

Village of Jacksonville
Regular Council Meeting
February 25, 2026 6:30 PM

The Village of Jacksonville met in regular session with Mayor Sam Smathers presiding. The meeting was called to order at 6:39 PM. Council members present were Kenneth “Jay” Chapman, Leonard “Butch” Chapman, David “Dave” Moleski II and Rachel Gratz. Also present were Solicitor Andy Grillo, Fire Chief DJ Henry and Fiscal Officer Heather Rockwell.

Councilperson Butch Chapman motioned to excuse Councilpersons Angela Strock and Eric Clift from the February 25, 2026 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Gratz. All Council members voted “yes”. Motion carried.

Councilperson Butch Chapman motioned the approval of the January 28, 2026 Regular Council Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Gratz. All Council members voted “yes”. Motion carried.

Fire Chief Henry reported that the Jacksonville Fire Department was awarded a \$38,000 Small County Volunteer Fire Department grant for miscellaneous equipment and gear. The department has responded to 25 runs since January 1, 2026 consisting of 5 cancelled in route runs, 11 miscellaneous runs, 4 structure fires, 4 motor vehicle accidents and 1 brush fire. Henry reported that new member Michael Walls completed the Auditor of State Fraud Training online, but it did not give him an option to print a certificate. Walls also had a background check completed verbally. Solicitor Grillo stated an individual can purchase a two-year driver’s abstract themselves on the BMV website for \$5.00. Henry stated this could be an issue for some members as they don’t wish to invest money in a volunteer position. Henry stated the Jacksonville Firefighters Association is paying for the checks for Walls. Councilperson Gratz stated she feels that the Village should perform these checks on all existing members since it wasn’t done when they were hired. Fiscal Officer Rockwell stated that the Village insurance already recommended that driver’s abstracts be completed for all employees that drive Village vehicles. Council requested Fiscal Officer Rockwell set up something with the Athens County Bureau of Motor Vehicles to get driver’s abstracts and background checks for new employees.

Henry reported that Breathing Air Systems contacted him and sent a quote for service allowing him to obtain a purchase order for the service this time. Henry updated the account to reflect his name instead of the previous chief. Fiscal Officer Rockwell stated two services annually are included in the permanent budget and a blanket purchase order will be issued to hopefully prevent future issues. Henry is still waiting for invoices from Johnson’s for pump testing and truck repairs.

Henry stated the billing company utilized by the department, PMMG, stopped performing insurance billing services for motor vehicle accidents. Another company, Fire Recovery USA, was recommended. Henry would like to look into what services they offer and possibly change the billing company.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources provided an agreement with the Jacksonville Fire Department which will allow the department to be reimbursed a minimum of \$70 for responding to wildfires originating on private land within the State fire protection area. It will also allow reimbursement of a minimum of \$100 for wildfires with two hours or less suppression time originating on land owned by Wayne National Forest or Ohio Department of Natural Resources within the State fire protection area. If a wildfire is more than two hours suppression time, the department will be reimbursed per person, per truck. Advanced trails are supposed to be added to the agreement at a later date. Henry signed and returned the agreement to Ohio Department of Natural Resources.

Councilperson Gratz asked Henry if the fire department intended to apply for the Athens County Together grant. If so, she will need to coordinate with them because only one grant is awarded per Village and she applies annually. Henry stated he didn’t realize this was the grant that Gratz utilizes and the department will not apply so they don’t interfere with her projects.

Fiscal Officer Rockwell reported on behalf of Administrator Rockwell and Water Operator Riley that they have been repairing a roof leak on the garage, installing the camera system on the garage, salting and plowing roadways, repairing/replacing stop signs, cleaning street edges, picking up trash throughout the Village and repairing water leaks.

Solicitor Grillo reported that he is working on a “mutual aid” agreement requested by the Mayor for the surrounding Villages to help each other. Smathers would like this to apply to all services including the Water Operator, Administrator and Fiscal Officer. Smathers feels our communities are stronger when we work together. Grillo stated he is working on a case, but cannot provide details because it involves juveniles.

Fiscal Officer Rockwell presented the December 2025 and January 2026 bank reconciliations and financial statements. Rockwell reported that the Annual Financial Statements are complete and 2025 is closed out. Rockwell stated the Village is improving each year, but progress is slow. Rockwell discussed potential upcoming legislation regarding property tax abolishment that could greatly and severely affect the Village’s ability to operate. Rockwell reminded Council that she forwarded an information sheet regarding the abolishment, and encouraged all Council members to read it and be prepared to discuss the issue with residents.

