

Village of Jacksonville
Regular Council Meeting
May 27, 2026 6:30 PM

The Village of Jacksonville met in regular session with Mayor Sam Smathers presiding. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM. Council members present were Kenneth “Jay” Chapman, Leonard “Butch” Chapman, Angela Strock, Dave Moleski, Rachel Gratz and Eric Clift. Also present were Solicitor Andy Grillo, Fire Chief DJ Henry, Water Operator Ron Riley and Fiscal Officer Heather Rockwell.

Resident John Dillon appeared before Council to discuss parking improvements behind his store and address questions regarding the upcoming Revitalization Project. Dillon wants to place gravel behind his building and establish a parking lot with access off the State Route. Dillon expressed concerns about a meter pit. The pit is for sewer and Dillon was advised to consult with Trimble Township Wastewater Treatment District. Dillon can meet with Rockwell at the office to review the Revitalization plans to see how they may affect his storefront.

Mary Nally of Sustainable Ohio Public Energy Council (SOPEC) appeared before Council to introduce herself. Nally is the new Southeast Ohio Regional liaison. Nally explained that SOPEC negotiates a fixed term rate for residents and small businesses that participate in the Community Choice Aggregation Program. Savings for these participants has been over \$4,000. Nally explained electric rates are on the rise due to increased demand for data centers, delays in replacing power plants and the war in Iran. The Public Utilities Commission of Ohio (PUCO) also approved a \$10 per month increase for all AEP Ohio customers despite SOPEC’s opposition. Opt out letters were sent to residents and small businesses in Jacksonville with a 6/1/26 deadline. SOPEC participants can opt out of the program any time without fees. Councilperson Strock asked why the program is opt out instead of opt in. Nally stated this is the way it is written in Ohio Revised Code. Clift asked how often participants can opt out. Nally stated they can opt out and back in any time, as often as they want. They can opt out permanently through the PUCO or annually through AEP. Nally also explained community grants funds available through SOPEC.

Lee Raines, Outreach Coordinator for the Athens County Auditor’s Office, provided Council with levy estimate worksheets for upcoming levy renewals. Raines stated the levies can be placed on the 2026 General ballot giving the Village three opportunities to pass them. Rockwell will bring the necessary resolutions to the June and July meetings for placement on the 2026 General ballot.

Councilperson Butch Chapman motioned the approval of the April 29, 2026 Regular Council Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Clift. All Council members voted “yes”. Motion carried.

Fire Chief Henry reported that the department has responded to 8 runs since the April meeting, consisting of 4 motor vehicle accidents, 3 calls for service and 1 EMS assistance call. Henry stated he received two applications: Marvin Nichols and John Welch. Henry stated Nichols wishes to return to the department and has been made aware of the new requirements. Councilperson Chapman asked if the background check and driver’s abstract for Amesville can be used for Nichol’s application for Jacksonville. Council discussed this and if there should be a doctor’s release due to physical limitations. Henry stated Welch was previously on the department and had issues taking the classes to get certified. Council discussed if the village should require a BCI background check or an FBI background check. Council also discussed how recent a background check should be to be considered current for village requirements. A Fire Committee Meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, June 24, 2026 at 6:00P to discuss these matters.

Henry reported that in 2023 there was an invoice for Redd’s Public Safety for a grant purchase. The Jacksonville Firefighters Association was supposed to pay any overage not covered by the grant. Henry stated the JFA funds are currently unknown because the accountant has all of the books. Henry asked if Council would approve paying the \$830 outstanding balance to Redd’s Public Safety out of village funds. Council recommended requesting a donation from the Eagles to cover the invoice for the JFA.

Henry inquired about the status of the internet service change. Rockwell stated it is in the process and asked where the fire department connection needs to be located. Henry stated anywhere inside the bay wall will work. Rockwell asked Henry if the department was open to a shared connection if necessary, and if an ethernet connection is needed by the fire department. Henry stated they do not need an ethernet connection and they are not opposed to a shared connection.

Henry stated Hunter Harp is supposed to receive his firefighter certification next week. Councilperson Butch Chapman motioned to approve Hunter Harp as an active member of the fire department if a current fire card is provided to Rockwell. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Clift. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried.

Mayor Smathers inquired about fire department billing procedures. Smathers stated a Glouster fire run was billed. Smathers asked if all runs outside of Jacksonville are billed. Henry stated runs are billed for all territories except Homer Township because their contract specifically states soft billing is not permitted.

Water Operator Riley reported that he has been working on trimming, mowing, resolving issues with storm drains and a roadway washout on North Seventh Street.

Solicitor Grillo reported the Sunshine Law Training on behalf of Councilpersons Butch Chapman and Jay Chapman is complete. The Public Records Request response is almost ready and should be sent this week. Grillo is working on two pending cases in Municipal Court for Jacksonville.

Fiscal Officer Rockwell presented the April bank reconciliation and financial statements and requested approval of the March 2026 financial statements and bank reconciliation. Councilperson Butch Chapman motioned to approve the March 2026 bank reconciliation and financial statements as presented at the April 29, 2026 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Gratz. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried.

Councilperson Gratz reported a street light out at Third and Palmer Streets. Water Operator Riley stated street light outages can be self-reported to AEP directly or through the village website. Riley has reported this light out, but AEP owns the lights so the village has no control over when AEP fixes it.

Gratz asked about the curb cut requested by Jackie Andrews. Riley stated this has been resolved. Gratz reported former Councilperson Cameron Lowery is now the regional liaison for Southeast Ohio for the Auditor of State's Office. Lowery wanted to remind everyone to complete the Auditor of State's Fraud Training requirement.

Gratz asked if Rockwell heard back from Jane Forest Redfern regarding a Community Cleanup event for Jacksonville. Rockwell stated she has not received a response. Gratz requested Rockwell reach out to her again.

Councilperson Gratz discussed items included in the Old Settlers Reunion contract. Council had no objections to items in the contract.

Councilperson Butch Chapman asked if the monument in the Grove Park could be moved to the Veteran's Park if the project ever receives funding. Rockwell stated there is wayfinding for the monument's current location included in the upcoming revitalization project.

Mayor Smathers entertained a motion to adjourn.

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:23 PM.


Mayor Samuel Smathers


Fiscal Officer Heather Rockwell