

September 22, 2025

Council President Mr. Martin called the September 22, 2025 Belpre City Council meeting to order at 6:30pm. The roll was called with the following members present: Mr. Ambrozy, Mrs. Dennis, Mr. Ferguson, Mrs. Campbell, Mr. Locke, Ms. Riffle and Mr. Seebaugh present. Also present was Mayor Abdella, Safety-Service Director Mr. Rhodes, City Auditor Mrs. Nolan, City Law Director Mr. Webster, Treasurer Mrs. Cassady and Clerk of Council Mrs. Meredith

Council President Mr. Martin asked everyone to please rise for the Prayer and remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance. Mrs. Nolan gave the invocation and led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Council President Mr. Martin asked all present if you have cellphones or any electronic devices to please turn them off or to vibrate so it won't interfere with the recording.

If you plan to address council this evening, please rise, come to the podium, state your name clearly so the clerk can get your information, and address council.

Council President Mr. Martin asked for a motion for the September 08, 2025 meeting minutes. Mrs. Dennis made a motion to approve the minutes of September 08, 2025 as presented and by-pass the reading. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mayor Abdella presented her report to council. It is as follows:

Communications:

- The one shelter was removed in the preparation for the new playground. We are working with two vendors to secure pricing to place the new shelters so that they are ready for next season. Mr. Seebaugh I would like to have a recreation commission meeting to discuss these shelters and their construction. We also need to discuss the Park grant that is to be submitted for the lighting and trails.
- The new snow plow has been received and is in the parking lot for your inspection. In reviewing the billing and financials it was determined the funding for the truck will need added to the supplemental. It was left off the budgeting process.
- I attended the WWW policy board meeting as we prepare for road projects over the next several years.
- On Wed Sept 16th Belpre hosted the Mayor's Dinner. We had about 25 individuals representing the Mid-Ohio Valley. It was a very informative evening.

- We are working with the Belpre Marietta Health Department in reviewing several septic systems within the city. We will be working with the homeowners on certifying them or working with them to connect to the city sewer.
- Many of the City officials and the County Commissioners received a petition from residents on the Murry Street area regarding a property that is unsafe. This property while in the City limits is in the township. Therefore, the trustees and the county commissioners are going to have to enforce the cleanup. Please be mindful that we do have several areas in the city limits that are in the township.
- Mr. President please assign to the utilities committee the implementation of a plumbing and housing code (the reason this is utilities; is it will discuss what materials will be utilized in plumbing and electrical)
- Vehicles on Order
 - o Rescue Truck to replace the Heavy rescue has made it to McConnelsville. They are doing the final equipment and vinyl installation. We should have the truck in a couple weeks.
 - o Snow plow - It has arrived and is available.

Projects

- Water Tank - under construction - Demo of underground tank complete, site prep underway.
- SCADA – All documents are signed – next preconstruction meeting. This will allow all booster and lift stations to have radar monitoring and be able to communicate to the operators 24/7.
- Park Plan - All-inclusive plan ground is underway.
- WWTP – Planning and Design -- Spoke with Heidi from RCAP to determine the debt service we need annually for the construction. The assumptions are 10 million. 30 years, plus interest. Payment will be 527,000 annually
- Well Field Generator - We received 50K towards this project it will be an additional 50K to complete. This will show up on a supplemental this year or on next year's budget depending on scheduling.
- Source Water Signage – in process

Legislation

- Match for Park grant for Phase 1
- Real estate purchase

- WRP – Planning – Design – Construction
- Utilities - Water bill clarification

Grants Applied

- Transportation grant – 1.1 million Submission on September 8 for planning and design of streets and sidewalks around the Stone Road – Campus Drive, Maple Street area. No Match Required
- ODNR Department of Forestry – Historical tree preservation \$20K no match required

Awarded

- \$75, 000 Traffic Impact Study for Area around MMH – Farson – Braun - Clement
- \$85,000 Housing Technical Assistance Grant – Finalized – Scope of work pending
- \$55,000 EPA Drinking Water Grant - Filed: Generator and Signage for area of well field. – We were awarded the generator and source water protection funding.

o Working with vendor for generator.

