CITY OF FAIRBORN
COUNCIL WORK SESSION
April 20, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.
Fire Training Room

COUNCIL MEMBERS	Present	Absent
Dan Kirkpatrick, Mayor	☒	☐
Clint Allen, Councilman	☒	☐
Sylvia Chess, Councilwoman	☐	☒
Brian Dodd, Councilman	☒	☐
Rodney McCubbins, Deputy Mayor	☒	☐
Mary Reaster, Councilwoman	☒	☐
Tana Stanton, Councilwoman	☒	☐

Deputy Mayor McCubbins made a motion to excuse Councilwoman Chess from the work session. Councilwoman Stanton seconded. Yes, six: McCubbins, Stanton, Allen, Dodd, Reaster, and Kirkpatrick. Nays, none. Mayor Kirkpatrick excused Councilwoman Chess from the meeting.

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT

Bertles, Browning, Gebhart, McClure, Roman, Schell, Taylor, and Williams.

Mike Gebhart, City Manager, explained they would try to cover two topics tonight. From 5:00 p.m. to 5:25 p.m. Hilary Browning will present information about ClearGov and Mike from ClearGov will join through a Zoom call to dive deeper into ClearGov because tonight there is a supplemental appropriation approving the money to get ClearGov started. The second item will be the item from the retreat that they did not get to and if we need to move the Council Rules Handbook that could be moved to the next work session. He turned the meeting over to Hilary Browning, Finance Director, to explain ClearGov.

CLEARGOV DEMONSTRATION AND DISCUSSION

Hilary Browning, Finance Director, patched in Michael Lepore who is the representative with ClearGov. In essence ClearGov is a government transparency portal that staff is seeking authorization to add as a budget line item. They provide a lot of transparency tools, and they also provide a budget book tool. Ultimately, the goal is to provide financial information in a better to understand format that is more accessible and clearer for the public to understand. With regard to the Budget Book, the City does not currently have a compliant budget book so the goal would be to use this tool to help them create one. It would be downloadable from the City's website. The current budget book is just printouts from Munis. It is like 400 pages long and it becomes instantly inaccurate the minute there is a supplemental appropriation. Whereas, a portal like this one allows us to have dynamic information as the year progresses.

She added Mike from ClearGov into the conversation. She explained who was present in the room as the audience, as she could not share her screen with Mike. She began the power point presentation. Attached as Exhibit "A" is her PowerPoint presentation. She displayed various examples of other cities that are using this format, including the City of Hilliard and Riverside. Information from the portal can be transferred to PDF reports and it can also download the budget book as a PDF, the revenues, expenditures, or the demographics can be downloaded from this format.

The online Budget Book tool helps to provide efficient summarization of our budget information. It is clear, consistent and helps staff write the budget book. It is also compliant with GFOA. Our current practice is not compliant, so we are unable to participate in GFOA's budget programs. Councilwoman Reaster asked what GFOA stood for? Mrs. Browning stated it is the Government Finance Officers Association. It is the Finance Director's credentialling entity. The City also recently won the GFOA award for our ACFR, the annual comprehensive financial report. This would allow them to move forward with the budget side of that. As a reminder the ACFR is actuals only. It is what happened, but it doesn't necessarily show how true you were to your budget or what the budget process is. The policies behind apportioning your resources and that is what the budget book is meant to show. Lastly, the portal automatically generates demographic and economic data. Right now, Cherise and Jaylen do this all by hand and post it to the internet. With this portal they would no longer have to do that because we would receive it as it is updated by the census bureau right straight into our portal. Mike from ClearGov had nothing to add to her presentation. He mentioned that 85 surrounding area organizations are using this platform including Huber Heights, Riverside, Vandalia, Clayton, and Bellbrook are just a few examples. ClearGov is also partnered with the Ohio GFOA at a local level. They are at the conference every year with speaking slots to drive further thoughts at local government levels. They work with a number of Fairborn's neighbors to provide information not just for today but looking and growing for the future of the community as well.

