

April 13, 2026

Council President Mr. Martin called the April 13, 2026, Belpre City Council meeting to order at 6:35pm. The roll was called with the following members present: Mr. Ambrozy, Mr. Cassady, Mrs. Dennis, Mr. Ferguson, Mr. Locke, Ms. Riffle and Mr. Seebaugh. Also, present was Mayor Abdella, Safety-Service Director Mr. Rhodes, City Law Director Mr. Webster, Treasurer Mrs. Nolan and Clerk of Council Mrs. Meredith. Absent from the April 13, 2026 meeting was City Auditor Mrs. Campbell.

Council President Mr. Martin asked everyone to please rise for the Prayer and remain standing for the Pledge of Allegiance. Chief Stump 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 March 23, 2026 meeting minutes. Mrs. Dennis made a motion to accept the minutes of March 23, 2026 as presented and by-pass the reading. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

#### Reports of City Officials:

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

Mr. President and Citizens:

I hope everyone had a wonderful Easter, I would like to thank everyone for the prayers and uplifting thoughts for me and my family with the passing of our mother. It meant a lot to all of us.

I attended the SOPEC Board meeting today to learn more about the rising cost of energy rates as well as new and upcoming opportunities for possible new customers.

The water department in collaboration with the administration are working on water tap cost for the proposed developments.

Tower Truck is in the shop at this time for some needed repairs.

Just a reminder the Marietta Belpre Health Department will meet this week on Friday at 10am in Belpre and is open to anyone wishing to join us.

Reminder this Saturday April 18<sup>th</sup> is Belpre Spring Clean up 8am-noon at the Belpre Street Garage

- Washington County Spring Clean up April 25, 2026 at Location: Americas Styrene's Employee Park Lot, 1701 Route 7, Marietta, Ohio. Safe disposal of chemicals and hazardous materials. No tires or electronics devices will be accepted.

#### Project Work:

- Water tank will resume construction in May – How to proceed determining.
- SCADA – Work on sites to begin in April.
- Lift station assessments at Rockland and Clement – this project to kick off Thursday.
- City Valve Assessment to begin in a few weeks. This is being funded by a grant for \$20,000.

#### Grant Awards:

- ODNR Grant award from Land and Water Conservation fund for \$486,506.00 awarded to expand the walking path and add additional lighting and expand the walking path to the soccer field – we need to respond to a few budget questions to finalize this opportunity.
- Buckeye Hills/Belpre Collaboration to do a planning, design and engineering traffic/sidewalk study for the area around Stone Rd, Campus Drive and Washington Blvd to determine the impact of the construction for the proposed unified campus of Belpre City Schools.
- A list of city streets that need evaluated and/or paved have been given to Mayor Abdella. We are in the process of getting some prices.

#### Upcoming Events:

- April 18, 2026 8am to noon Spring Clean-up at Belpre Street Garage.
- April 24, 2026 Civitan Park – Planting of an America 250 White Oak with our Memorial Trees
- May 31, 2026 Memorial Day Flag Raising Ceremony at Leavitt's followed by a Memorial service at Cedarville Cemetery to honor our Revolutionary War Soldiers.
- June 27, 2026 Belpre will kick off 4<sup>th</sup> of July week with a community picnic and our theme is "Proud to be an American". There is a lot of exciting things happening this day. A list of the day's events will be posted soon.

Legislation Pending:

- Southeastern Ohio Equipment – Street Sweeper Purchase
- EMS Contract Renewal
- EMS Equipment Lease Renewal
- Salt Contract Purchase

**Safety-Service Director Mr. Rhodes** reported on the Safety-Service Directors updates:

- Code Enforcement Actions since March 23rd, 2026: 6 code violations /15 zoning permits.
- Early spring and we are already getting complaints about some yards. Pat is keeping a close watch on these yards and will be placing door hangers where needed. We are trying to keep yards under control.
- MXU Update: As of today, there are 140 MXUs remaining to be updated.
- Dispatcher Donny Myers tendered his resignation as he obtained employment with the Ohio University Police Department. His last day will be Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>. The dispatcher position has been posted and interviews will take place this week.
- An Operator 1 position will be posted this week for an opening at the waste water treatment plant.
- The sewer line jetting and CCTV footage project has been postponed. Metropolitan Environmental had numerous problems with completing the work as well as employee issues. Looking for a new company to complete the work. Lambert Street had two holes in the sewer lines. Clint to put on the books to take a look at.
- Stonegate Construction has completed all of the waterline projects. They will be paving within the next few weeks after the asphalt companies begin running.