o Source Water Signage

Discussion followed regarding the petition from residents on the Murry Street area regarding a property that is unsafe. This property while in the City limits is in the township. Therefore, the trustees and the county commissioners are going to have to enforce the cleanup

Safety-Service Director Brian Rhodes presented his report before council, it is as follows:

- The code enforcement officer and I are continuing to become more familiar with stormwater issues. We were involved with two variance hearings last week where the lot coverages were greater than the recommended 35%.
- The shelter at the park has been demolished. Construction for the new playground is due to commence next week. Should be completed early October.
- The code enforcement officer and I have continued to conduct rounds through the city and have issued door hanger warnings when appropriate.

Anyone having complaints about properties within the city should come to the city and talk to the Code Enforcement Office.

Mr. Webster asked if the playground would be completed before the Apple Butter Stir-Off. He was informed that it should however if it is not the area will be roped off to keep folks out of the area.

City Auditor Mrs. Nolan – Thank you Mr. President and Council,

The Mayor and I reviewed the City Policies again last week. We were not able to complete the Cybersecurity policy. Our new SSD has advised he would assist along with Chief Stump and Greg our IT contractor. I have received guidance from Julian & Grube so that we will be compliant with them. The policies are on your desk and need assigned for review to Finance committee.

The August 2025 Expense/Revenue Budget Reports, Check Register, Payroll journal, and Receipts ledger reports were emailed to Council Friday, September 19, 2025.

The Bill Adjustments and Credit Memo Reports for August 2025 were emailed to Council Friday, September 19, 2025. This report will need Councils approval please.

Mrs. Dennis made a motion to accept the Bill Adjustments report for August 2025 as presented. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mrs. Dennis made a motion to accept the August 2025 Credit Memo as presented. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Assigned to the Finance Committee was general policies.

City Law Director Mr. Webster reported that he followed up with the County Auditor regarding real estate tax and obligation of the property known as the Bingo Building. No decision has been made at this time. Ms. Riffle asked if they anticipate one? Mr. Webster stated he got no commitment.

City Treasurer Mrs. Cassady announced that before you tonight are the Treasurers Report for August 2025 that needs approved by council. A copy of the report was emailed to council and there are copies available at the back file. Mr. Ferguson made a motion to accept the August's Treasurers Report as presented. Discussion followed regarding the bottom line of the report. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Communication and Petitions:

Council President Mr. Martin assigned to committee: Mr. Ferguson, Finance/Audit Committee was assigned the purchase agreement with Badger Lumber Company, Inc and Procedure on Utility Deposits. Mr. Ambrozy was assigned **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE BELPRE AUDITOR TO CREATE A NEW ACCOUNT FOR THE CITY OF BELPRE-SEWER DEPARTMENT ACCOUNT NO 5604-WATER RECLAMATION PLANT.**

Reports of Standing Committee:

Mr. Ferguson Finance/Audit Committee reported that Finance/Audit Committee met for the purpose of reviewing the Capital Asset Policy. It was the decision of the committee to forward on to the law director to draft legislation. After discussion regarding the purchase agreement with Badger Lumber Company, Inc., it was decided to add to the agenda for first reading. Mr. Ferguson made a motion to add to tonight's agenda for first reading **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF BELPRE TO EXECUTE A PURCHASE AGREEMENT WITH BADGER LUMBER COMPANY, INC.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. Mr. Ferguson called a Finance/Audit committee meeting for September 25th, 2025 at 5:30pm for the purpose of discussing the purchase agreement with Badger Lumber Company, Inc and Procedure on Utility Deposits. Council President asked for a Special Council meeting on October 6th, 2025 at 6:30pm for the purpose of **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF BELPRE TO EXECUTE A PURCHASE AGREEMENT WITH BADGER LUMBER COMPANY, INC.** assuming that all the other discussions and meetings go correctly. Mr. Ferguson recapped the meetings.

Mrs. Dennis, Police and Fire Committee presented the EMS report prepared by Dr. Greenley. The report is as follows:

Dear Council Members,

We are so grateful for the opportunity to serve Belpre and its residents. Last month, we received 125 total calls. We transported 97 of them to the ER and had 25 refuses. We did 3 transports last month. Our average time from dispatch to scene was 5 minutes and 10 seconds. Our average chute time was 1 min and 43 seconds. We were asked by the Washington County Fair to provide coverage for their event last month which was a great success and a chance for our crews to be even more visible in the community.