Mrs. Browning launched a demo of the City of Hilliard ClearGov platform as well as the City of Huber Heights. The portal for Huber Heights is under construction with less information included. Riverside, Ohio uses the Budget Book aspect of the ClearGov platform which she demonstrated. The Budget Book portion of the ClearGov platform includes a glossary of all of the relevant budget terms. Mayor Kirkpatrick asked if the citizens would have access to all of this information. Mrs. Browning responded, yes.

Mrs. Browning stated ideally today staff is requesting $22,500 as a supplemental appropriation, thereafter, the cost will be built into the annual budget for the software costs. Phase one of the project would focus on the core modules like Huber Heights did so it would be the overview of the revenues, expenditures, and the demographics. Then Phase two would be to introduce those dynamic dashboards for each of the departments. Right now, they have the static dashboards that Emily Gay updates with department information. Each of the departments sends the data to Emily every single month on a timeline. She produces the graphics and we post the PDF. Instead, staff would upload the data every single month and it would become dynamic and available, and it would also show trends. Following the adoption of the 2027 budget in November, they would launch the online Budget Book tool at that time so that in advance of January the Budget Book would be available to the public. Throughout 2027 they would evaluate the

performance and expand the public awareness and then they would use the platform to strengthen our transparency and community trust. Some ideas could be that we host roundtables with the public schools or the public library. She had the idea that they might train teachers and librarians so that they can help their students and help patrons use the portal and have the information accessible to them.

Councilman Allen asked how functional this is for the directors to work their budgets? Mrs. Browning stated it is going to be through uploads from Munis, so department directors are not going to be uploading any information into this portal. It will be Finance driven just like our existing portal is now. We currently use the State of Ohio's portal system.

Councilwoman Reaster asked if they see this tool being useful for the directors and the employees, or is this more geared toward the transparency for the community to see what their dollars are and where they are going? Mike Gebhart, City Manager, stated ultimately for him this is first and foremost it is for transparency. He does not find the Auditor's Open Checkbook very user friendly to him, which probably means the residents don't find it particularly helpful either. He also thinks that people who don't know anything about Fairborn and may be looking at us from an economic development standpoint could use some of the information that is there to help make decisions about staying here, coming here, and expanding here. Primarily, for him, this is just one step closer to being transparent. Even though Open Checkbook is meant to do that it does not come anywhere close. He thinks having a Budget Book is huge because having 400 pages is a lot. Sometimes, by no fault of our own, people assume because it is so large that we are hiding something and that is not the case. This is much more user friendly. So ultimately for him it is transparency first. Budgetary stuff is a close second or equal to it as it will help with the budgeting process significantly. It is also a tool for economic development. It can be a tool for different departments depending on how much information is entered.

Councilman Allen asked if this information is on demand, is it quarterly, is semi-annual? Mrs. Browning stated that it is based on the community and how frequently they want to upload. She demonstrated the City of Chillicothe's website which has a checkbook feature where you can actually see and download their entire checkbook. Councilman Dodd asked if they post the information or who does it? Mrs. Brown stated she does not know if Chillicothe uses upload or if they have Api hook. She is not sure. Fairborn would be opting for uploading, so the frequencies would be determined by the City and our capacity. Councilman Dodd stated it gets uploaded from the Finance office to them. He asked if the IT Department has reviewed this for security. Mike from ClearGov explained there is a two-page technical and security overview document that spells this out in great detail. ClearGov is AWS web based and extremely secure with single sign on, multi-factor authentication. That document spells out all the security protocols in place.

Councilwoman Reaster asked when it comes to costs for this is it ala carte or are there different packages to choose from. Mrs. Browning explained the costs that they are presenting are the models they have chosen. If this is successful, they can certainly evaluate some of the other modules like the project module Hilliard has and add that on, but right now what they are opting for is the base transparency portal with the dashboards and the budget book. It also has for purchase in the future an ACFR building model or a Public Annual Financial Report module if they want to build on that which is available.

