms. Taylor informed council that the revenue put in for the department for 2026 was \$120,000 on the budget and that \$74,214 had already come in within four months.

me at the end of the week, it's going to take some time. She's got a lot of people to reach out to, so maybe two weeks, but should be soon, relatively soon. How about that?

Ms. Milburn asked if there were any updates to any of the committees. Mayor Puckett questioned if the finance committee had an update. Mr. Troutman responded, "we do have, which I don't have the updated one. We do have the preliminary that is hand noted. Ms. Taylor, Fiscal Officer, noted that the preliminary numbers are not in the UAN System yet.

Mr. Troutman continued that council members had the preliminary budget for next year. He stated there was a need to have approval by the July meeting, so we can enter this as notated by hand, and then Ms. Taylor can enter it in the UAN system and bring it back next month, and that will be the second reading when we have that copy.

Mr. Baker said that as long as it works for council, I think that's what he would recommend.

Mr. Troutman told council that they have a copy of the temporary budget and changes can be made once the information is entered into the system. Ms. Taylor will be able to print it out then council can look at it further.

Mr. Troutman stated that then it can be edited to adjust the budget. This will give us the opportunity to have the three readings and approve by July so then it can be turned over to the auditor.

Mr. Baker stated this would be the first reading. If this is what we are voting on as the temporary submission, then it just has to be the proposed ordinance or resolution for submission.

Mr. Vaughn asked if this is what council would be voting on.

Mr. Troutman indicated that the temporary budget had to be turned over to the auditor by the end of July either the 21st or 31st. Ms. Vance reiterated that the budget would have to be to the auditor by the end of July.

Mr. Vaughn said, "So this would be the first reading of the three readings." Mr. Troutman responded that this would not be the permanent budget. Ms. Milburn stated that we should have already had this done. Mr. Vaughn responded, "Yes, yes, yes."

Mr. Troutman explained to council that if there were no notations, that would mean it is zeroed out. It will be put in the system for next time unless there are changes made to the next version for the next meeting.

Mr. Baker informed council that as long as it's in writing, and that will be the second reading of it. It would just need to be noted as amended. Mr. Baker asked for the date of the regular meeting in July, which would be July 13, giving plenty of time to get the temporary budget to the auditor.

Mr. Troutman gave his recommendation that council should to take the budget home to review, come back with questions. At that time the second reading would be done and ready for the deadline. Mr. Vaughn agreed. Mr. Baker suggested that the finance committee meet before June 9th meeting in case there were any revisions that could be presented at the regular council meeting in June.

Mr. Troutman was okay with scheduling the finance committee meeting pending Mr. McRoberts availability. Ms. Taylor stated she would be available at any time. Mr. Troutman has agreed to have the finance committee meeting on June 11 at 7:00 p.m.

Mr. Puckett asked about any other updates from committees of Public Safety, Public Works, and Personnel. No other updates. Mr. Vaughn said that Mr. Taylor had not been put on a committee yet with Mr. Baker saying the logical one would be the committee that Mayor Puckett was on previously.

Ms. Vance asked to have a new updated committee list printed.

*Attachments: America 250 flyer; Rumpke contract; Sheriff's investigation report; LESO report
Ordinance 1336-25; ORC 723.01, ORC 723.02, ORC 723.05
Ordinance 116-11*

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nick Braun - Just wanted to mention the Memorial Day parade is coming up. The 25th line up begins at 9:30 at the American Legion Hall. He stated that he was to ask if anybody wanted to join as an official to be there. They are letting kids come in on their bicycles, and then a couple of entries from the Celtic Cottage. They will be giving out some prizes and stuff like that.

Mr. Braun then asked about the drones from the LESO, which he questioned how many there were. Ms. Milburn responded that she did not know. Mr. Braun said the LESO website said five. Ms. Milburn responded then that is how many there were. Mr. Braun stated it was hard to justify having five drones in a town this size. Mr. Vaughn asked if we can't get in to look and see how many is there. Ms. Milburn said the key was not currently working. Mr. Braun also was concerned that the inventory listed two DOD bomb squad robots for a town with nine miles. He said he couldn't understand the need for all the equipment.

Mr. Vaughn did have a question off topic. He said, "When all this started, he stated we had a police dog that sniffed gun powder residue. He said somewhere it states the dog is trained in that. We have unmanned drones, we have robots for the safety of officers, it says. And then there was a bomb threat at our local school, and none of our police officers were there with any of that stuff showed up, because our former, very short-lived mayor said they had more pressing things to do. Anyone have a comment on that?

Ms. Vance responded, "Well, I'm pretty sure when there is a bomb threat at a school, your local police are not the priority. Public safety people who show up, then the sheriff's department has protocol, and the bomb squad, it does not always include your village police officer. Ms. Milburn also noted that Ghost is not a bomb dog. Mr. Vaughn then asked again if Ghost was trained for gun powder and didn't it say that he was trained in gun powder residue? Ms. Milburn reiterated that Ghost is not a bomb sniffing dog.

