

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS

Bellbrook City Council Meeting

June 22, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Schweller called the meeting to order on Monday, June 22, 2026.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor Schweller led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

- **Council Members Present:** Mr. Ashley, Mrs. Cyphers, Mr. Greenwood, Mr. Havens, Deputy Mayor Hoke, Mayor Schweller.
- **Council Members Absent:** Ms. Wright.
- A motion was made by Mayor Schweller and seconded by Deputy Mayor Hoke to excuse Ms Wright from the meeting. **Motion passed 6-0.**
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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- The minutes from the previous meeting on June 8, 2026, were presented. No corrections or changes were noted.
- Mayor Schweller declared the minutes approved as submitted.
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MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SPECIAL GUESTS

- The Mayor clarified that the city does not generate profit from property taxes, but that these revenues cover city expenses. He also expressed appreciation for the constructive public input received during the meeting.
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CITIZEN COMMENTS

- Megan Neveau expressed general support for the DORA but raised concerns about the proposed hours of noon to midnight, seven days a week, due to the presence of unaccompanied minors in the downtown area. She suggested a phased approach with hours starting later on weekdays, similar to the model used in Tipp City.
- Don Siro, a Lions Club member, spoke in favor of the DORA, believing it would create more event opportunities and a festive atmosphere, noting he has seen similar districts operate successfully elsewhere.
- Ann Beeman questioned the inclusion of the city park within the DORA, as parks typically prohibit alcohol, and reiterated concerns about the hours, particularly during children's camps.
- Michael Froning spoke in support of the DORA, arguing that complicating the hours would cause confusion and expressed confidence in the community's responsible behavior. He agreed that the DORA could be modified later if needed.
- Jen LeClaire of 3408 Pavilion Lane spoke in support of the DORA, noting that of the 150-170 DORAs established in Ohio since 2015, none have been repealed. She presented it as a way to revitalize downtown and shared a positive anecdote from her hometown in Kentucky, where going "wet" for tourism did not lead to the feared negative consequences.
- Richard England, a 65-year resident, spoke in opposition to the DORA. He expressed concern about allowing open containers in an area that includes three churches, a park, a library, and the Dairy Shed. He stated that responsible individuals can already consume beverages discreetly and that the DORA would not be a beneficial change for the city.

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CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

- Mr. Schommer provided a report on several topics:
 - The capital project for security upgrades, including lock and camera replacements, is nearing completion.
 - The street paving project is almost finished, with only some edge sealing and pavement markings remaining.
 - The City is negotiating collective bargaining agreements, with an update to be provided in an executive session.
 - In response to an inquiry from Council Member Ashley about new street signs, Mr. Schommer stated the signs are complete, but the City is awaiting the delivery of the posts.
- Mr. Schommer provided an overview of Ordinance 2026-O-06, explaining it is a renewal of the existing 1.3 mill general fund levy, not a new tax. The term "additional" refers to it being in excess of the ten-mill limitation. He noted the levy has been renewed twice before, maintains existing rollbacks and homestead credits, and generates approximately \$235,000 annually for the general fund to support capital improvements, infrastructure maintenance, and general operations.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

NEW BUSINESS

Community Affairs/Administration

• Committee Reports

- Presentation/Staff Report: Mr. Havens reported no items.

• Resolution 2026-R-19 Establishing A Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area Or DORA For Downtown Bellbrook Pursuant To Revised Code 4301.82

- Presentation/Staff Report: A public hearing was held for the resolution. Mr. Schommer presented that a DORA allows carryout of alcoholic beverages in specially marked, 12-ounce containers from permitted establishments within a designated 48-contiguous-acre area. He clarified a DORA is not a festival, does not create new liquor permits, and does not alter public intoxication laws. A safety and sanitation plan with police presence and extra trash containers has been developed. A map of the proposed area was displayed, showing the boundaries covering the B4 business district zones of the Old Village. The DORA would be subject to review at least every five years.
- Council Discussion: Council confirmed the DORA would not close roads or sidewalks. Individual businesses can prohibit DORA beverages on their premises, and patrons cannot carry a DORA beverage into another liquor-permitted establishment. Mr. Greenwood noted the success of DORAs in similar communities like Loveland. Deputy Mayor Hoke shared positive observations from other DORAs, such as in Waynesville, and noted the Council can amend the DORA if issues arise. Council discussed the proposed hours, with the City Manager confirming that hours can be changed at any time

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by Council, while boundaries are set for five years. It was reported that permit-holding businesses were hopeful for the DORA's success. The topic of student safety was raised, with the consensus to start with simple hours, increase police patrols, and have the Safety Committee receive regular updates. A council member argued the DORA is a necessary strategic move to signal that Bellbrook is serious about economic development. Another member noted the DORA benefits businesses without patios and provides a cost-effective way to permit alcohol during events like park concerts. Mayor Schwaller expressed confidence in the city's ability to manage the DORA safely, crediting the police and fire departments for their planning on past events.

