

SARDINIA COUNCIL MEETING

April 27, 2026 7:00 P.M.

Prayer Nick Taylor

Pledge Mayor Dustin Puckett

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

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

Mayor Dustin Puckett swore in new councilman Nick Taylor.

Nomination needed for President Pro Temp. *Nomination made by Dean Vaughn for Gary Troutman to take the seat, seconded by Mike McRoberts. Roll call Dean Vaughn, yes; Mike McRoberts, yes; Nick Taylor, yes; Anna Turner, pass; Peggy Vance, no. Gary Troutman fills seat for President Pro Temp.*

Mayor Puckett congratulated Mr. Troutman on his nomination.

Mayor Puckett informed council in their packet is the Essentials for New Council Members, so they understand their duties. Must complete Sunshine/Public records training in the first 90 days.

COUNCIL NOTES

Council reviewed meeting minutes from March 9, 2026, regular meeting and March 23, 2026, special meeting. *Motion to approve minutes from March 9, 2026, made by Peggy Vance, second by Dean Vaughn. Roll call all yes. Motion to approve minutes from March 23, 2026, made by Dean Vaughn, second by Peggy Vance. Roll call all yes.*

Attachments: Meeting minutes of March 9, 2026, and March 23, 2026

FINANCIALS

Council reviewed financials for February 2026 and March 2026.

Motion made to approve February financials made by Dean Vaughn, second by Gary Troutman. Roll call all yes. Motion made to approve March financials made by Gary Troutman, second by Dean Vaughn. Roll call all yes.

Attachments: Financials for February 2026 and March 2026.

Mayor

Mayor Puckett read the resignation letter from Amy Mason effective April 3rd. Ms. Mason thanked the Village for the opportunity to work for the Village. Ms. Mason will help to make a seamless transition. Administrator position has been posted on Indeed and Ohio Means Jobs. Resumes have been coming in so the interview process will begin next week. Ms. Vance asked what day the job was posted this will have to be verified. Job posted on April 14, 2026.

Mayor Puckett read the resignation letter from David Klump as he will be retiring from the sewer plant as of April 30th. Tim Mock will be the sewer operator of record with Mr. Klump's retirement.

Third reading of revised pay ordinance for Tim Mock which has been amended to reflect that his salary will be taken 100% from sewer. Mr. Baker explained the change in the amendment for the third reading was that Mr. Mock's salary, instead of being split between water and sewer, would be completely sewer with the resignation of Mr. Klump. This will go into effect on Friday, May 1, 2026.

Motion made to accept this third reading for Mr. Mock's pay change made by Peggy Vance, second by Dean Vaughn. Roll call all yes.

Summer help with mowing and weed eating. We have received two applications currently. Mayor Puckett will review these with the Village workers for their input.

Phone coverage for the administrator phone which is the emergency phone for the Village. Currently, Dave, Ray, and Tim are carrying the phone on their on-call week. If they take a call during their week, they are asking for on-call pay. Suggestion is that for a phone call without being called out they would get 1.5 hours of on-call pay.

Motion to approve on call pay for phone calls made by Dean Vaughn, second by Anna Turner. Roll call all yes.

Village Yard Sale dates are usually Memorial Weekend and Labor Day Weekend. Mayor Puckett would like to have the dates as other Villages currently do on a monthly basis May through October. Request is made to have the 2nd Saturday of each month as yard sale days. *All council voted yes except for Ms. Vance who voted no.*

Mayor Puckett needed signatures for a surveyed split of property owned by Mr. Stephen Kramer. Mr. Kramer informed council that the resurveyed property would allow him to sell the property where the old laundromat was. Tax map has been approved. The buildings have separate entrances and exit.

Motion was made to accept the surveyed changes by Dean Vaughn, second by Nick Taylor. Roll call all yes.

Veteran Park Grant. The Village was awarded \$15,000 for updates to Veteran's Park to make the park more accessible and for additional handicap and baby swings. Mayor Puckett asked if we purchased a new play set, it would be nice to get volunteers to help put this up. There is a Project Information Packet that was received today that needs to be completed then returned to ODNR for approval. Ms. Vance asked that we contact the insurance company to see if volunteers can be used. Mayor Puckett asked Mr. Baker about having council members together at the park to construct a play set. Mr. Baker responded that his rule of thumb was to not have three or more members of the council together as it could be construed as a meeting.

