

AGENDA

CHILLICOTHE CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING MARCH 16, 2026 7:00 P.M.

**CALL TO ORDER
PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
ROLL CALL BY CLERK
PUBLIC COMMENT**

MAYOR HUGHES

1. Presentation – Natalie Menke Grant Funding Strategy
2. Refer City Attorney – HELP Loan Request – Francy DeVries & Gage DeVries

ADJOURNMENT

AGENDA CLERK

**CITY OF CHILLICOTHE
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING**

A Special Meeting of the City Council of the City of Chillicothe, Peoria County, Illinois, on Monday March 16, 2026, at 7:00 P.M. with Mayor Michael D. Hughes presiding and with proper notice having been posted.

Mayor Michael D. Hughes called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

The Pledge of Allegiance, to the Flag of the United States of America, was recited.

Chairman Hughes directed Clerk Byrnes to take roll.

Present:
Mayor Michael D. Hughes
City Clerk Jill M. Byrnes
Treasurer Andrea Bredeman

Alderspersons Present: Barry Bredeman, Brett Cantwell,
Patricia Westerman-Connor, Michael Crabtree,
Courtney Gehrig, Sandra Levell, Gary Sharp

**Alderspersons Attending
Electronically:** Patrick Semtner

Also Present: Office Manager Denise Passage
Economic Development Director Amanda Beadles

Absent: City Attorney Kevin Day
Attorney Taylor Cascia
Police Chief Jeremy Cooper
Superintendent of Public Works Shawn Sutherland
City Engineer Josh Harken
Assistant Office Manager Chelsea White

Chairman declared a Quorum present.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Francy DeVries, 212 N. Hazel Street, introduced herself and her son Gage to the Council. Francy informed the Council she and her son are seeking a HELP Loan from the City for the purchase of Marge's.

Motion Alderperson Connor, second Alderperson Crabtree, that the Council authorize the City Attorney to prepare the necessary documents for a HELP Loan agreement between the City of Chillicothe and Francy DeVries and Gage DeVries, d/b/a Marge's in the amount of \$105,000.00 at a rate of 3.75% interest for a term of 10 years securing the note with a mortgage on Marge's property at 930 N. Second Street. Payable from the HELP Loan Fund.

Note: Current HELP Loan balance: \$444,969.18 (as of 2/28/26)

March 16 – Wall street prime rate 6.75% - 3.0=3.75%

Roll Call Vote was:

Ayes: **Bredeman, Cantwell, Connor, Crabtree,
Gehrig, Levell, Semtner, Sharp**

Nays: **None**

Chairman declared motion carried.

Mayor Hughes introduced Natalie Menke, freelance grant writer, Shortlist Studio, LLC, to present her Kickoff Funding Strategy Alignment Session. (See attached documents).

Mrs. Menke explained she was retained by the City of Chillicothe to do a funding strategy for the next 12-18 months and layout the grants with the highest impact short term. This would be the first of 3 meetings as part of that contract. Mrs. Menke asked the Council for the community challenge that they feel is the most urgent to be addressed. After discussion it was the consensus of the Council to have Mrs. Menke focus on the following:

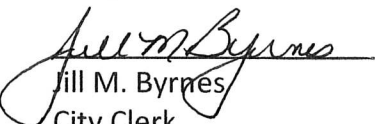
- 1) Rebuild/Renovation of City Hall
- 2) Lead Service Lines/EPA requirements
- 3) Northtown housing revitalization
- 4) Riverfront development/feasibility study

Mrs. Menke informed the Council that at the next meeting she would present an update of her findings. No definitive date has been set for that meeting.

Motion Alderperson Gehrig, second Alderperson Bredeman, to adjourn.

Council adjourned at 7:49 p.m.

Mayor Hughes declared meeting adjourned.


Jill M. Byrnes
City Clerk



CITY OF CHILLICOTHE

Office of the City Clerk

908 N SECOND ST., PO BOX 145, CHILLICOTHE, IL 61523
(309)274-5518

NOTICE

TO: Mayor Michael D. Hughes
Alderspersons: Barry Bredeman, Brett Cantwell, Patricia Westerman-Connor, Michael Crabtree, Courtney Gehrig, Sandra Levell, Patrick Semtner, Gary Sharp

FROM: Jill M. Byrnes, City Clerk

SUBJECT: NOTICE OF A SPECIAL MEETING

DATE: MARCH 16, 2026 7:00 P.M.