Rockwell provided Council with the 2026 Committee Listing as approved by Council at the January 2026 meeting. Rockwell reported she is still working on the Cybersecurity Program and is finally making some headway thanks to assistance through the Mayor’s Partnership for Progress. Rockwell stated the Trimble fire contract is complete and signed by Trimble. Chief Henry still needs to sign the contract. Rockwell provided Solicitor Grillo with the Public Defender contract addendum for signature. Rockwell stated the Village of Trimble graciously paid for the Breathing Air Systems outstanding invoice from August 2025 in the amount of \$1,048.15. Rockwell provided Council with a handout for upcoming Certified Public Records/Sunshine Law training that is required for all newly elected or appointed Council members. Councilperson Butch Chapman motioned to appoint Solicitor Grillo as designee for the training for himself and Councilperson Jay Chapman. Councilperson Jay Chapman seconded the motion. All Council members voted “yes”, except Councilperson Gratz who voted “no”, as she felt there was no reason they could not complete the training themselves. Motion carried.

Fiscal Officer Rockwell requested Council approval for a water leak credit for account 01510-001 in the amount of \$166.32 for 15,400 gallons to be charged at cost. The leak is repaired and occurred over the course of one billing cycle. Councilperson Butch Chapman motioned to approve the leak credit of \$166.32 for account 01510-001. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Gratz. All Council members voted “yes”. Motion carried.

Fiscal Officer Rockwell requested Council approval for a water leak credit for account 02420-001 in the amount of \$1,275.43 for 70,085 gallons to be charged at cost. The leak is repaired and occurred over the course of three billing cycles at a commercial location. Councilperson Butch Chapman motioned to approve the leak credit of \$1,275.43 for account 02420-001. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Gratz. All Council members voted “yes”. Motion carried.

Rockwell provided Council with an Official Certificate of Estimated Resources, 2026 Permanent Appropriations Ordinance, and a Resolution establishing an Investment Policy. Rockwell proposed investing Village funds in a “sweep” account with the bank to earn interest on the unused portion. This amount can be increased as Village finances improve. The initial investment is protected from loss and there is an interest floor rate of 0.12%. Interest is deposited back into the sweep account on a monthly basis. The Village is required by Ohio Revised Code to have an investment policy in place prior to investing any funds.

Councilperson Gratz stated the Jacksonville Firefighters Association would like to perform a community trash pickup on May 17, 2026. This would involve picking up trash and litter along the roadways, not bagged trash. Council discussed a community cleanup day for Jacksonville. Fiscal Officer Rockwell will contact Jane Redfern of the Athens County Solid Waste District to see if she is interested in coordinating a cleanup with Jacksonville, Glouster and Trimble as they did in 2025.

Councilperson Butch Chapman asked if anything is being done about the high grass inside the fence at 3 S. Ninth Street. Solicitor Grillo recommended contacting the Athens County Health Department. Village employees cannot mow the high grass because it is inside a privacy fence.

Councilperson Butch Chapman motioned to approve the 2026 Official Certificate of Estimated Resources as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Moleski. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried.

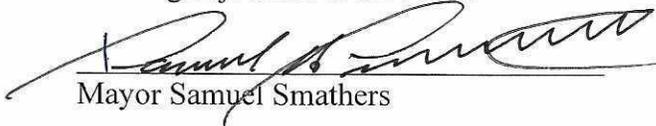
Councilperson Butch Chapman motioned to suspend the rules and read by title only Ordinance 2026-6 declaring an emergency. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Gratz. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried. Ordinance 2026-6: An Ordinance to Make Permanent Appropriations for the Current Expenses and Other Expenditures of the Village of Jacksonville, Ohio During the Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2026 and Declaring an Emergency. Councilperson Butch Chapman motioned to adopt Ordinance 2026-6 as read. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Jay Chapman. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried.

Councilperson Butch Chapman motioned to suspend the rules and read by title only Resolution 2026-7 declaring an emergency. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Gratz. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried. Resolution 2026-7: A Resolution Authorizing an Investment Policy for the Village of Jacksonville and Declaring an Emergency. Councilperson Butch Chapman motioned to adopt Resolution 2026-7 as read. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Jay Chapman. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried.

Mayor Smathers entertained a motion to adjourn.

A motion was made by Councilperson Jay Chapman and seconded by Councilperson Gratz to adjourn. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 PM.


Mayor Samuel Smathers


Fiscal Officer Heather Rockwell