As far as the status of the fleet, the new ambulance 490 has been a real blessing to our organization and we are so grateful for it. Ambulance 491 needed service for a coolant leak and other incidentals and was in need of a transmission replacement. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey Greenley

Chairman

City of Belpre EMS, Inc.

Mrs. Dennis also announced that on October 3rd, 4th and 5th she would be taking stage at the Actors Guild performing with the show Hee Haw.

Mr. Locke, Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewer reported that he attended the Triple W meeting with the mayor. Mayor from Marietta was there, Josh Schlicher and others. It was a very good meeting and I feel we are making headway. I did see the dump truck out front. I'm disappointed that it doesn't have a chrome front bumper. The storm water repair on Braun Road is progressing nicely. The Force Main for the water storage tank should start very soon. They have started on the playground and I'm very excited to see how it turns out.

Mr. Ambrozy Utilities Committee reported on his Utilities Committee Meeting held 9/22/2025. Please see below:

Meeting started at 5:19pm.

All Utilities Committee members were in attendance (Bill Locke, Penne Riffle and John Ambrozy). They were joined by other members of City Council (Lyndsay Dennis, Erica Campbell and Dave Ferguson) and Larry Martin, Susan Abdella, Brian Rhodes, Tina Nolan and Jackie Cassady.

A hand-out with the information below was distributed to all participants and members of the community in attendance. The hand-out was reviewed and discussed during the meeting.

Note: See comments in red. These additional comments were also discussed.

Meeting Objective - help people better understand their Water Bills

- Water Bills and possible changes
- Review Ordinance (Water and Sewage Rates) revisions

Water Bills

- Due to the cost to revise, Water Bills will remain in current format.

Note: Separating base rate and usage costs on the Water Bills was investigated. Two companies are involved in the Water Bills (Software Solutions and Smart Bill). The total cost estimate to separate the costs was \$3,300. Due to this cost, it was decided to keep current format and not separate the base rate and usage costs.

Ordinance Revisions

1) Section 939.04 Rates for Water Users

- Rates are listed in Exhibit A (effective 10/01/2024):

Exhibit A.

City of Belpre Water Rates (effective 10/01/2024)

Residential customers inside Belpre City limits will have a base rate of \$13.14 and an additional \$2.32 for every 1,000 gallons used.

Residential customers outside Belpre City limits will be increased by 100% of the inside rate. \$26.28 base rate plus \$4.64 per 1,000 gallons.

Commercial customers inside Belpre City limits will have a base rate of \$19.71 and an additional \$3.48 for every 1,000 gallons used.

Commercial customers outside Belpre City limits will have a base rate of \$19.71 and an additional \$3.48 per 1,000 gallons used.

Each water bill will also include the \$4.00 and \$2.00 water improvement charges per previous ordinance. Note: it was discovered the ordinance for the \$4.00 and \$2.00 charges was missing on-line. However, a hard copy was found (Ordinance No. 20, 2020-21). It will be added back to the ordinances.

Effective October 1, 2025, there will be a 20% increase to water rates.

- **Add definitions to Exhibit A:**
 - **Base Rate** - monthly fee to cover the fixed costs of providing water service, regardless of how much water you use; this flat rate pays for operations, maintenance, and personnel required to maintain the water system.
 - **Usage Rate** - based on the amount of water you consume during the billing period, which is measured by the water meter; covers the distribution costs to deliver water to your home or business.
- The October 1, 2025 increase applies to both Base Rate and Usage Rate.
 - **Create Exhibit B for the new rates:**

Exhibit B.

City of Belpre Water Rates (effective 10/01/2025)

Residential customers inside Belpre City limits have a base rate of \$15.77 and an additional \$2.78 for every 1,000 gallons used.

Residential customers outside Belpre City limits have a base rate of \$31.54 and an additional \$5.57 for every 1,000 gallons used.

