

**THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE FORTIETH COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BERKLEY, MICHIGAN WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 7 PM ON MONDAY, MAY 19, 2025 BY MAYOR DEAN**

**PRESENT:** Councilmember Steve Baker                      Councilmember Clarence Black  
Mayor Pro Tem Ross Gavin                      Councilmember Dennis Hennen  
Councilmember Jessica Vilani  
Mayor Bridget Dean  
**ABSENT:** Councilmember Gregory Patterson

**OTHER STAFF PRESENT:**

City Manager Crystal VanVleck  
City Attorney Dan Christ  
City Clerk Victoria Mitchell  
Deputy City Manager of Public Services Shawn Young  
Community Development Director Kristen Kapelanski  
Deputy Finance Director Amy Zurawski  
Interim Downtown Development Authority Executive Director Jennifer Finney  
Emergency Manager Jack Blanchard

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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

Councilmember Black stated he is an officer of the Army and will be leaving us for deployment to an undisclosed location. It is the highest honor to lead the men and women of the U.S. Army. They are going to harm's way, so prayers are welcome, but don't feel bad for him, this is what he is trained for and what he loves to do. He will deploy for nine months to a year, but Public Safety does this every day of the year. He intends to be a contributing member of the Council, but he doesn't know. This will be his second-to-last meeting. He and his wife have four wonderful teenagers that she has to deal with, and maybe he gets the best end of the deal. He stated that his wife has been doing this for 20+ years, although she understands, please support her. He is going to miss the majority of his kids' senior year. He looks forward to coming back safely and serving.

Mayor Dean said he will be in all that prays' hands.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Muthu Veerappan, Big Law LLC, Auburn Hills, introduced himself to Council and stated that he had submitted a proposal for attorney services.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Councilmember Baker moved to approve the following Consent Agenda  
Seconded by Councilmember Black

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** Matter of approving the minutes of the 40th Regular City Council meeting on Monday, May 5, 2025; the Special Work Session on Monday, May 5, 2025; and the Special City Council Budget Work Sessions on Monday, April 28, 2025 and Tuesday, April 29, 2025.

**WARRANT LIST:** Matter of approving Warrant List No.1410.

**ORDINANCE NO. O-06-25:** Matter of approving the Second Reading and Adoption of an ordinance of the City Council of the City of Berkley, Michigan to add Article III, Workforce Housing PILOT to Chapter 114 Taxation, of the City of Berkley Code of Ordinances to provide for approval of an exemption from ad valorem property taxes for housing being developed or rehabilitated for workforce housing for persons and families whose household income is not greater than 120% of area median income, as authorized by provisions of the State Housing Development Authority Act of 1966, Public Act 346 of 1966. MCL 125.1401, et seq.

**RESOLUTION NO. R-06-25:** Matter of approving a resolution of the Council of the City of Berkley, Michigan authorizing the Decertification of Local Roadways.

**MOTION NO. M-32-25:** Matter of approving the Southeastern Oakland County Public Works Association joint and cooperative agreement.

**RESOLUTION NO. R-07-25:** Matter of approving participation in the "Tie Michigan Teal" campaign to promote awareness of ovarian cancer and its symptoms.

**PROCLAMATION NO. P-19-25:** Matter of proclaiming June 2025 as LGBTQIA+ Pride Month.

**PROCLAMATION NO. P-20-25:** Matter of proclaiming June 19, 2025 as Juneteenth Celebration Day.

**PROCLAMATION NO. P-21-25:** Matter of proclaiming June 6, 2025 as National Gun Violence Awareness Day.

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

## ***REGULAR AGENDA***

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

Councilmember Vilani read P-19-25 in its entirety.  
Councilmember Black read P-20-25 in its entirety.

**MOTION NO. M-33-25:** Matter of considering the First Reading for an amendment to the Planned Unit Development previously approved for a multiple-family development on the east side of Coolidge Highway, south of Cambridge Road and north and south of Columbia Road by the applicant, Krieger Klatt Architects on behalf of WJ Ventures LLC, 2465 Columbia, 2475 Columbia, 2468 Columbia, 2476 Columbia, and 2475 Cambridge.

Councilmember Black moved to approve Motion No. M-33-25

Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gavin

Ayes: Hennen, Vilani, Baker, Black, Gavin and Dean

Nays: None

Absent: Patterson

Motion Approved.

Wayne Wudyka, Birmingham, introduced changes made to the project since it was originally approved.

Ray Phillips, Krieger Klatt, went through the presentation reviewing all of the changes that Director Kapelanski discussed previously.

**MOTION NO. M-34-25:** Matter of approving the “Berkley Street Art Fest” event on Saturday, July 12, 2025 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. on Coolidge Highway, between Catalpa and Beverly, for the Berkley Area Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 72-1253. Approval is conditional upon the submission of required items and documents prior to event dates.

Councilmember Vilani moved to approve Motion No. M-34-25

Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gavin

Ayes: Vilani, Baker, Black, Gavin, Hennen and Dean

Nays: None

Absent: Patterson

Motion Approved.

