

BRYAN CITY COUNCIL

September 2, 2025

Council President Mary Leatherman opened the meeting with the following members present: Richard Hupe, Jim Kozumplik, F. John Betts, and Stephen Alspaugh. Also attending were: Mayor Carrie Schlade, City Engineer Brian Wieland, Police Chief Greg Ruskey, Fire Chief Doug Pool, Wastewater Superintendent Wes Wygant, Parks and Recreation Director Benjamin Dominique, Director of Utilities Derek Schultz, Bryan Board of Public Affairs Members Annette Schreiner, Bob Eyre, Richard Long, Jim Salisbury and Karen Ford, and Clerk-Treasurer John Lehner.

Mr. Alspaugh moved, Mr. Betts seconded, to approve the minutes of the August 18, 2025 Regular Meeting, as amended to reflect Council Member Richard Hupe's absence in the opening caption. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried.

City Engineer Wieland provided an update on the resurfacing of Huntington Drive by explaining that due to mechanical issues experienced by the vendor and a recent turn in the weather to cooler evening temperatures, he recommends the work be put off until the summer of 2026. Further discussion was held.

Bryan resident Steve Cox addressed the Council to agree with City Engineer Wieland's assessment, noting that, for now, the road is in the best condition it has been since 2022.

Bryan Board of Public Affairs Chairman Schreiner addressed Council to review provisions in the Bryan City Charter pertaining to the Board of Public Affairs (BPA). She defended the BPA for adding little cost to the operation of city utilities while providing over 100 years of utility operations experience to help set the direction and assure the long-term sustainability of utility operations. She urged Council to not pass the ordinance on this evening's agenda pertaining to a City Charter amendment that would place the dissolution of the BPA on the spring ballot.

Bryan Board of Public Affairs Member Ford addressed Council to review the history of City Charter amendments pertaining to the BPA, including previous attempts to dissolve the Board that were rejected by the voters. She recounted many of the ways that Bryan Municipal Utilities contributes to the well-being of the community, its cost-effectiveness, and how it is well-managed by the BPA.

Bryan Board of Public Affairs Member Eyre addressed Council to remind all that the cost of having the BPA is minimal in comparison to the years of home-grown utility experience currently sitting on the Board.

Ordinance No. 43, 2025, titled,

**AN ORDINANCE TO PLACE ON THE BALLOT FOR ELECTORAL
CONSIDERATION, AN AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER OF THE**

CITY OF BRYAN, TO DISSOLVE THE ELECTED BOARD OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND TO BRING THE BRYAN MUNICIPAL UTILITIES UNDER THE DIRECTION AND SUPERVISION OF THE BRYAN MAYOR AND BRYAN CITY COUNCIL.

was presented and read by title only. Mayor Schlade shared a slide presentation emphasizing modernization and efficiency as the point of the proposed Charter amendment. She noted that Bryan is the last remaining city in Ohio with an elected utility board, and that it has become a challenge to get people to run for open seats. She noted the cost to the utility of maintaining the Board and the redundancies of having two elected bodies often meeting on and passing resolutions on the same items. She pointed out that over 60 years of utility experience on the existing Board will be lost after the November election of new Board members.

Mayor Schlade emphasized that she and the City Council already oversee the Bryan Wastewater Treatment department, a comparable public utility with similar operations and capital needs to those overseen by the BPA. And she clarified that under the new proposed structure the utility would not be sold, that utility funds, by law, would not be transferred for use by other functions of the City, and that the Bryan Municipal Utilities workforce would not be reduced.

Council Member Alspaugh looks forward to hearing from the citizens of Bryan on the matter.

Council Member Kozumplik noted the perceived division between the “city” and Bryan Municipal Utilities and supports the idea of a more unified governing structure.

Council Member Hupe looks forward to an open dialogue with the public and cautioned all to be leery of misinformation as the issue proceeds.

Council Member Betts emphasized that the language simply puts the issue to the voters. He suggested that if passed, the Council ought to consider an appointed utility advisory committee to the Council, similar to Planning & Zoning, for example. He proposed two changes to the language in the ordinance that would deemphasize the arguably nominal cost savings of the change, while retaining the efficiency of operations that would be gained.

Further discussion was held.

Mr. Betts moved, Mr. Alspaugh seconded, to amend Ordinance No. 43, 2025 by removing “with less fiscal expense” from the second whereas clause, and by removing in its entirety the fourth whereas clause that refers to “added expense to the taxpayers and ratepayers of the City”. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried.

Ordinance No. 43, 2025 was let lie, as amended, after its first reading.

Resolution No. 39, 2025, titled,

A RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT A \$1,500.00 DONATION FROM THE BRYAN AREA FOUNDATION ON BEHALF OF THE ROBERT F. FLIGHTNER MEMORIAL LAW ENFORCEMENT SCHOLARSHIP TO THE CITY OF BRYAN POLICE DEPARTMENT.

was presented and read by title only. Police Chief Ruskey noted that Captain Jamie Mendez and Patrol Officer Justin Coffman had applied for and received training scholarships from the Robert F. Flightner Memorial Law Enforcement Scholarship through the Bryan Area Foundation, and he requested Council accept the funding for the designated training purpose.

Mr. Betts moved, Mr. Hupe seconded, to suspend the reading of Resolution No. 39, 2025, on three separate days. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried.

Mr. Kozumplik moved, Mr. Alspaugh seconded, to pass Resolution No. 39, 2025. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried.

Resolution No. 40, 2025, titled,

A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING THE CLERK-TREASURER AND/OR CITY ATTORNEY AS DESIGNEES TO ATTEND TRAINING FOR RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICIES

was presented and read by title only. Clerk-Treasurer Lehner explained that the resolution updates similar language that was approved in 2007 and will serve as a backup provision in the event any elected official is unable to complete Ohio's "Sunshine Law" training within the designated timeframes. The Ohio Revised Code allows for the appointment of a designee.

Mr. Alspaugh moved, Mr. Betts seconded, to suspend the reading of Resolution No. 40, 2025, on three separate days. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried.

Mr. Kozumplik moved, Mr. Hupe seconded, to pass Resolution No. 40, 2025. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried.

Mayor Schlade thanked members of the Bryan Municipal Utilities Communications Department for meeting with her and other City staff to explain the need to upgrade the City's email exchange server. She also provided an update on the status of the Dad's Place federal court case and its recently announced dismissal, noting that the cases in the other courts remain ongoing.

Bryan Board of Public Affairs Member Richard Long asked if the ordinance asking for voter approval to amend the City Charter included any provision to expand the size of City Council from five to seven members and suggested that it ought to be considered.

Mr. Alspaugh moved, Mr. Hupe seconded, to adjourn the meeting. Roll call vote: all ayes; nays, none. Motion carried.

President of Council

Clerk-Treasurer