**City Auditor Mrs. Campbell** was absent. No report was given in her absence.

City Law Director Mr. Webster had no report. Mr. Webster stated that we would need a motion to go into executive session at the end of the meeting. I have some information on litigation.

**City Treasurer Mrs. Nolan** had no report.

Communication and Petitions:

Council President Mr. Martin assigned the following to committee:

- Ms. Riffle Rules Committee was assigned people feeding feral cats.
- Mr. Ferguson Finance Audit Committee was assigned the Salt Contract

**Reports of Standing Committee:**

Mr. Ferguson Finance/Audit Committee had no report.

Mrs. Dennis, Police and Fire Committee had no report.

Mr. Locke, Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewer reported that his committee met at 6:00pm prior to this evening's meeting to discuss a street sweeper for the City of Belpre. Mr. Locke made a motion to add to tonight's agenda for first reading **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF BELPRE TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH SOUTHEASTERN EQUIPMENT COMPANY TO PURCHASE A 2026 SCHWARTZE A4 STORM STREET SWEEPER.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Locke also reported that the street department has been cutting down trees throughout the city and feeding the wood chipper. They have had a lot to clean up.

Mr. Ambrozy Utilities Committee reported that since the last meeting he attended on March 30<sup>th</sup> the Parks and Recreation committee meeting, April 2<sup>nd</sup> the EDG monthly project meeting, and April 8<sup>th</sup>, the monthly water main project meeting. Mr. Ambrozy stated that we anticipate this being completed by the end of the month.

Mr. Ambrozy also stated that he would like to thank Angie, Erica and Lyndsay for adding the document which is called "Understanding Your Monthly Utility Bill" to our city's website. If you go to the city's main website, scroll down, you will find a section called Common Services and you will be able to find this link. There has been a number of constituents ask questions about the monthly utility bill. I think this will be very helpful for people to understand their utility bill.

Mr. Seebaugh Parks and Recreation Committee reported that his committee met March 30, 2026 at 6pm.

The following topics were covered and discussed.

ODNR grant for parks awarded for \$486,000.00 to extend walking tract and lighting. It was noted that this money would not allow for the replacement of old lights around existing track. No specific date as to when funds will be received as of meeting. Mayor Abdella noted she requested additional dollars from Kevin Ritter for the park.

Concern was raised for a new track to interfere with the yearly Cross Country meet. Mayor and myself have assured Rod O'Donnel it will not.

Dave Ferguson suggested an idea that had been tossed around regarding an outdoor gym. Link to YouTube video about gym to be shared.

Basketball court – United way work group slated to reline the basketball court. Day of action in June is targeting date. There is a need for lights on the baseball field side of court.

Shelter Design for pond area. Mayor shared designs of shelters to be placed at pond on new pad. Consensus was between two models. Cost was discussed and the difference between pre-fab and stick build was very little.

Shelters raised questions from council lady Ms. Riffle concerning cameras. Mayor Abdella acknowledged that cameras in park for security are in need of replacement.

Baseball Fields – Field 2 backstop is in disrepair. Backstop on Field 1 is pretty new. Idea is to remove field 3 and 4 to make way for a multi-use field. Flag football, soccer, etc. this would require city to repair fields 1, 2, and condemn and reuse land from 3 and 4 for the multi-purpose field. Dirt Worx will give quote for field work. It was noted by me that Dirt Worx was experienced in building soccer fields in the past.

Mayor noted a call for kayak launch like the one in Saint Mary's. She's relying on street dept. supervisor Chris to supply quote for the build.

Restrooms in park are in major need of drain line replacement. According to investigation, the line size needs increased.

Concession stand - Baseball league wants to repair. Mayor and myself suggested a 50/50 split with setting up an active concession stand with use of baseball and possibly high school ball, and a front with vending machines that are managed by a vending company.

Boat Ramp – There is a need for paving to be done and some drudging around the ramp.

Councilman Cassady noted a need for seating features around the playground area. Rotary has supplied a few benches to be constructed in the park for that purpose.

The playground equipment has developed large mud holes and a fix is needed. It was suggested by councilman Ferguson too seek out the large durable mats used in horse stalls and farms to serve as a fix. No definitive fix declared.