CC: City Treasurer, City Attorney Kevin Day

You are hereby notified that a Special Meeting of the City Council, of the City of Chillicothe, Illinois, has been called by the Honorable Mayor Michael D. Hughes. The Special Meeting will be held in the Council Chambers at City Hall, located at 908 N. Second Street, at **7:00 p.m.**, on **Monday March 16, 2026** for the purpose of considering the following items of city business:

MAYOR HUGHES

- 1) Presentation – Natalie Menke Grant Funding Strategy.
- 2) Refer City Attorney – HELP Loan Request – Francy DeVries & Gage DeVries

Respectfully,

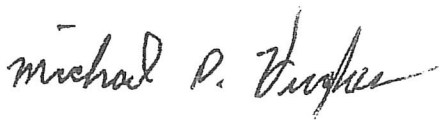
Jill M. Byrnes, City Clerk

Memo

To: City Clerk, Jill Byrnes
From: Mayor Michael D. Hughes
cc:
Date: March 12, 2026
Re: Special Council Meeting

I would like for you to add an agenda item to the special council meeting to be held on Monday, March 16, 2026, at 7pm in the council Chambers at City hall. The topic to be added is:

Refer – Attorney - HELP Loan Request – Francy DeVries and Gage DeVries

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael D. Hughes". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael D. Hughes
Mayor

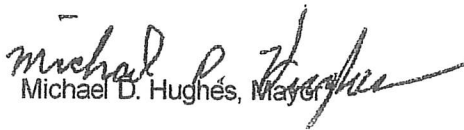
Memo

To: City Clerk, Jill Byrnes
From: Mayor Michael D. Hughes
CC:
Date: 3/2/2026
Re: Special Council Meeting

I would like for you to call a special council meeting, for Monday, March 16, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall, for the following topic

- 1) Presentation – Natalie Menke Grant Funding Strategy

Respectfully,


Michael D. Hughes, Mayor

Kickoff Funding Strategy Alignment Session

Date & Time: March 16, 2026 @ 7:00 PM

Attendees: Natalie Menke, Mayor Hughes, City Council Members

Objectives:

1. To understand the City's program needs for the next 12-18 months
2. To outline the grant research process for the next 8 weeks

Expected Outcome:

Clear alignment on priority initiatives, funding readiness, and strategic direction for grant research

What We'll Cover:

1. Vision & Strategic Focus

- Who do you most want to serve in the next 12-18 months?
- What major change do you want to create in your community?

2. Priority Funding Needs

- What are your top 2-3 fundable projects or initiatives?
- Which projects are ready to implement vs. still in development?
- What is the approximate funding range needed?

3. Organizational Readiness

- Do you have internal capacity to manage grant-funded projects?
- What systems exist to track outcomes and report impact?
- What additional resources or support may be needed?

4. Partnerships & Community Alignment

- What partners are essential to project success?
- How has the community been involved or expressed support?
- Are there existing collaborations we can build upon?

5. Impact & Success

- What will success look like in one year?
- What measurable improvements will the community experience?

6. Funding Strategy Process & Next Steps

- Overview of research timeline and deliverables
- Roles and communication expectations
- Schedule of upcoming meetings

Tentative Schedule

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
MARCH 16 Meeting #1: Kickoff Meeting	17	18	19 Natalie to send draft Project Planning ToolKit to the City for review	20
23 The City to send Project Planning Toolkit edits to Natalie	24 Prospectus drafting and grant research <u>begins</u>	25	26	27
30	31	APRIL 1 Natalie to send prospectus draft text to the City for review	2	3
6 The City to send prospectus text feedback to Natalie	7	8 Natalie to send prospectus layout design to the City for review	9	10 The City to send prospectus layout design feedback to Natalie
13 Natalie to send Draft Funding Matrix and Final Prospectus to the City	14	15 Meeting #2: To discuss Draft Funding Matrix and Prospectus	16 Funder outreach <u>begins</u>	17
20	21	22	23	24
27	28	29 Funder outreach <u>ends</u>	30	MAY 1

4	5	6	7	8
11 Natalie to submit finalized Funding Strategy to the City	12	13 Meeting #3: To review final deliverables	14	15

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Meeting: Special Meeting Meeting Date: 3/16/2015
Time: 7⁰⁰pm Place/Room: City Hall

Name	Address	Phone
1. <u>Trancy M. DeVries</u>	<u>212 N. Hazel St Chillum</u>	<u>3096348681</u>
2. <u>Gage DeVries</u>	<u>611 W Hellock Hollow RD</u>	<u>309(402)7085</u>
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