Mr. Vaughn then continued, "yes, not a bomb but gunpowder residue. And then we have those robots that it says in the meetings for back then, that they were for the safety of officers. Mr. Vaughn then cut off Ms. Vance and told her to stop talking that he was talking. Then He stated, "we have robots, but our officers didn't show up for that. I was just kind of confused about why they wouldn't be at our Eastern school. The villagers here, their kids go to that school".

Mr. Baker informed Mr. Vaughn that the sheriff's office would have to contact our department if they needed our services. We just don't automatically go outside the village limits. Mr. Vaughn said okay he did not know how that worked. Mr. Vaughn told Ms. Vance to be quiet, which she responded by telling Mr. Vaughn to remember that if he wanted that respect.

Roberta North – Ms. North gave the council papers last time at your last meeting, and the only two I've heard from is Peggy and Anna on how they want to be contacted. She asked if the guys had filled out their papers? Mr. Taylor said he had his in his notes somewhere. Ms. North asked Mr. Vaughn how he would like to be contacted which he responded, "Same way we contacted your husband, contact the city manager, and then they'll contact me, and I'll contact them. That's how it was in the email from our old city manager. I sent it to you yesterday."

Ms. North said that we were new now with transparency. Mr. Vaughn informed Ms. North he would get her an address, and a letter could be sent to him. Mr. Troutman did not realize that Ms. North wanted something to fill out but his information is on there as public record.

Melissa Zeller – had no public comment.

Beth Kress – Ms. Kress began, "I'd like to speak to the word transparency. I applied for the village administrator job, showed up at the last meeting. I'm at this meeting. Thanks to you to Mr. Riley, I've watched all the previous meetings online. Mr. Seibert, congratulations. So, I'm going to read to you from the Ohio Sunshine Laws and the Ohio Revised Code, because it was not followed."

Ms. Kress asked, "How many people were present in his interview?" Ms. Milburn responded three. Ms. Kress continued, "According to the Ohio Sunshine Law and Ohio Revised Code, a village administrator must be appointed by the mayor and confirm a majority vote of a legend of the legislative authority council, which you have accomplished, and I'm shaking, because I'm very frustrated, because this is my town, this is my home, like Shauna brought up, I'm one of those legacy families, 1828. Thank you. The hiring process, including the interviews and voting, must take place in a public meeting, although discussions regarding compensation may occur in executive session. He was not interviewed in a public meeting."

Ms. Kress continued, "The appointments and the mayor's approval must be in writing and filed with the village clerk. I didn't see you present anything in writing. I don't feel that I was given a fair interview for the position, I don't know his qualifications. He does not know mine. We both could be very applicable candidates, but without having a public interview. How is that fair and transparent to our community that we represent, because I don't feel that it was done. Due diligence according to the Ohio Sunshine Law, that you all have to take training on. And also, Miss North, can I have your paper? You asked them to sign up, because if I recall correctly, committees, Mr. Troutman is personnel. I contacted Mr. Troutman up to the minute before this meeting, and he said he was not aware of anything to do with the position being filled. Sorry, Gary."

Ms. Kress asked, "So were we doing things correctly? Are we not doing things correctly? Ohio Sunshine Law says an Ohio Revised Code, so Mrs. Vance's motion to accept Mr. Seibert, along with Mrs. Turner, second, and those of you who voted yes are in violation of Ohio Sunshine Laws. Thank you."

Mr. Vaughn said, "Talk about a legal problem."

Mr. Baker said, "I think it's easily remedied. We just vote to vacate the appointment of Mr. Seibert, and then we publicly conduct interviews for everybody that's applying."

Ms. Kress stated, "As it should have been done in the beginning." Mr. Vaughn agreed.

Mr. Baker said, "We need a motion to vacate the position" which Mr. Vaughn made the motion, Mr. Taylor seconded the motion. Roll call: Troutman – yes, Vance – no, Turner – no, Vaughn – yes, Taylor – yes. Position was rescinded. Mr. Baker then stated that the interviews will need to be done publicly at an open meeting that council will set and then you will make a recommendation to council at the conclusion of those interviews, then council will vote at the conclusion of that recommendation.

Mr. Vaughn asked if we could set that for an emergency meeting which Mr. Baker said should be done.

Mr. Baker asked how many applicants? Ms. Milburn responded that there were 8, maybe 12, she would have to count. So, we will have to contact them all about the public meeting that we're about to announce. They will have to be given notice as to the time and date, and to appear for their interview

Mr. Vaughn said, "I have another question totally off that, but I don't really understand the chain of command. Okay, if you are an employee for the village, how do you get, like, say you wanted to terminate somebody, how is that done? I mean, is that done through the vote of the council, it's brought up by somebody, and council votes on it, and then it's done."

Mr. Baker answered, "So, you have to make a motion." Mr. Vaughn, "Yes, yes, that's why I thought so. Somebody makes a motion to terminate somebody's employment, somebody seconds it, majority votes on it, it's done. Correct, jobs that don't follow unless it's contracted. Mr. Baker did say that there had to be some sort of basis for termination.