What they did not sign up for is there is a front piece that is a budget-building tool. They already use Munis for this function. So, they are not using that front piece from ClearGov. She is trying to save money by opting into the portals that she thinks would be the best for us right now. They can also make quarterly reports. These are areas that can potentially be added on if it is successful and it proves value. She does think they need to put in effort to the transparency portal and the budget portal and really make sure that it is well utilized before we were to evaluate other modules. Councilwoman Reaster agreed.

Councilman Dodd stated the $22,500 is for this year and for them to start it. Will it be the same price next year as well? Mrs. Browning explained it would be slightly lower in the subsequent years because it does not include the professional services. Mrs. Browning stated there was a question about a sustainability module. She showed that as a custom model. Mrs. Browning discussed how Hilliard monitors their solid waste tonnage and their diversion rate. This information comes from their Solid Waste District. Mrs. Browning explained the City does report its solid waste tonnage as a dashboard input so we could certainly report this if that was desired, or if there were other metrics where we should start collecting data so that we could have a dashboard that is a different conversation. Councilwoman Stanton asked if this is extra with the platform? Mrs. Browning stated this is part of the transparency portal. Councilwoman Stanton asked if this would be extra work, or less work for the departments? Mr. Gebhart stated most of it is going to come from Finance at this point. Mrs. Browning stated the department's contribution right now is to the dashboard reporting that they all do monthly already which goes to Emily Gay.

Councilwoman Stanton asked when they come up with the Strategic Plan and the measurables for that then some of the measurables might be for the custom platforms. She asked what the trade off is to handle $20,000 in the budget? Mrs. Browning stated last month we reduced the appropriation by close to $3 million so we do have room in the appropriation from the income tax revenues to allocate to this Now, next year when we go into the budget she will have to build that into her departmental budget request and see where things are, but that is how it would work it would have to become part of her department's budget annually. It is a relatively small ask we have making personnel adjustments in the supplemental that are greater than this. She thinks in terms of the supplemental request that is being made it is a relatively small one. Mrs. Browning described the steps involved in the supplemental process at all levels.

Mike Lepore, the ClearGov representative, made closing comments and thinks the platform can be beneficial for the City.

Mayor Kirkpatrick stated they were pretty much out of time. Mr. Gebhart stated they would bring the Council Rules back at the next work session. He asked them to take a look at the proposed changes. There is an updated memo that was at their seat. This includes some updates from Mr. McNamee's side of things. They will dedicate the next work session solely to the Rules of Council.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Councilwoman Stanton said it before, but she wanted to say it again that she would like to request at some point an Executive Session to get an update on the Wright State

University lawsuit. Mr. Gebhart stated there is no lawsuit or legal action against them right now. Mr. Gebhart stated there is nothing to report because there has been no movement. They are working behind the scenes for a resolution. Councilwoman Stanton stated she would like to know what is going on. Mike McNamee, City Solicitor, responded that it would be appropriate for an executive session. Councilwoman Stanton asked for the Tree Board requirements if non-residents can serve on the board. Mr. Gebhart stated he would speak with Mr. McNamee about that. She asked for people's thoughts on recording work session meetings. She keeps bringing it up because she has had citizens tell them they would like them to be recorded, but if everyone is against it, she will stop bringing it up. She asked if everyone was against it, except her? Mayor Kirkpatrick stated he is against it because this is a meeting where they want to be able to speak openly. Councilman Dodd stated it is a work session for the Council. Councilwoman Stanton stated she and Clint Allen had talked with him about Habitat for Humanity. Mr. Gebhart stated he did not know where they were with Norm. They originally reached out to him immediately and he will follow up with him. Councilman Allen thinks it would be great to have a sit down with them. Mr. Gebhart agreed. Councilwoman Stanton asked thoughts about chickens. Is she the only one in favor of that and should she drop it? Mr. Gebhart explained this is his 14th year with the City and during his first four years we had free range chickens cruising around in Wright View and there were people who did not want that. So, most cities don't allow them. One of them is because they have roosters and they crow at the crack of down and that irritates everyone. There is also the smell that goes along with them. It is not that we don't want them, but unless you have a half-acre yard or bigger it is probably not the best thing to do. He knows there are chickens all over the place the City; he just doesn't hear about them. He knows the group that was here previously about the chicken petition has talked to Kathleen Riggs and she is working through that with them. It is just like bees. They are working a complaint off of Southlawn that involves a pool next door to someone who keeps bees and those bees are not moving over to this person's pool because of the water. The neighbor is very concerned now with these bees swarming near the pool. There are unintended consequences whether it is bees or chickens or quail that those gentleman want to do. He does not want to say no, but he was also very upfront with the gentlemen that were here that he is not pro that. If you want to do that it could be done in the Township because the Township has rules that protect agricultural uses, but it does not mean we are not willing to talk about it. Staff is talking with them. He does not have anything to report at this time.