**MOTION NO. M-35-25:** Matter of approving the “Berkley Art Bash” event on Saturday, June 14, 2025 from 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on 12 Mile Road for the Berkley Area Chamber of Commerce, P.O. Box 72-1253. Approval is conditional upon the submission of required items and documents prior to event dates.

Councilmember Vilani moved to approve Motion No. M-35-25

Seconded by Councilmember Black

Ayes: Vilani, Baker, Black, Gavin, Hennen, and Dean

Nays: None

Absent: Patterson

Motion Approved.

**MOTION NO. M-36-25:** Matter of approving a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) event, "Berkley Pride Block Party" on Robina south of 12 Mile Road, on Gardner south of 12 Mile Road, and in the Municipal Parking Lot located between those two roads, on Sunday, June 22, 2025 from 1 to 4 p.m. Approval is conditional upon the submission of required items and documents prior to the event date.

Councilmember Baker moved to approve Motion No. M-36-25

Seconded by Councilmember Vilani

Ayes: Baker, Black, Gavin, Hennen, Vilani, and Dean

Nays: None

Absent: Patterson

Motion Approved.

**PRESENTATION:** Matter of receiving a presentation regarding the 2025/26 FY City Manager proposed budget for the City of Berkley, Michigan.

Crystal VanVleck opened the presentation. She introduced Amy Zurawski, Deputy Finance Director.

Ms. VanVleck said the presentation is an overview and the budget document goes into greater detail which is available on the City's website.

**PUBLIC HEARING:** Matter of holding a public hearing regarding the City Manager proposed 2025/26 FY Budget and supporting tax rates for the City of Berkley, Michigan.

**Public Hearing Opened: 8:58:13**

**Public Hearing Closed: 8:58:21**

**RESOLUTION NO. R-08-25:** Matter of approving a resolution of the Council of the City of Berkley, Michigan approving the 2025/26 through 2030/31 Capital Improvement Plan of the City of Berkley, Michigan.

Mayor Pro Tem Gavin moved to approve Resolution No. R-08-25

Seconded by Councilmember Vilani

Ayes: Black, Gavin, Hennen, Vilani, Baker and Dean

Nays: None  
Absent: Patterson  
Motion Approved.

**RESOLUTION NO. R-09-25:** Matter of approving a resolution of the Council of the City of Berkley, Michigan setting the residential and commercial service fee for the collection and disposal of solid waste, effective July 1, 2025.

Councilmember Hennen moved to approve Resolution No. R-09-25

Seconded by Councilmember Vilani

Ayes: Gavin, Hennen, Vilani, Baker, Black and Dean

Nays: None

Absent: Patterson

Motion Approved.

**RESOLUTION NO. R-10-25:** Matter of approving a resolution of the Council of the City of Berkley, Michigan setting the various rates for water and sewer services, effective July 1, 2025.

Mayor Pro Tem Gavin moved to approve Resolution No. R-10-25

Seconded by Councilmember Baker

Ayes: Hennen, Vilani, Baker, Black, Gavin and Dean

Nays: None

Absent: Patterson

Motion Approved.

**MOTION NO. M-37-25:** Matter of receiving updates to the City of Berkley Fee Schedule.

Councilmember Hennen moved to approve Motion No. M-37-25

Seconded by Councilmember Black

Ayes: Vilani, Baker, Black, Gavin, Hennen and Dean

Nays: None

Absent: Patterson

Motion Approved.

**RESOLUTION NO. R-11-25:** Matter of approving a resolution of the Council of the City of Berkley, Michigan adopting the annual budget for the fiscal year 2025/26 and acknowledgment of the 2026/27 and 2027/28 budget projections.

Councilmember Baker moved to approve Resolution No. R-11-25

Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gavin

Ayes: Vilani, Baker, Black, Gavin, Hennen and Dean

Nays: None

Absent: Patterson

Motion Approved.

**MOTION NO. M-38-25:** Matter of approving the terms of the second amendment to the City's Ground Lease agreement with AT&T.

Councilmember Hennen moved to approve Motion No. M-38-25

Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gavin

Ayes: Baker, Black, Gavin, Hennen, Vilani and Dean

Nays: None

Absent: Patterson

Motion Approved.

## **COMMUNICATIONS:**

### **COUNCILMEMBER BLACK**

- Reported that the Committee for Engagement and Transparency is working on a comprehensive survey to determine how residents would like to receive communications.
  - Noted that there was no meeting this month, so more information will follow.

#### **COUNCILMEMBER HENNEN**

- The Tree Board will meet on Tuesday, May 27th at 7 PM in the second-floor Public Safety Conference Room.
- The Zoning Board of Appeals has no upcoming meetings.
- Shared that he attended the Michigan Municipal League Summit on Leadership over the weekend and highly recommended it; he was unexpectedly asked to speak at the summit about Berkley's early look at the MML's Thriving Communities Framework and its potential benefits. He reflected that his personal takeaway was the importance of not just sharing facts but also explaining the "why" behind them to be a better communicator. He stated that although he is analytical by nature, he intends to work on the emotional side of communication based on what he learned at the summit.