Commercial customers inside Belpre City limits have a base rate of \$23.65 and an additional \$4.18 for every 1,000 gallons used.

Commercial customers outside Belpre City limits have a base rate of \$23.65 and an additional \$4.18 for every 1,000 gallons used.

Each water bill also includes the \$4.00 and \$2.00 water improvement charges.

- **Base Rate** - monthly fee to cover the fixed costs of providing water service, regardless of how much water you use; this flat rate pays for operations, maintenance, and personnel required to maintain the water system.
- **Usage Rate** - based on the amount of water you consume during the billing period, which is measured by the water meter; covers the distribution costs to deliver water to your home or business.

2) Section 935.02 User Charges (Sewage)

- Rates for the City sewer system are listed in Exhibit A, based upon the metered consumption of water.
- **Revise Exhibit A as follows:**

Residential customers inside Belpre City limits will pay \$10.88 for up to 1,000 gallons of water flow and for every additional 1,000 gallons of water flow.

- **Current wording:** Residential customers inside Belpre city limits will pay \$10.88 for every 1,000 gallons of flow.

Residential customers outside Belpre City limits will pay \$21.76 for up to 1,000 gallons of water flow and for every additional 1,000 gallons of water flow.

Commercial customers inside Belpre City limits will pay \$16.32 for up to 1,000 gallons of water flow and for every additional 1,000 gallons of water flow.

Commercial customers outside Belpre City limits will pay \$21.76 for up to 1,000 gallons of water flow and for every additional 1,000 gallons of water flow.

- **Add to Exhibit A:**
 - With zero gallons of water flow, there is still a Sewage charge. Accessibility to the Sewage Plant exists and costs involved to maintain continue.

Other items

4% increase in future years

- Per the current ordinances, the 4% increase in future years applies to both Water and Sewage rates. Water is described in 939.08 ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT OF RATES and Sewage is described in 935.03 SURCHARGES (g).

Note: For clarification, add to Water ordinance the increase applies to both Base Rate and Usage Rate.

Create policy for damaged equipment (example: water meter or MXU)

- Add to ordinances.

Meeting ended at 5:52pm.

John Ambrozy

Utilities Committee Leader

Mr. Ambrozy made a motion to add to tonight's agenda for first reading **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE BELPRE AUDITOR TO CREATE A NEW ACCOUNT FOR THE CITY OF BELPRE-SEWER DEPARTMENT ACCOUNT NO 5604-WATER RECLAMATION PLANT**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Seebaugh Parks and Recreation Committee apologized for missing the last meeting however he was out of town working. He thanked council for being excused. I would like to call a committee meeting for October 6, 2025 at 6:45pm to discuss building the shelter at Civitan Park and the park grant. They had a wonderful turn out for the Cross-Country Event. Pretty excited about the playground. There is a list of items we each have under committee assignment. I would like to have Little League Baseball removed from my list for now and we will tackle it in the Winter before Spring arrives. Mr. Webster added to the Cross-Country Event. He stated that EMS was present for the event. We had at least two kids go down. It was good to have them available. Mr. Seebaugh stated that we had a young gentleman at the soccer field break his ankle a few weeks ago and EMS responded and took very good care of him.

Council President Mr. Martin stated that Mrs. Dennis has an Executive meeting on Monday October 6, 2025 and may be late for the meeting, however Mrs. Dennis stated that she would be here. I'm making you aware of this

Mrs. Campbell Planning and Zoning/Economic Development announced that her committee met September 15, 2025 at 6:30 pm for the purpose of discussing ocean containers and structures for demolition. Mrs. Campbell stated that there is a gentleman coming to discuss shipping containers. They asked me to go back and research the flood plain and shipping containers. Mrs. Campbell called a committee meeting for September 29th, 2025 at 6:30pm for the purpose of discussing the flood plain and permits for elevating them. Mrs. Campbell was

also contacted by Rumpke regarding trash service. They requested that they be notified when there is school delay. Mayor Abdella stated that she would contact Nick as to who we should notify.