Park budget may need adjusted for the upcoming holiday season. The Christmas festival and carousel were a large draw with the public. All agreed and will review as time approaches.

Question was raised by Councilman Locke about RC Club lease and the expiration date. No answer given.

One citizen spoke on the park. Karen Locke suggested a heavier police presence at the boat ramp during peak season.

No other ideas, questions or concerns were presented to committee. Committee closed at 6:48pm.

**Mr. Cassady Planning and Zoning/Economic Development had no report.**

**Ms. Riffle Rules Committee** had no report at this time. Ms. Riffle stated that she was going to do some research on the cat issue and probably call a committee meeting to discuss.

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to by-pass committee and add to the agenda for first reading A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO A SALT CONTRACT WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT). This has to be completed by May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026.

Mr. Webster stated that In the Safety-Service Director defense we were notified this morning and was able to get this legislation prepared today for this evening's meeting. This is typical with ODOT.

A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

**PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL – AGENDA items only** – none

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** -

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for third reading A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO EXECUTE AN AGREEMENT FOR MANAGEMENT OF THE BELPRE SENIOR CENTER. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson moved this be Resolution 2, 2026-2027 and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for third reading A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF BELPRE TO SIGN A CONTRACT FOR THE CITY OF BELPRE TO CONTRACT WITH WASHINGTON SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT TO SUPPLY TECHNICAL STORM WATER MANAGEMENT ASSISTANCE FOR THE CITY OF BELPRE. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson moved this be Resolution 3, 2026-2027 and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ambrozy brought before council for third reading AN ORDINANCE TO READOPT ORDINANCE NO. 20 (2020-2021) WHICH WAS ORIGINALLY ADOPTED ON OCTOBER 26, 2021, AS SECTION 939.04. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ambrozy moved this be **Ordinance 3, 2026-2027** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Locke brought before council for first reading **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF BELPRE TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH SOUTHEASTERN EQUIPMENT COMPANY TO PURCHASE A 2026 SCHWARTZE A4 STORM STREET SWEEPER**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Locke moved to suspend the rule of council on three different days to allow for the second and third reading of **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF BELPRE TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH SOUTHEASTERN EQUIPMENT COMPANY TO PURCHASE A 2026 SCHWARTZE A4 STORM STREET SWEEPER**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Locke brought before council for second and third reading **AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF BELPRE TO EXECUTE A CONTRACT WITH SOUTHEASTERN EQUIPMENT COMPANY TO PURCHASE A 2026 SCHWARTZE A4 STORM STREET SWEEPER**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Locke moved this be **Ordinance 4, 2026-2027** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for first reading **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO A SALT CONTRACT WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT)**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson moved to suspend the rule of council on three different days to allow for the second and third readings of **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO A SALT CONTRACT WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT)**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for the second and third readings **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE SAFETY-SERVICE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO A SALT CONTRACT WITH THE OHIO DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (ODOT)**. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Mr. Ferguson moved this be **Resolution 4, 2026-2027** and duly passed. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

PERSON APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL:

Joyce Jones, 205 Maple Street, Belpre addressed council regarding a warehouse being built behind Wigal Electrical and how this building was approved by council. I will be attending the next Planning and Zoning Development meeting to get some answers and to see what kind of precedence that are being set in Belpre. Why was the warehouse approved by size in a residential area. Neighbors at 205, 207, 208, and 210 was not notified that anything like this was going to happen. It is a problem with other residents as well. It appears that Belpre has some severe zoning issues that can't be reversed. We already took our downtown many years ago and it no longer exists. There is a drug store/Rite Aid, a gas station/Go-Mart and a auto sales business that resides in this area now. There are too many empty commercial lots in Belpre. This is going to bring a lot of tax revenue to Belpre which is correct. But we have buildings that are empty and we need to find ways to fill these buildings. We also have 3-5 empty commercial lots on Main Street and we won't talk about Jerry's Auto and the empty Fruth Building. We are beginning to look like Parkersburg wondering where the planning and development direction is coming from and are we getting professional advice? The Children's Hospital, Marietta Memorial and schools are moving us forward however we are having a housing problem. We are concerned. President of Council Mr. Martin informed Ms. Jones that council did not approve that building. This is not a council function. She was informed by Mayor Abdella that the company is located on commercial property (C-2) and the company has complied to everything that they were suppose to. It is difficult when you have commercial property that joins with residential property. Ms. Jones stated that the chiropractor is also next door to her and she understands that there may be another building built there to store trucks.

