

**THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE FORTIETH COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BERKLEY, MICHIGAN WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 7 PM ON MONDAY, MARCH 3, 2025 BY MAYOR DEAN**

**PRESENT:** Councilmember Steve Baker  
Councilmember Clarence Black (attending remotely from Fort Snelling, MN on military duty)  
Mayor Pro Tem Ross Gavin  
Councilmember Gregory Patterson  
Mayor Bridget Dean

**ABSENT:** Councilmember Dennis Hennen  
Councilmember Jessica Vilani

**OTHER STAFF PRESENT:**

City Manager Crystal VanVleck  
City Clerk Victoria Mitchell  
City Attorney Ann Christ  
Finance Director Carl Johnson  
Community Development Director Kristen Kapelanski  
Communication Director Caitlin Flora  
Interim Downtown Development Authority Director Jennifer Finney

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Councilmember Patterson moved to approve the Agenda  
Seconded by Councilmember Baker  
Ayes: Black, Gavin, Patterson, Baker and Dean  
Nays: None  
Absent: Hennen and Vilani  
Motion Approved.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Jason Benedict, Berkley, spoke in favor of lower parking minimums.

Bob Sutherland, Berkley, commended the Department of Public Works and Emily Loomis, City Building Official.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Mayor Pro Tem Gavin moved to approve the following Consent Agenda  
Seconded by Councilmember Baker

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** Matter of approving the minutes of the 40th Regular City Council meeting on Monday, February 24, 2025.

**ORDINANCE NO. O-01-25:** Matter of approving the second reading and adoption of an ordinance of the City Council of the City of Berkley, Michigan to Amend Article II, Collection and Disposal of Chapter 58, Garbage, Rubbish, and Refuse of the City of Berkley Code of Ordinances to clarify requirements for containers for garbage versus rubbish and to clarify pick-up times for emptied garbage and rubbish containers.

**PROCLAMATION NO. P-03-25:** Matter of receiving a proclamation recognizing Michael McGuinness for his years of service and dedication to the Berkley Downtown Development Authority.

Ayes: Gavin, Patterson, Baker, Black and Dean  
Nays: None  
Absent: Hennen and Vilani  
Motion Approved.

**REGULAR AGENDA**

**RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS:** Matter of receiving any recognitions or presentations from the Consent Agenda.

City Councilmember Steve Baker read P-03-25 in entirety.

Desiree Dutcher presented Mr. McGuinness with a photo album showcasing his success in Berkley on behalf of the Downtown Development Advisory board members.

Mr. McGuinness said that this is a great honor. He gave credit to the DDA team and the business owners who contributed so much. He said thank you from the bottom of his heart to Council and city staff. He thanked everyone who makes downtown Berkeley so special.

**PRESENTATION:** Matter of receiving a presentation on Ready to Serve You at [www.berkeleymi.gov](http://www.berkeleymi.gov).

Director Flora presented regarding the new City website, [www.berkeleymi.gov](http://www.berkeleymi.gov).

- Berkeleymi.gov was launched on February 8, 2025
  - Reflects updated branding
  - Easier to find what you need at your fingertips
- Moving to a .gov domain
  - Helps identify official, trusted information
  - Only verified government organizations can use .gov
  - Increases security and searchability
- Ongoing improvements
  - Relying on the community to share what they need or can't find
  - After this initial launch period, each department will share their updates on a monthly basis. Ultimately hoping to move to bimonthly or even quarterly department updates
- Feedback requested
  - Please utilize the form at the top of the home page or bottom of every page!
  - You may also email [communications@berkeleymi.gov](mailto:communications@berkeleymi.gov) to share more detailed feedback

**MOTION NO. M-06-25:** Matter of denying a special land use request from applicant, Christina DelPizzo, as it does not meet the standards in Section 138-653, specifically that 'Standard 4: the proposed use is designed so that the public health, safety and welfare shall be protected' is not met based on the fact that there is insufficient room for off-street parking and drop-off of children and insufficient room for off-street employee parking for this unique property, which as a corner lot has a shallow driveway and is near to the narrow street on the front side.

Mayor Pro Tem Gavin moved to approve Motion No. M-06-25

Seconded by Councilmember Black

Ayes: Patterson, Baker, Black, Gavin and Dean

Nays: None

Absent: Hennen and Vilani

Motion Approved.

**MOTION NO. M-08-25:** Matter of approving the appointment to various boards and commissions.

Councilmember Patterson moved to approve Motion No. M-08-25

Seconded by Councilmember Baker

Ayes: Baker, Black, Gavin, Patterson and Dean

Nays: None

Absent: Hennen and Vilani

Motion Approved.

**MOTION NO. M-09-25:** Matter of accepting the quarter ended December 31, 2024 budget-to-actual report.

Mayor Pro Tem Ross Gavin moved to approve Motion No. M-09-25

Seconded by Councilmember Patterson

Ayes: Black, Gavin, Patterson, Baker and Dean

Nays: None

Absent: Hennen and Vilani

Motion Approved.