Ms. Riffle Rules Committee announced that she had attended the Mayor's Dinner. Mostly West Virginia people attended. Very interesting conversation about what they are doing and their accomplishments. Ms. Riffle requested that the calendar be updated on the website. She also recognized the EMS for their quick response time when they had to call for her father. Ms. Riffle asked if there has been any update on the gas leak on the corner of Ann Street and Rockland Avenue? Mayor Abdella stated that she hasn't received any updates on the leak and perhaps they were still looking for the leak. Ms. Riffle asked about the cones at the boat ramp. Mr. Locke stated two poles with flags were ripped down last Fall. They were cut down and holes were dug creating a safety issue. This is the reason for the pilon and tape.

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL – AGENDA items only – None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: - none

NEW BUSINESS:

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Mr. Ambrozy brought before council for first reading **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE BELPRE AUDITOR TO CREATE A NEW ACCOUNT FOR THE CITY OF BELPRE-SEWER DEPARTMENT ACCOUNT NO 5604-WATER RECLAMATION PLANT.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. This will lie over until the next meeting of council.

PERSON APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL:

Judy Drake 713 Oak Tree Lane addressed council regarding a property owner issue with the city for the last 25 years. This property is located at the Southeast corner of Roselawn and Moody Avenue. There had been an agreement with the city. There were several cars removed and it is cleaned up better than it has been in years. The citizens should be warned and if the citizens do not clean up then the city should move in and slap the cost to their property tax. Mayor Abdella and SSD Rhodes have been to the property and Mayor Abdella stated that it is better than it was but far from perfect. We have talked about how far as I'm allowed to go regarding the clean up because what someone considers trash; it may be others treasures. I don't have the answer and have asked the Planning and Zoning Commission and the law director to direct me in the

right direction. Mrs. Drake stated that you don't know how much I appreciate seeing a working council.

Mr. Ferguson addressed council regarding a levy that the community passed to build a new school. We have several places that are unsightly. We have heard all these issues but we are still sitting here trying to decide what we are going to do. I personally talked to the gentlemen beside Kim's house and I was not getting through to him. Nobody wants to live across from Murray Street as you have to worry about snakes, skunks, rats, etc. There is not one person here that wants to have to look out their window and look at all this junk.

Mr. Webster commented about real estate taxes. Please remember that the notification you got from the Auditor's Office is a preliminary notification. Your real estate taxes will not be set until January and has to go back through the State of Ohio. The changes within the county on real estate taxes run between 10-40%. There is no way your taxes are going to double. I'm not going to say they are not going up however you can challenge your bill again. The number received is not a final number. The number you received when you received a post card was based on computer evaluation in Columbus. In 2028 they will come back and re-evaluate your property.

Mr. Ambrozy asked if we are going to do something about the properties. Mr. Ferguson had some very good points. Is there an action and who has the action? President of Council Mr. Martin stated that we are going to find a city that has the ordinance. Mr. Campbell stated that she is doing research on the demolitions of properties and already has some information regarding how we would put fees against their properties should we go in and clean up their properties. It took two years for the Marietta Housing Code to approve and they still can't get it to work. We believe that from the constitutions and amendments we can't go in and take someone's property. When does health and safety issues over ride their rights of the property. We have to find a balance. It is a difficult situation.

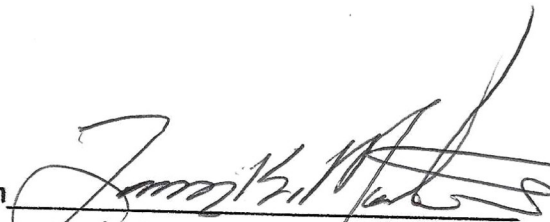
Mr. Locke stated that we helped with the Cross-Country Event along with Mr. Webster. There were almost 600 kids that were in attendance. The kids all love it down there.

Mr. Locke addressed a gas leak near Depot Street. He stated that he talked to a gentleman that worked for the gas company and he said that here was a bad gas leak and folks should avoid the area. They are getting ready to dig up gas lines all over the city.

Adjourn:

Ms. Riffle made a motion to adjourn from the council meeting at 7:36pm. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

President of Belpre City Council Mr. Martin

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James H. Martin", written over a horizontal line.

Clerk of Belpre City Council Mrs. Meredith

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kimberly S. Meredith", written over a horizontal line.