

March 09, 2026

Council President Mr. Martin called the March 09, 2026, Belpre City Council meeting to order at 6:40pm. 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 Auditor Mrs. Campbell, City Law Director Mr. Webster, and Treasurer Mrs. Nolan. Absent from the March 9, 2026 meeting was 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. 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 February 23, 2026 meeting minutes. Mrs. Dennis made a motion to accept the minutes of February 23, 2026 as presented and bypass 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:

Good evening, we have had a busy start to March. During our last council meeting, I was attending the Headworks academy to learn about grit removal and screening of a Water Reclamation facility. This was great information on how to improve the life of our equipment while treating less water.

This past two week we had several meetings with our Housing Technical Assistance Grant working group. This project is going very well.

In April the onsite SCADA work will begin.

We have had several water leaks over the past two weeks. It has been a very busy couple of weeks for the water team. We have a couple that are requiring additional work; one on Leonard and one on Rt.7,

The street department has found several sink holes in town and are beginning the work to correct them. These appear to be from collapsed storm drains.

The 10" Water main project is on track to finish in April. The only thing left will be the delay of asphalt plants opening.

The Water tank project is ramping back up and I am grateful for the support and guidance of the county engineer.

The Farson Street Traffic impact study is underway and we are waiting on feedback from the firm about possible solutions.

There is a boil water advisory from Rt.7 (Orion North) and Joe Skinner Road.

Mr. President please assign to council AN ORDINANCE ASSOCIATED WITH HOUSING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

Mr. President, I request an executive session at the end of tonight's meeting to discuss real estate transactions.

Council President Mr. Martin assigned to Mr. Cassady Planning and Zoning and Economic Development Committee AN ORDINANCE ASSOCIATED WITH HOUSING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.

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

- Code Enforcement Actions since February 23rd: 4 code violation warnings issued/10 permits issued.
- MXU progress: 325 MXUs (9%) remaining to be replaced. 384 MXUs in inventory so we have plenty, at this time, to complete the project.
- The flat roof for the city building was completed today ACR1 Roofing. The cost was \$19,507.00 with a warranty of 15 years and most cost effective. I am still working on the letter to USI in reference to the damage caused (closet and carpet). Per Rob Beglin at USI, the cost of the roof is not covered, but the damages may be.
- Meeting with an insurance adjustor tomorrow morning in regard to the damages to the water wells last spring.
- We currently have an opening at the Waste Water Treatment Plant. If anyone knows someone who may be interested, please pass the word. Civil Service testing will be required for interested individuals.

Attached to my report are reports from the department heads. They are filed with my report in council chambers. Chief Stump will present his report.

Chief Stump presented his report. It is as follows:

Report for council 3/9/2026

1. Status of Officers. All officers off of FTO
2. BAC machine status. All officers certified as well as 2 senior operators
3. Emergency lighting in building replaced or repaired
4. All Sgt's. attended OTOA (OH Tactical Officers Association) leadership training
5. All officers except Fields have completed Active shooter training through OTOA
6. Elm St. Drug Bust
7. Radio quotes for MARCS radios
8. Temp Holding Facility inspection passed
9. Operation with OSP
10. Dispatcher civil service test
11. Compliments received about city council.

Ms. Riffle addressed Chief Stump in regards to the new breathalyzers for drunk drivers. She stated with the laws changing with marijuana is there an uptake in that and how do you know the difference when you pick up someone that it may be drug related. Chief Stump stated that if it is alcohol, you can detect an odor. If it is marijuana, it can also be detected by odor along with a urine test. Sgt. Huddleston is a DRE Officer trained to interview a person and do evaluation testing to determine the situation.

City Auditor Mrs. Campbell presented her report before council. It is as follows:

- We have worked on finalizing the budget
- Added the appropriations for 2026 budget
- Scheduled training in mid-March
- Meeting on March 3rd about \$2-\$4 dollars and adding to all available units.
- Working on letter to landlords for the 6-dollar fee
- Working on Generator Grant finalization for the end of March
- Lisa our Deputy Auditor and myself had VIP Training on Payroll Budget on Friday the 6th. We are working with Julian & Grube on the 2025 audit. We have over 55 request that they are

watching. Kim Martin and Lisa Rankin are also helping get these requests to Julian & Grube for their audit.

City Law Director Mr. Webster had no report

City Treasurer Mrs. Nolan had no report.