Mario Coon 1111 Blennerhassett Avenue addressed traffic on Blennerhasset Avenue and the rate of speed that some people are driving. The popularity of the boat ramp, our parks, the soccer fields it's only going to get worse. We have no sidewalks for walkers, runners, etc. which only opposes a higher risk, He asked if the city would consider speed humps, speed cushion or speed wave. This would be a seasonal sort of things. Getting street signs at major streets would also help. Mayor Abdella stated that they would have ODOT do a speed study on the area. She also stated that she would get the process started.

Kathy O'Donnell #3 Bay Pointe Drive, Belpre addressed mischief in the park. I have noticed older boys playing on the new playground equipment and a number of bicycles that are in the park around the area. She stated that there are approximately 7 lights out or are flickering. She would like to see more cameras and brighter lights in the park and around the equipment would be good.

Chief Stump stated that he would have a meeting with his officers about patrolling the area more both for speed and the playground. We will be checking out the lighting. I would also like to commend the soccer club for everything they do for the 700+ kids.

Chief Stump also reminded citizens with golf carts that it is time to renew their registrations. I will also talk to council about updating the Golf Cart Ordinance.

Alison Holland echoed the concerns that Mario has about the speeding on Blennerhassett Avenue. She asked about the future of the park plan and the lighting. She has concerns how police will be able to access the walking path. Mayor Abdella stated that there will be additional lighting, and some trees will be removed over time. There are cameras located now at the sewage treatment plant that we can monitor back to the police department. Police can get there from the street department. New cameras will be installed.

Jeff Greenley 930 Pine Street presented his EMS report. Mr. Greenley gave a brief school update. It is in full swing. We are in hopes to have everything in place by June and bids out by August. We hope to have a ground breaking in the fall. We continue to work with our architectural firm. We appreciate the support of council. The school will be built in two phases.

Karen Locke 726 Tuttle Street asked what time the parks close. She was informed 11:00pm. She asked about the lighting at the basketball court. Mayor Abdella stated that Chris was working on that. Mrs. Locke asked them to add the Pickle Ball Court for lighting. Mayor Abdella stated that there is no electric back there. Will the tennis courts have lights? Mayor Abdella stated she didn't know but would check with Chris.

Anna Shaffer Harper 742 George Street apologized for the conditions around her home. She has had family issues. Years ago, my daughter was on drugs and it was a battle. Anytime I had a problem the Belpre Police Department was there to help. They did a wonderful job. My grandson is now a police man for the Belpre Police Department.

Mr. Ferguson discussed the issue with Metropolitan Environmental. He was asked to speak to the law director.

Ms. Riffle reminded everyone that the primary early voting has opened and there are a lot of issues and two levies on the ballot.

Mr. Locke stated that he is on Blennerhassett Avenue a lot. I have been passed by cars going over the speed. There is a lot of foot traffic. Mr. Locke stated that it had been brought to his attention about putting stop signs at the intersections of Lee Street and Stone Road to help slow the traffic. Those with the boats and Harley Davidson Motorcycles are probably the biggest offenders. Mr. Locke said that something needs to be done about the problem.

Alison Holland stated that she didn't feel that stop signs was the answer at those two locations. I failed to mention that a neighbor's pet was killed that lives close to the park. There is no reason that drivers can't slow down to avoid this from happening.

Mr. Coon even discussed the area entering and exiting from the soccer field. We need to come up with something for that area.

Mayor Abdella stated that she would have the code enforcement officer go down and check the area where the pine tree is blocking the view of traffic flow. She also stated that she would speak to the police department regarding speed on Blennerhassett Avenue and increasing signs.

Mr. Cassidy made a motion to go into executive session for the purpose of discussing litigation.

President of Council Mr. Martin stated that once the executive session is over council will return back to council for adjournment from executive session. There will be no further discussion come before council this evening other than dismissing.

A vote was called for adjournment into executive session at 7:45pm. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting eye.

Ms. Riffle made a motion to resume from executive session at 8:05pm. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

**Adjourn:**

Ms. Riffle made a motion to adjourn at 8:05pm. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

President of Belpre City Council Mr. Martin



Clerk of Belpre City Council Mrs. Meredith