Councilwoman Reaster stated on the chicken thing there is a huge sanitation issue that comes with them also. Then you start talking about government and regulation and she is not for more government. She thinks we have too much now and to Mike's point, where do you draw the line? Do you want someone to peek over your fence into your backyard? We have people who do that. She wants chickens but the reality is it opens up a whole hot mess. Mr. Gebhart stated there are predators that you don't think are predators, for instance feral cats. You could have a feral cat get into a chicken coup and then you are pitting people against each other. He told those gentlemen you can't call the City when a raccoon gets into your chicken coop and expect the Police to come out and shoot the raccoon. There are some unintended consequences. Councilwoman Stanton did tour one in Yellow Springs. Councilman Dodd stated being one that grew up with chickens they are nasty and he would not want his neighbors to have them.

Councilman Allen appreciated the presentation on the portal as it provides transparency and efficiencies. It also leans into process improvements and building processes.

Councilwoman Reaster had one question. There is a basement dug on Wayne is that an infill project or is that a Habitat project do we know. Cherise Schell stated that it could be a rebuild from the property owner as there is not infill going on there that she is aware of at this time. Mrs. Browning stated she could check for her as they did have fire escrow payments for construction.

ADJOURNMENT

Deputy Mayor McCubbins moved to adjourn the meeting. Councilwoman Reaster seconded. Yeas, six: McCubbins, Reaster, Allen, Dodd, Stanton, and Kirkpatrick. Nays, none. Motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 5:56 p.m.

MAYOR

CLERK, CITY OF FAIRBORN

Fairborn City Council Work Session

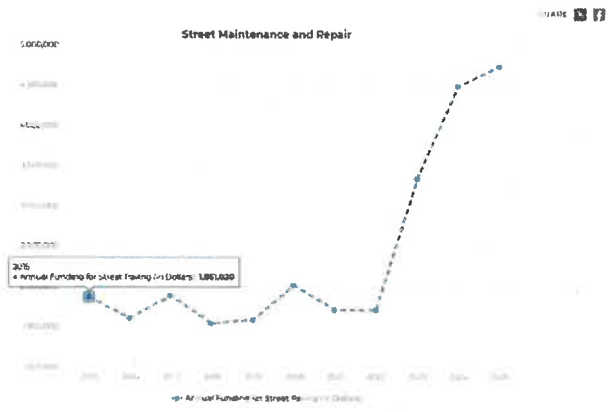
ClearGov Transparency Portal and Budget Book & Rules of Council

Work Session to Council on April 20, 2026

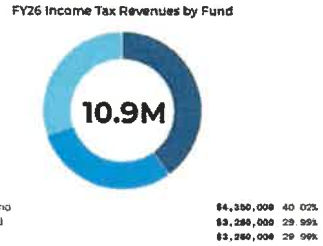
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Topic One: ClearGov Transparency Portal and Budget Book

- ClearGov provides cloud-based tools that make the City's financial and performance data easy to access, understand, and share with the public.
- The transparency portal presents budgets, actuals, and expenditures in a clear, user-friendly format.
- Interactive dashboards can be customized with department-level data to provide deeper insight into City operations.