**RESOLUTION NO. R-02-25:** Matter of authorizing amendment 2025-3 of the 2024/25 fiscal year budget as presented.

Mayor Pro Tem Gavin moved to approve Resolution No. R-02-25

Seconded by Councilmember Baker

Ayes: Gavin, Patterson, Baker, Black and Dean

Nays: None

Absent: Hennen and Vilani

Motion Approved.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

**COUNCILMEMBER PATTERSON**

- Wished everyone a Happy March.
- No other updates.

**MAYOR PRO TEM GAVIN**

- For the Parks & Rec Advisory Board, registration for winter 2 programs is ongoing and available on the recreation registration site, accessible by using the City website and clicking on Parks & Rec Programs under the sign up on the main page. Registration for spring break vacation camp is open; the camp runs from Monday, March 24<sup>th</sup> through Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup>. Registration is available online. The next meeting of the Parks & Rec Advisory Board will be on Wednesday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM at the Community Center.
- The Library Board will next meet on Wednesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at 7 PM at the Library.

**COUNCILMEMBER BAKER:**

- For the Downtown Development Authority: they are currently passing the baton. Congratulated Mr. McGuinness and welcomed Ms. Finney. He said that we are in good hands with Ms. Finney and we are pleased to have her back as we search for the permanent person for the position. For information about events and upcoming activities downtown, visit [downtownberkeley.com](http://downtownberkeley.com). The DDA board will next meet on Wednesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>.
- The Historical Committee will next meet on Tuesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>. He said there is still time to visit the memories of 12 Mile exhibit currently on display in the Berkley Historical Museum. It features photos and memories across 12 Mile from the 1920s to the 2000s. For more information on that and other cool historical tidbits, visit them at [berkeleyhistory.com](http://berkeleyhistory.com).
- It was Albert Einstein who once said, "Know where to find the information and how to use it. That's the secret of success." He said he offers that as some very important information at the federal level is being rejected or purged. He said that the CDC has significantly cut back on sharing important health and disease information and purged all of their LGBTQIA+ information, health equity, social vulnerabilities and things like that. Meanwhile, diseases don't care who is in charge: the measles, COVID and the bird flu are continuing to pick up; there is 70 cases of bird flu in humans as close as Ohio, with one fatality. He urged that everyone does their best to stay informed; there are resources out there that you can seek out, like the Mayo Clinic, [healthline.com](http://healthline.com), [yourlocalepidemiologist.com](http://yourlocalepidemiologist.com) (sends newsletters twice a week). He said that as we see access to information is being curtailed, part of being an informed electorate is to be aware of what's going on to take care of and protect our families.
- Hug someone you love.

**COUNCILMEMBER BLACK**

- Committee for Engagement and Transparency will next meet on Wednesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Congratulated Director Flora and saluted Mr. McGuinness.
- He said that he very blessed to be able to serve this nation as a soldier and one of the things he has noticed, especially while he was at Fort Bragg for training where wildfires have swept through both North Carolina and South Carolina, is don't let the best of us come out at the worst times. It shouldn't take the worst things to bring us together; we can do that every day. He said that if you think about the wildfires in LA and the flooding that hit Southwest Detroit, people do a great job of coming together when things are at their worst. He said that it's always amazing to see but also heartbreaking that it takes that. He said Councilmember Baker always says to hug someone you love, but maybe right now it's hug someone that you don't. He encouraged everyone to continue to do what we do so well in this community: be engaged. Be engaged next door, down the street, across the street. When you see communities that have no choice but to rely on each other you really do see what the community is about.

**CITY MANAGER VANVLECK**

- Councilmember Hennen is out sick today but still engaged at home. Thanked him for his valuable feedback.
- The informal group for the Dorothea pilot pocket park closure will meet on March 13<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM at Coffee & Bark. It's open to anyone who wants to participate in that discussion and help brainstorm what that would look like.

**CITY ATTORNEY ANN CHRIST**

- No update.

**MAYOR DEAN**

- Said she attended the grand reopening of TLG Fitness, in the former home of Zoom Room. She said that the owner has created such an incredible space and community; she has all kinds of classes to choose from. She is affirmative and a great coach and we are so fortunate to have such an activated and engaging business in our city. Check out classes online to see if there's a class you'd like to dip a toe into.
- Said she performed a marriage ceremony on Friday; she said the couple was absolutely adorable. She said that she and her husband, Mike, are celebrating their 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary on March 9<sup>th</sup>. She

said that's a very long time and it made her think that life takes all kinds of twists and turns and at the end of the day you can ride the waves and meet those challenges, not that it's easy. Wished a happy anniversary to Mike Dean and best wishes to the happy couple.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Councilmember Patterson moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 8:40 PM  
Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gavin  
Ayes: Baker, Black, Gavin, Patterson and Dean  
Nays: None  
Absent: Hennen and Vilani  
Motion Approved.

---

Bridget Dean, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

---

Victoria Mitchell, City Clerk