Hope Street Trailer update – Ms. Milburn informed council that there is still funding for the FY24 landbank demo grant. She has reached out to the property owner to have her call the engineer to inquire if this property can be put on the demo list.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Each member of council was given an overview of what each committee's duties were.

No updates on committee meetings.

Mr. Troutman asked if we had any information from the audit that was conducted last year, of which there has been no updates to date given.

Finance committee does need to meet to start on the 2027 Temporary Budget. Meeting was scheduled for May 11, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. prior to the May 11th council meeting. Mr. Troutman, Mr. McRoberts, and Michelle Taylor all agreed to this date and time.

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Mr. Baker informed council and public of the status of the ongoing investigation with the police department. Before the March 9th regular meeting Brown County Sheriff decided to do their own investigation. The information was requested by a subpoena for records pertaining to the investigation. The Village complied with a lot of records that were copied as quick as was possible, which he stated was about seven days. Mr. Baker has been keeping updated on the investigation and was informed, as of today, Sgt. Ernst has completed the investigation which is now on Zach Corbin's desk for review. Mr. Corbin will be reviewing this week then inform Mr. Baker of the findings. Mr. Baker cannot speak if there are or are not any charges that will be filed until Mr. Corbin contacts Mr. Baker.

At the March 9th meeting we decided to employ Ms. Katherine Bailey. There was some confusion with the change of the mayor. Past Mayor had gotten in contact with Ms. Bailey regarding the engagement letter, so Mr. Baker had to sort out the mayor's change. The engagement letter was then signed by Mayor Puckett. Mr. Baker had his first telephone conversation with Ms. Bailey on either March 29th or March 30th where he related to her the broad classification of what has been brought to council, that there were two statements brought to council, and who the parties were for everyone to be looked at. Ms. Bailey was given the names of the staff, their hire dates, and their contact information. After that, the following week, Mr. Baker had not told Ms. Bailey of the sheriff's office investigation, so there was another phone conversation where this information was relayed to Ms. Bailey. Ms. Bailey stated that she would go as far as she can but would wait to interview anyone until the Sheriff's investigation is completed. If any interviews were done before the investigation is complete there would be a 5th Amendment component. If there were any charges that came out of the sheriff's investigation none of those interviews would be admissible in court. So, Ms. Bailey has put her investigation on hold until the sheriff's report is completed. Mr. Baker keeps in contact with Ms. Bailey either by phone or email.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Beth Kress – introduced herself to council. She stated that she would like to be considered for the Administrator position. She provided her resume to council members although she had previously dropped one off at the office. She is a lifelong Brown County resident. She believes she has qualifications that meet or exceed the expectations of the position. She has been involved in many community organizations, she has helped redo the Chamber of Commerce, she has 30 years of volunteer experience, 30 years of work experience. She has had many roles over that time including social services, business manager, government roles, and is a 16-year-old OPERS member. She is a very transparent person and will answer any questions.

Bruce Stinson – did not want to make any comments but will put together a proposal regarding the cemetery since he stated nothing has been done yet.

Roberta North – Ms. North has completed a form that gives all the information for the council with contact information and what committees they are on. She has put one on each seat for the audience.

Regina Waters – owner of Celtic Cottage. Ms. Waters has printed out a list of items for council. Requesting garbage cans at each end of town. Also requesting doggie poo disposals in the cemetery where people walk their dogs so they will pick up for their own dog. She did state that they have started a garden club asking for donations, if possible, for flowers or pots to beautify the center of town. Ms. Waters asked if there were flower containers used before that were stored somewhere they could use. Would like to have the streets cleaned once a month.

Ms. Waters asked about the pillar that was in the spot where the old fair used to be. Thought this would be a good spot for beautification but the pillar is gone. Wondering what happened to this, it was near the fire station.

Ms. Waters asked if there was a plot of land owned by the Village that could be used to have a community garden. Flower and vegetable garden. This would bring the community together to do something local. Mr. Vaughn said we will check on the property where the building was burnt down.

Ms. Waters was questioned if the garden club has a 501C3, which Ms. Waters stated that as of yet they do not. One of their members was going to look into see about this for the garden club.

