

Roll Call

A regular meeting of the Kalamazoo City Commission was held on Monday, November 20, 2023 at 5:02 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers at City Hall.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Mayor David Anderson
Vice Mayor Don Cooney
Qianna Decker
Jeanne Hess
Stephanie Hoffman
Esteven Juarez
Chris Praedel

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

None

Also present were City Manager Jim Ritsema, City Attorney Aaron Leal, and City Clerk Scott Borling.

2023-43-01

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Hoffman, seconded by Commissioner Juarez, moved to approve the minutes from the City Commission meetings on June 5, June 20, July 5, July 17, August 7, August 21, September 5, September 18, October 2, and October 16, 2023. With a voice vote this motion passed.

Commissioner
Comments

Mayor Anderson gave members of the 54th City Commission the opportunity to make final comments and remarks.

Commissioner Decker expressed excitement at getting to work with the new City Commission. Commissioner Decker stated she was sad to see Commissioner Juarez leave.

Commissioner Praedel thanked his wife and children for supporting him in his work as a City Commissioner. Commissioner Praedel thanked Commissioner Juarez for his service and stated he was sad to see him go off the Commission.

Commissioner Hoffman offered remarks about Commissioner Juarez and his focus on community. Commissioner Hoffman encouraged Commissioner Juarez and stated she would continue to work with him.

Commissioner Hess stated the 54th City Commission had many successes, but there was still much work to do. Commissioner Hess stated Commissioner Juarez's work was just beginning.

Vice Mayor Cooney noted he had worked with Commissioner Juarez for a long time, and he thanked Commissioner Juarez for being a voice for the voiceless.

Commissioner Juarez stated this moment was bittersweet, and he thanked the community for giving him the opportunity to serve. Commissioner Juarez spoke about the need for a person to change themselves before trying to change others. Commissioner Juarez urged Commissioners to focus on doing what was right rather than who was right. Commissioner Juarez stated God had put Commissioner Wilson in this position for a reason.

Mayor Anderson stated Commissioner Juarez's transition off the City Commission was a change, not an end. Mayor Anderson observed there were leaders all over the City serving their community, and this work was not driven by the City Commission.

City Clerk Borling presented the following report from the Kalamazoo County Board of Canvassers:

The Kalamazoo County Board of Canvassers has certified the following results from the Municipal Election held on November 7, 2023: having received 7,080 votes, David Anderson was elected Mayor; having received 5,797 votes, Jeanne Hess was elected City Commissioner and is, by charter, the Vice-Mayor; having received 5,343 votes, Chris Praedel was elected City Commissioner; and having received 4,783 votes, Alonzo Wilson II was elected City Commissioner.

The report of the Board of Canvassers was received into the record.

At 5:16 p.m. Mayor Anderson adjourned the meeting *sine die*.

City Clerk Borling administered the Constitutional Oath of Office to newly elected City Commissioners Alonzo Wilson II and Chris Praedel; newly elected Vice Mayor Jeanne Hess; and newly elected Mayor David Anderson.

Prior to taking the oath of office, each newly elected official was given the opportunity to have a friend or loved one present to them and affix a pin bearing the City Seal.

At 5:25 p.m. Mayor Anderson called to order the first meeting of the 55th City Commission of the City of Kalamazoo.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Mayor David Anderson
Vice Mayor Jeanne Hess
Don Cooney
Qianna Decker
Stephanie Hoffman
Chris Praedel
Alonzo Wilson

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

Also present were City Manager Jim Ritsema, City Attorney Aaron Leal, and City Clerk Scott Borling.

The invocation, given by Pastor Greg Jennings, Sr. from Progressive Deliverance Ministries, was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor Anderson recognized the presence of State Representative Julie Rogers.

Vice Mayor Cooney read a proclamation *Honoring Esteven Juarez for Dedication and Service to the City of Kalamazoo*. Mayor Anderson presented Commissioner Juarez with a framed copy of the proclamation.

State Representative Julie Rogers presented a special tribute to Commissioner Juarez signed by herself, State Representative Christine Morse, State Senator Sean McCann, Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist, and Governor Gretchen Whitmer.

2023-43-02

Report of the Board of Canvassers

Adjournment *Sine Die*

Oath of Office Ceremony

Call to Order and
Roll Call – 55th City
Commission

Invocation

Introduction of Guests

2023-43-03

Proclamations and
Tributes

	Commissioner Juarez spoke about God's relationship to time and stated he was seeking God's direction for his life. Commissioner Juarez stated God was pleased with his efforts as a City Commissioner.
Adoption of the Agenda	By unanimous consent, the City Commission adopted its meeting agenda as presented.
Public Comments	Next, when an opportunity was given for general public comments, the following people addressed the City Commission: <u>In-Person Comments</u> Jane Ghosh, President and CEO of Discover! Kalamazoo, thanked Commissioner Juarez for his service and stated Discover! Kalamazoo was looking forward to working with the new City Commission. Ms. Ghosh invited Commissioners to the Discover! Kalamazoo annual meeting. Dean Thomas congratulated Commissioners on their re-election. Mr. Thomas suggested the City remove the Black Lives Matter mural on Rose Street because the organization supported Hamas. Jim Sullivan, non-resident, introduced himself as Vice Mayor Hess's brother and stated their parents would have been proud of her. Mr. Sullivan stated his late husband had served on the East Lansing City Council, and he would have been proud of Vice Mayor Hess too. <u>Call-In Comments</u> Kay criticized the City Commission and Mayor Anderson for not addressing the housing crisis and other issues in the City.
City Commissioner Comments	Finally, an opportunity was given for miscellaneous comments from City Commissioners. Commissioner Cooney responded to Mr. Thomas and stated the Black Lives Matter mural was not an endorsement of an organization but an affirmation that black lives do matter. Commissioner Cooney expressed support for the mural. Commissioner Praedel welcomed Commissioner Wilson and offered his support and assistance. Commissioner Decker welcomed Commissioner Wilson. Mayor Anderson expressed support for the Black Lives Matter mural and stated it was the result of community-based leadership.
Adjournment	The meeting adjourned at 5:52 p.m. Scott A. Borling City Clerk Approved by the City Commission on: _____

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