- Motions:
 - Motion to open the public hearing. Motion passed.
 - Motion to close the public hearing. Motion passed.
 - A motion was made to adopt Resolution 2026-R-19. **Motion passed 6-0** (Mr. Ashley—Yes; Mrs. Cyphers—Yes; Mr. Greenwood—Yes; Mr. Havens—Yes; Deputy Mayor Hoke—Yes; Mayor Schweller—Yes).

Finance

• Committee Reports

- Presentation/Staff Report: The Finance committee reported no additional items beyond actions taken in the public hearings.
- **Ordinance 2026-0-06 An ordinance to proceed to levy an additional tax in excess of the ten mill limitation pursuant to Ohio Revised Code section 5705.19(A) for all purposes described in section 5705.19(A), as amended, which levy shall be 1.3 mills and shall run for a period of five years pursuant to Ohio Revised Code section 5705.19, and declaring that the question of the tax levy be submitted to the electors at the election to be held November 3, 2026.**
 - Presentation/Staff Report: The City Manager provided an overview, emphasizing the ordinance places a renewal of the existing 1.3 mill levy on the ballot. He confirmed its role in funding general operations and capital maintenance and that state rollbacks would continue.
 - Council Discussion: During the public hearing, no citizens offered comments. Council reaffirmed that this is a renewal, not a new tax, and confirmed continued state rollback eligibility.
 - Motions:
 - A motion was made to open the public hearing. The motion was approved by consensus.
 - A motion was made to adopt ordinance 2026-0-06. The motion was seconded by Catherine. **Motion passed 6-0** (Mr. Ashley—Yes; Mrs. Cyphers—Yes; Mr. Greenwood—Yes; Mr. Havens—Yes; Deputy Mayor Hoke—Yes; Mayor Schweller—Yes).

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Public Safety

- **Department Staffing Updates**

- Presentation/Staff Report: Chief Carmin reported that two prospective police candidates were recently interviewed and the department continues to seek qualified candidates. The Fire Department also interviewed a promising full-time candidate. A community blood drive was announced for Saturday, June 27, 2026, at the fire station.

Public Service

- **Annual Paving Program Update**

- Presentation/Staff Report: The service department completed the annual paving program, which is based on field assessments to prioritize roads in the worst condition to maintain safety and avoid deferred maintenance.
- Council Discussion: Council highlighted the program's effectiveness.

CITY OFFICIAL COMMENTS

- A council member stated that the city's goal with the DORA is to improve the downtown experience for residents, not to generate revenue from businesses.
- A council member who serves on the Safety Committee offered to follow up regularly with the police chief to monitor the DORA's implementation.
- Mr. Greenwood reported his attendance at a Flag Day ceremony and highlighted the Greene County verification of 63 Revolutionary War veterans' graves in the county.
- Mr. Havens expressed appreciation for public participation in the meeting.
- Mayor Schweller announced the Bellbrook Amateur Radio Club's National Field Day event at Sackett-Wright Park from 2:00 p.m. Saturday, June 27, to 2:00 p.m. Sunday, June 28, 2026. He invited the public to attend.
- The Mayor reiterated that the council listens to all public comments and believes the changes being made will uplift the town.

ADJOURNMENT

- A motion was made to enter executive session for preparing, conducting, and reviewing negotiations or bargaining sessions with public employees concerning compensation or other terms and conditions of employment. **Motion passed 6-0** (Mr. Ashley—Yes; Mrs. Cyphers—Yes; Mr. Greenwood—Yes; Mr. Havens—Yes; Deputy Mayor Hoke—Yes; Mayor Schwaller—Yes).
- A motion was made to exit executive session. **Motion passed 6-0** (Mr. Ashley—Aye; Mrs. Cyphers—Aye; Mr. Greenwood—Aye; Mr. Havens—Yes; Deputy Mayor Hoke—Aye; Mayor Schwaller—Yes).
- The meeting was adjourned.
- The next scheduled meeting is July 13, 2026.

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Michael Schweller, Mayor

Robert Schommer, Clerk of Council