City of Hilliard's Streets Dashboard

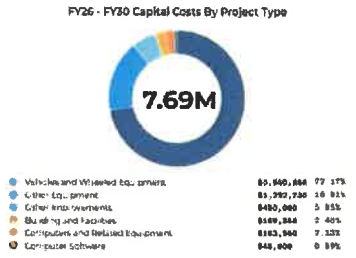


Excerpt from City of Riverside's 2026 Budget Book

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ClearGov Transparency Portal and Budget Book

- Information can be exported into PDF reports, ensuring access for residents without reliable internet.
- The online budget book tool helps staff efficiently compile and present budget information in a clear, consistent, and easy-to-understand format.
- The platform also supports preparation of a Government Finance Officers Association (GFOA) award–compliant budget document.
- The portal automatically generates demographic and economic data, saving staff time and effort.



Excerpts from City of Riverside's 2026 Budget Book

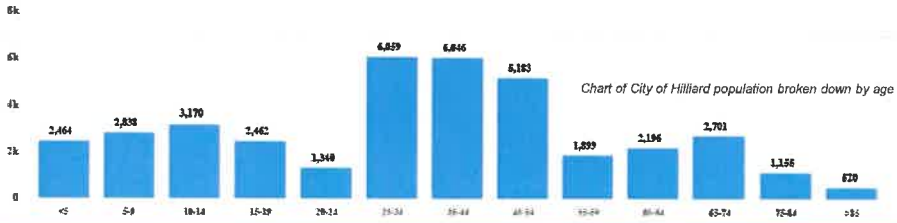
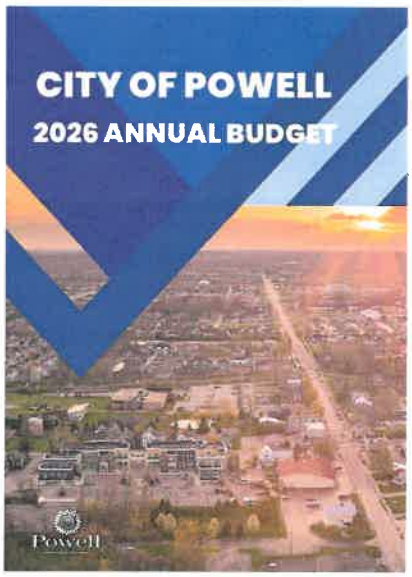


Chart of City of Hilliard population broken down by age

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ClearGov Transparency Portal and Budget Book Demonstrations



City of Hilliard Transparency Portal:
https://hilliardohio.cleargov.com/

City of Huber Heights Transparency Portal (in progress):
https://cleargov.com/ohio/montgomery/city/huber-heights

City of Riverside's Budget Book:
https://www.riversideoh.gov/government/departments/city_budget.php

City of Chillicothe's Cleargov Checkbook:
https://chillicotheoh.cleargov.com/checkbook

City of Powell Budget Book: https://city-powell-oh-cleardoc.cleargov.com/17884/903596/d

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ClearGov Transparency Portal Implementation

- We are requesting a $22,500 supplemental appropriation to begin implementation of the transparency portal in June 2026. Implementation will align with development of the 2027 Budget and the 2027–2031 Capital Improvement Plan.
- Phase 1 will focus on core modules: Overview, Revenues, Expenditures, and Demographics.
- Phase 2 will introduce dynamic department dashboards, replacing existing static reports.
- Following adoption of the 2027 Budget (November 2026), we will launch the online budget book.
- Throughout 2027, we will evaluate performance, expand public awareness, and use the platform to strengthen transparency and community trust.



Capital Improvement Timeline tracker for the Well Community Center from the City of Hilliard's Cleargov portal

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Questions?

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