Dusty Faul – Mr. Faul stated he is an investor in the Village with heritage that goes back to 1923. Mr. Faul stated that they have bought some places in the Village to try and clean up. Recently there has been a lot of thefts at properties, batteries stolen from trucks, power tools stolen, vehicles that people are leaving dogs in who are drug addicts. Mr. Faul stated that they had to call the Sheriff's office, which sometimes can be a two-hour wait but by then the suspect is gone. Mr. Faul is asking if the Village could contact the sheriff to do more patrol for added security. Nick Taylor asked where the property was, but Mr. Faul did not want to say that, but he will get the address to Mayor Puckett after the meeting.

Paul Riley – First, wanted to commend the council on the conduct of the meeting. Definitely a different meeting than the first meeting he attended. Mr. Riley stated he was at the meeting tonight to discuss Ordinance 1336-25 which designated a portion of Mae Street as a one lane road to a two-way road. Mr. Riley could not find any survey that was done regarding the width of the road. Mr. Vaughn stated he thought there was an ORC that mandates size. Mr. Riley would like this to be looked at to address this with Ms. Gibbons. This would eliminate the calls and aggravation from Ms. Gibbons as she just wants to be heard. If this was lawfully done, then just let Ms. Gibbons know this.

Darla Louderback – was satisfied with the information she received about the landbank grant for the Hope Street trailers that is a drug haven. Ms. Louderback also hoped that all the hatred and anger that has been going on with the police, the council, and people resigning could just be adults and act like adults, talk to each other with respect. There is so much negativity on Facebook talking about euthanizing people and being disrespectful that it is embarrassing. Ms. Louderback would like to see Sardinia rise above and be respectful and move forward. Mr. Vaughn stated he agreed with this and Mr. Taylor stated professionalism.

Julia Clark – no comment today.

Frank Fussnecker – Mr. Fussnecker stated he is a candidate for commissioner. If he is fortunate enough to win that seat he would like to work with Villages. The one thing we need is an Economic Developer at the county level, that can help write grants even if the Villages have someone to do that, this would be helpful for initiating funding for small villages. There is a lot of talk about development which it would be nice to see development along the 32 corridor to bring good paying jobs to county where people would not have to go far from home to work. Mr. Vaughn asked if Brown County had an Economic Development person, which Mr. Fussnecker stated Mr. Williams left the position last week, so the county is just filling that vacant position. Mr. Fussnecker said he just wanted to introduce himself and ask for support for his commissioner's candidacy.

Julie Wagner – Ms. Wagner stated she moved to Sardinia in 2019 as is the acting chair of the Democratic Party for Jackson Township. Ms. Wagner wanted to talk more about the beautification of the business district. She stated she is working with the Celtic Cottage who is asking for signage near the highway to promote the business. She stated that she is asking the county what would be possible to put up and where. Ms. Wagner would like to get a cut flower garden going and a possible tea garden with seating and eventually putting in some clay statues. Ms. Wagner stated she wanted to put large planters or pylons to decorate. Ms. Waters added that she would like to have signage at the entrance to the Village for all the businesses to be represented.

Mr. Baker asked if there is a proposed spot for the signage. ODOT owns the park and ride so they would have to be contacted with a proposal for signage near 32. Mr. Vaughn stated his understanding is that they are asking for property owned by the Village to put signage. Ms. Wagner asked if the proposal was something they would have to write which Mr. Baker responded affirmatively.

Shauna Weis – Hope and Promise had an Easter Egg Hunt on March 28th with approximately 60 children that showed up. During the Easter Egg Hunt they gave away approximately \$300 in gift cards from local businesses that were left over from Christmas in the Village that was cancelled.

Hope and Promise Board met where it was decided that they are going to pause Hope and Promise. They will not be having the Farmer's Market this year or other activities. The money that was in their funds was divided among the American Legion, Friends of the Library, the History Club and the large balance that was remaining was given to the Agape Food Pantry. The Board wanted to make sure that all the funds would go to places in the Village. The foundation had great support from Amy and the council

Mayor Puckett – requested that Venita Milburn be the Interim Administrator until an appropriate administrator can be hired. *Motion made by Peggy Vance to name Venita Milburn as Interim Administrator until position is filled. Motion was seconded by Anna Turner. Roll call all yes.*

Motion to adjourn made by Dean Vaughn, seconded by Mike McRoberts. Roll call all yes.

**NEXT MEETING MAY 11, AT 7:00 P.M.
MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:03 P.M.**

5.11.2026

Date Approved



Mayor



President of Council