Communication and Petitions:

President of Council Mr. Martin stated that he had already assigned to Mr. Cassady's Planning and Zoning/Economic Development Committee AN ORDINANCE ASSOCIATED WITH HOUSING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE that he graciously accepted.

Also, I received from Brian Rhodes and Erica Campbell a memo dated March 9, 2026 in RE: to 939.08 ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT OF RATES & 935.03(g) SURCHARGES.

In accordance with Section 939.08 and 935.03(g) of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Belpre, the water and sewer rates will be increased by 4% with the effective date of April 1, 2026. The increased rates will be reflected on the bills due on May 18, 2026.

This memo was signed by:

Brian P. Rhodes – Safety-Service Director

Erica N. Campbell - Auditor

Reports of Standing Committee:

Mr. Ferguson Finance/Audit Committee stated that he did attend the Utilities and Finances/Audit Committee meeting on March 9th, 2026, in regards to the \$4 and \$2 Monthly Water Fees. Mr. Ferguson also reported that his committee met March 9, 2026 for the purpose of discussing three items: 2026 Budget, Senior Center Contract and the Washington Soil and Water Conservation District. The 2026 Budget is up for second reading this evening. Mr. Ferguson made a motion to add to tonight's agenda for first 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 made a motion to add to tonight's agenda for first 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.

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

Mr. Locke, Streets, Sidewalks and Storm Sewer had no report.

Mr. Ambrozy Utilities Committee reported that he attended several meetings since our last council meeting. Last week we had a meeting on the \$4 and \$2 water fees. We had several members in attendance. I attended the monthly EDG status meeting. This morning, we had a couple of good meetings as well. With the change in the weather the water tank project is starting to move along. I also, attended another meeting on the Water Main Replacement Project. Before tonight's regular council meeting we had a combined Finance/Audit Committee meeting and Utilities meeting at approximately 6:10pm to discuss the \$2.00 and \$4.00 fees. With that being said I would like to make a motion to add to tonight's agenda for first 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. Seebaugh Parks and Recreation Committee had no report. Mr. Seebaugh called a committee meeting on March 16, 2026 at 6pm to discuss some park projects.

Mr. Cassady Planning and Zoning/Economic Development reported that on February 25th, I attended the Ohio River Commissioners meeting at the Lafayette. This meeting had to do with Economic Development up and down the Ohio River. They are trying to move the meetings around the state. The City of Belpre was well represented. Our school officials were even there. Last Friday, I met with the mayor and Sam Tuten with Sunday Creek Horizons and they brought me up to speed in regards to **AN ORDINANCE ASSOCIATED WITH HOUSING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.** At this time, I would like to call a committee meeting for March 16, 2026 at 6:15pm for the purpose of discussing **AN ORDINANCE ASSOCIATED WITH HOUSING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.**

Ms. Riffle Rules Committee had no report. Ms. Riffle asked for the status of the zoning study. Mayor Abdella stated that this was what the committee meeting was about. Ms. Riffle said that was good as she needed to get back on her committee assignment regarding the moratorium. I received a text from the DMV reporting about an unpaid ticket. I wanted to make the citizens aware that this is a SCAM. If you ever have any questions regarding a letter like this you can go to the Secretary of State and go under current SCAMS and find out what is out there. Mr. Webster stated that you can also go to the Washington County Sheriff's website.

PERSONS APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL – AGENDA items only – none

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: -

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for second reading **AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING YEAR 2026 ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. This will lie over until the next meeting of council.

Mr. Ambrozy brought before council for second reading **AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND SECTION 939.08 OF THE BELPRE CODE OF ORDINANCES BY ADDING A SENTENCE TO SECOND PARAGRAPH OF SECTION 939.08 – ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT OF RATES.** A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. This will lie over until the next council meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for first 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. This will lie over until the next meeting of council.

Mr. Ferguson brought before council for first 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. **This is probably the best money that we spent. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.**

Mr. Ambrozy brought before council for first 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. This will lie over until the next meeting of council.

PERSON APPEARING BEFORE COUNCIL: none

Mr. Ferguson made a motion to go into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing purchase of a sale of property. President of Council stated that when council adjourns from Executive Session they will return to council chambers for adjournment. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye. Adjourned at 7:15pm to Executive Session.

Ms. Riffle made a motion to resume from Executive Session at 7:40pm. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

Adjourn:

Ms. Riffle made a motion to adjourn at 7:40pm. A vote was taken with all members of council present voting aye.

President of Belpre City Council Mr. Martin_____

Clerk of Belpre City Council Protem Mr. Seebaugh_____