#### **COUNCILMEMBER BAKER**

- The Historical Committee met on Tuesday, May 13th. He wished everyone a happy Berkley History Month and encouraged visits to the museum. The museum has received a collection of Berkley High School band uniforms, including a mannequin fully dressed in one on display.
  - A Berkley-wide scavenger hunt will run from July 1st to August 31st, with more details forthcoming and great prizes planned.
  - Visit [berkleyhistory.com](http://berkleyhistory.com) for more information.
- The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) met on Wednesday, May 14th in the morning.
  - Shared news about the upcoming Dorothea Pocket Park Project pilot program, which will run from June 14th to July 19th and will close off that street for fun events and activities. He mentioned the project fulfills a long-standing item in the city's master plan for creating more public space.
  - Noted that the Michigan Municipal League will help coordinate a walking tour of the west end of 12 Mile Road in June to explore more placemaking opportunities.
  - Visit [downtownberkley.com](http://downtownberkley.com) for more event information.
- Quoted Malcolm X: "We need more light about each other. Light creates understanding. Understanding creates love. Love creates patience. And patience creates unity." Malcolm X was born on May 19, 1925, along with Grace Jones and André the Giant, who was his favorite wrestler growing up.
  - Listed observances for the day: National Plant Something Day, World Family Doctor Day, Frog Jumping Jubilee Day, and National Elected Officials Day.
- Praised Councilmember Black, calling him an inspirational leader and a great representative for Berkley and the region, and wished him safe travels, a smooth deployment, and a happily uneventful return home.
- Encouraged everyone to hug somebody they love.

#### **MAYOR PRO TEM GAVIN:**

- Reported that the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board will meet June 12th at 7 PM in the Community Center.
- Announced that the Library Board will meet on May 21st at 7 PM at the Library.

#### **COUNCILMEMBER VILANI:**

- The Environmental Advisory Committee's Native Plant Sale will be from 10 AM to 2 PM on June 1st at the Community Center.
- The Berkley Area Chamber will hold a Chamber Chat with the Royal Oak Leprechauns on Coolidge at 8:30 AM on June 20th, open to all.
- Highlighted the upcoming Berkley Art Bash and encouraged people to vote in the Berkley Has Heart Photography Contest.

- Reminded everyone that the Street Art Festival is on July 12th and that chalk artist registration is still open.
- Thanked Councilmember Clarence Black, referring to him as both a colleague and a friend, and expressed her appreciation for his service on the Council and to the country.

**CITY MANAGER VANVLECK:**

- Encouraged community members and stakeholders to volunteer for Downtown Development Authority (DDA) committees, including Business Improvement, Design, Organization and Development, and Marketing and Promotion. She directed interested individuals to contact DDA Director Jennifer Finney.
- Provided an update on Human Resources: the HR Director has been busy filling vacant and seasonal positions due to retirements, internal moves, and resignations. She also mentioned the upcoming employee healthcare open enrollment period at the end of June and praised the HR Director's positive impact on the organization.
- Planning is underway for the Dorothea Pilot Pocket Park, scheduled from June 18th to July 19th. She shared that the street closure will coincide with the Art Bash weekend, and DPW will assist with logistics. Volunteers and summer camp kids will help design and paint the space, with a soft opening and kickoff likely on June 21st. She invited the public to submit creative ideas for programming in the park, and encouraged musicians or anyone with ideas to contact city staff.

**CITY ATTORNEY CHRIST:**

- Reported that the city's final Michigan Tax Tribunal matter was resolved the prior week. He explained that the property owner had been seeking a \$500,000 reduction in taxable value, but it was resolved for a much smaller amount. He stated that the resolution was achieved in coordination with Oakland County Equalization and that there are now no pending tribunal matters.

**MAYOR DEAN:**

- Shared that she attended the National League of Cities Risk Conference in Clearwater, Florida, as part of her duties as a trustee for the Michigan Municipal League Workers Comp Fund. She said she enjoyed one-and-a-half days of Florida weather before attending full-day conference sessions, while her husband enjoyed the entire stay. She expressed appreciation for the Michigan Municipal League for the opportunity.
- Explained that Council Member Patterson was absent because his mother is in ICU in Port Huron, though stable and expected to return home in a few days.
- Addressed Councilmember Black directly, acknowledging that he has done and can do hard things, and commended his service both to the community and the country. She reiterated that it was "see you later, not goodbye" and noted there would be time to connect before his departure.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Councilmember Vilani moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 9:28 PM

Seconded by Councilmember Black

Ayes: Gavin, Hennen, Vilani, Baker, Black and Dean

Nays: None

Absent: Patterson

Motion Approved.

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Bridget Dean, Mayor

**ATTEST:**

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Victoria Mitchell, City Clerk

