

Village of Jacksonville
Regular Council Meeting
July 29, 2026 6:30 PM

The Village of Jacksonville met in regular session with Mayor Sam Smathers presiding. The meeting was called to order at 6:31 PM. Council members present were Kenneth “Jay” Chapman, Leonard “Butch” Chapman, Rachel Gratz and Angela Strock. Also present were Solicitor Andrew Grillo, Fire Chief DJ Henry, Water Operator Ron Riley and Fiscal Officer Heather Rockwell.

Councilperson Butch Chapman moved to excuse Council members Eric Clift and David Moleski II from the July 29, 2026 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Gratz. All Council members voted “yes”. Motion carried.

Councilperson Butch Chapman moved to approve the June 24, 2026 Regular Council Minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Gratz. All Council members voted “yes”. Motion carried.

Mayor Smathers reported that the Old Settlers Reunion Community Event Contract is signed and filed with the Fiscal Officer. The deposit for the event has been paid. A written agreement with Corner Pizza for road closures during the event is attached to the Community Event Contract.

Fire Chief Henry reported that Welch has been sent to firefighter training and will be taking the test this weekend. Henry provided a purchase order request for the training to Mayor Smathers for approval. Henry reported that the MARCS grant equipment purchased has been received. The Athens County 911 Center had imposed a deadline of January 1, 2027 to switch all communications to MARCS. Henry stated he spoke to Johnson’s Fire Equipment regarding switching the disaster siren to operate on MARCS as well. This may require equipment upgrades to the siren at the Fire Department’s expense. Henry requested permission to have Johnson’s look at the siren to see what upgrades will be needed. This may incur a service charge.

Fiscal Officer Rockwell stated she was contacted by the Ohio Department of Commerce today requesting proof of payment for the MARCS grant. Rockwell stated she has not received any invoices to pay for the MARCS grant and the deadline is July 31, 2026. Rockwell stated she must also provide proof of payment. Even if the invoices were provided today, the proof of payment wouldn’t be available by the deadline. Rockwell requested an extension to provide the documents, which was granted until August 31, 2026. Henry stated he received the invoice for the equipment via email. Rockwell requested Henry forward the invoice so payment can be made.

Mayor Smathers requested Henry provide an updated fire roster. Henry stated he emailed it to the Mayor the day he requested it. Smathers requested he send it again because the email wasn’t received. Council asked Henry if the fire department will be hosing down the streets prior to the Old Settlers Reunion Festival. Henry stated the department doesn’t have time to do it this year. Council inquired about the controlled burn training Henry mentioned at the previous meeting. Henry stated the applications are submitted and the property is on Hooper Ridge. 2 S. Second Street is being demolished by the owner and will not be used for fire training.

Water Operator Riley reported he has been doing a lot of mowing with the summer season being as rainy as it has been. Riley repaired water leaks on State Route 13 and North Sixth Street. Riley has been working on alleyways, gravel replacement and ditch cleaning after the recent heavy rainstorms. Water disconnects, reconnects and leak/burst alerts have also been addressed.

Fiscal Officer Rockwell presented the June bank reconciliation and financial statements and requested approval of the May 2026 financial statements and bank reconciliation. Councilperson Gratz moved to approve the May 2026 bank reconciliation and financial statements as presented at the June 24, 2026 meeting. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Butch Chapman. All Council members voted “yes”. Motion carried.

Fiscal Officer Rockwell reported that the Ohio Public Works Commission grant for paving was awarded for \$249,999!

Rockwell reported that she forwarded Rachel Gratz's contact information to Jane Forest Redfern to act as the Village liaison for the Community Cleanup Day tentatively scheduled for August 29, 2026. Rockwell stated she attempted to contact Allie Jago several times. Ms. Jago returned her call and left a message, but they never spoke. Rockwell stated she also called the Bateman's office to see if they will participate in the Community Cleanup Day, but the phone system hung up on her.

Rockwell presented two Auditor's Certificates for upcoming levy renewals. These will require motions for Council to accept the certificates. Rockwell also presented two resolutions to place the levy renewals on the November ballot and a pay resolution requested by Mayor Smathers.

Fiscal Officer Rockwell discussed the option of offering paperless billing to customers using the web portal to pay their water bills. Rockwell stated 67% of the Village's water customers use the web portal. Paperless billing can be offered by NexBillPay for a fee of \$0.10 per bill produced. The Village is currently paying \$0.65 in postage to mail each water bill plus the cost of the postcard. Rockwell stated paperless billing would save around \$600 per year if half the customers adopt paperless. Councilperson Gratz suggested adding language that enrolling in paperless billing does not prevent customers from paying water bills in the office or drop box. This may increase the adoption rate of the paperless billing.