Ms. Turner said, "I think during this whole process, everything was in turmoil. Here, Amy had resigned, everybody was resigning, the mayor, wanting to get them out. Well, they're out, and so this was kind of something that came up that was very needed." Ms. Turner explained she was talking about the Village Administrator. Ms. Turner also said, "I mean, we don't want to do anything that's not in compliance with the law, but also there was just a lot of disruption at that time."

Mr. Vaughn said that he did not know who the other applicants were. Mr. Troutman said that council would not vote for an administrator, it would be Mayor Puckett's recommendation.

Meeting for interviews was scheduled for May 27, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Lyons asked if the interviewees would all come at the same time to interview. Ms. Kress stated she would be interviewed in front of everyone in the room.

Mr. Troutman made a motion for the special meeting for interviews on Wednesday, May 27th at 6:00 p.m. Motion seconded by Mr. Taylor. Roll call all yes.

Mayor Puckett asked if Mr. Seibert had anything to say. Mr. Seibert said, "Yes, sir. I just looked it up, and I can't find a single Ohio Revised Code, and when I go into AI, it says there's not a single Ohio Revised Code section that requires all interviews for public employment to be conducted publicly. Recommendation by the mayor, and then confirmed by a vote, a majority of council, that's all true. That and that happened, and it was rescinded, so that's fine.

Mr. Baker stated that if it was done incorrectly, it would be corrected. I think it's important that if there's any criticism of our process, we correct that criticism publicly and openly. And then we're setting a special meeting to do that, section 735.271 of the Ohio Revised Codes.

Julie Wagner – Ms. Wagner wanted to discuss the garden club. They have three phases. The first phase was planters and baskets which is complete. They have two filled planters and 13 filled baskets ready to be hung, so they are waiting for the brackets to be completed and hung. The following phases, finding some garden space. She asked about the empty lot at 120 Winchester. Ms. Wagner did research on that property which she found the owner is still waiting, as Tony mentioned, waiting for the lawyers to finalize everything. She asked when do we expect that issue to be resolved? She asked if the litigation was still pending.

Mr. Baker responded that the litigation is still pending on that property.

Ms. Wagner would be interested in any property that they can successfully garden. Utilities would be fabulous if there was water access. If there's no water access, they would like to install some rain barrels. If there is a building nearby that has gutters that we can attach to.

Mr. Vaughn told Ms. Wagner to get with him after the meeting he had property available on College Ave.

Steve Kramer – Mr. Kramer began with an apology. First, I'd like to apologize. There was a meeting going on, and I was one of the people talking, and it was brought up to me that I got a loud voice at times, but I think everybody was talking. So, my suggestion, let's get a sign, meeting in progress, be quiet, because I don't know how people are supposed to know the meeting is going on. It's kind of hard to hold a meeting when you get crowds full of people here having side conversations. So maybe there's a better solution for that.

Mr. Kramer discussed his purchase of 102 Winchester that he would like to divide as it was before his purchase. Chris Renschall did the survey. The property division is at the engineer's office now for approval. This should be back from the engineer's office in a couple weeks. The current owners want to do a lot of work on the property. Mr. Kramer does not have to abide by the terms of the bank since the ATM is gone. Mr. Kramer feels the property will just get in worse condition if he continues to own it.

Mr. Vaughn asked if this was a second property before Mr. Kramer purchased it. Mr. Kramer stated that there were 11 parcels when he purchased the property.

Mr. Troutman asked if the property was going to go back to the way it was because he knew there was property behind the building. Mr. Kramer responded affirmatively also stating that the buildings were landlocked with a small sidewalk behind them.

Ms. Turner asked Mr. Kramer about the business in the bank building. Mr. Kramer stated that the business entails online sales, visa production, music rental, and installation service. People do not really know as Mr. Kramer does not like to advertise because it is the kind of business you don't want people disturbing

I don't like to advertise it, but I guess I just threw it out here now, because it's the kind of business you don't want people to disturb. The door is not unlocked during business hours but is by appointment only.

Mr. Baker informed Mr. Kramer there would need to be something from the engineer's office. Mr. Kramer did say he would like to see the town grow but he said with everything that is going on in town he has thought about putting all the properties up for sale and leave.

Mr. Baker did ask for a motion to amend the agenda to add an executive session with something that has come up. This would be under Ohio Revised Code 121.22(G)3 to discuss pending litigation specifically for the property at 120 Winchester Street.

Motion made by Gary Troutman to amend the agenda to reflect an executive session. Second was made by Dean Vaughn. Roll call all yes.

Mr. Baker asked for motion to go into executive session under Ohio Revised Code 121.22(G)3 to discuss pending litigation for the property at 120 Winchester Street. *Ms. Vance made a motion to go into executive session, Mr. Vaughn seconded. Roll call all yes.*

Executive session begins at 9:06 p.m.

Executive session ends at 9:28 p.m.

Motion to come out of executive session made by Peggy Vance, second by Gary Troutman. Roll call all yes.

No actions were taken out of executive session.

Motion to adjourn made by Gary Troutman, second by Peggy Vance. Roll call all yes.

NEXT MEETING MAY 27, AT 6:00 P.M.

MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:32 P.M.

June 16, 2026

Date Approved

Dustin R. H.

Mayor



President of Council