Councilperson Gratz discussed a resident email regarding a noise complaint that was sent to Council about six weeks ago. Gratz meant to bring it up at the June meeting. Council was aware of the situation, but the noise ordinance was not violated. Council was concerned that changing the noise ordinance will affect the Old Settlers Reunion festival and other businesses that have outdoor music during the summer months. Enforcement was also a concern because the County cannot enforce local ordinances.

Councilperson Butch Chapman expressed concerns over the high grass on Ninth Street that is inside the privacy fence in the yard. The Village has attempted to send high grass violations, but all mail is returned. Even if the Village were to proceed with the high grass violation it will be an issue to cite the owner into court.

Councilperson Butch Chapman stated he would like a wreath placed on the memorial in the Grove Park to honor the veterans.

Councilperson Gratz stated she felt that there should be a discussion regarding Resolution 2026-14 before voting on it. Gratz stated the issue was brought up at the June meeting and she felt a follow-up discussion was needed.

Councilperson Gratz moved to enter Executive Session per ORC Section 121.22(G)(1) regarding compensation of personnel, with Solicitor Grillo, Mayor Smathers, Fiscal Officer Rockwell and Water Operator Riley included as needed. Councilperson Strock seconded the motion. Councilpersons Gratz and Strock voted "yes". Councilpersons Butch Chapman and Jay Chapman voted "no". Motion failed.

Solicitor Grillo stated the Mayor does not have tie-breaking authority to enter Executive Session. Councilperson Butch Chapman asked why the matter couldn't be discussed in open session. Gratz stated the original discussion was in Executive Session and she felt the follow-up discussion should be as well.

Councilperson Gratz moved to enter Executive Session per ORC Section 121.22(G)(1) regarding compensation of personnel, with Solicitor Grillo, Mayor Smathers, Fiscal Officer Rockwell and Water Operator Riley included as needed. Councilperson Butch Chapman seconded the motion. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried. Meeting suspended for Executive Session at 7:24P.

Councilperson Jay Chapman moved to exit Executive Session. Councilperson Butch Chapman seconded the motion. All Council voted "yes". Motion carried. Meeting resumed at 7:52P.

Council decided to take action on Resolution 2026-14 as a result of Executive Session.

Councilperson Butch Chapman moved to suspend the rules and read by title only Resolution 2026-14 declaring an emergency. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Jay Chapman. All Council voted "yes", except Councilperson Gratz who voted "no", stating she preferred to read the resolution in its entirety. Motion failed.

Council discussed Resolution 2026-14. Gratz asked if the resolution should contain the names of the employees rather than the position names. Gratz expressed concerns that if any current employees were to leave Council would be committed to the same pay rate for a replacement employee. Rockwell stated in the event an employee left, Council would need to revisit the resolution prior to hiring a replacement employee. Positions may be separated and pay rates may need altered, but Rockwell did not feel it was appropriate to write the resolution with names of employees. Rockwell felt the resolution should only contain names if the employees are contractual.

Councilperson Butch Chapman moved to suspend the rules and read by title only Resolution 2026-14. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Jay Chapman. All Council members voted "yes", except Councilperson Gratz who voted "no". Motion carried. Resolution 2026-14: A Resolution Setting Wages for Employees Not Otherwise Covered by Contracts and Declaring an Emergency. Councilperson Butch Chapman moved to adopt Resolution 2026-14 as read, declaring an emergency. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Jay Chapman. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried.

Councilperson Butch Chapman moved to authorize Mayor Smathers to execute a Memorandum of Understanding with the Athens County Emergency Management Agency. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Jay Chapman. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried.

Councilperson Butch Chapman moved to accept the Certificate of Estimated Property Tax Revenue for the Current Expense levy renewal. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Jay Chapman. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried.

Councilperson Butch Chapman moved to accept the Certificate of Estimated Property Tax Revenue for the Fire Protection levy renewal. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Jay Chapman. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried.

Councilperson Butch Chapman moved to suspend the rules and read by title only Resolution 2026-12 declaring an emergency. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Jay Chapman. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried. Resolution 2026-12: Resolution to Proceed of the Taxing Authority. Councilperson Butch Chapman moved to adopt Resolution 2026-12 as read. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Gratz. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried.

Councilperson Butch Chapman moved to suspend the rules and read by title only Resolution 2026-13 declaring an emergency. Councilperson Jay Chapman seconded the motion. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried. Resolution 2026-13: Resolution to Proceed of the Taxing Authority. Councilperson Butch Chapman moved to adopt Resolution 2026-13 as read. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Jay Chapman. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried.

Mayor Smathers entertained a motion to adjourn.

Councilperson Butch Chapman moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Councilperson Gratz. All Council members voted "yes". Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 8:29 PM.


Mayor Samuel Smathers
Fiscal Officer Heather Rockwell