

Roll Call

A neighborhood meeting of the Kalamazoo City Commission was held on Monday, September 18, 2018 at 6:00 p.m. at Hays Park, 2001 Miller Road.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

Mayor Bobby J. Hopewell
Vice Mayor Don Cooney
David Anderson
Erin Knott
Matt Milcarek
Shannon Sykes
Jack Urban

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

None

Communications

Also present were City Manager Jim Ritsema, City Attorney Clyde Robinson, and City Clerk Scott Borling.

An opportunity was given for miscellaneous communications, but no communications were offered.

Neighborhood Communications

Neighborhood communications were received next.

Representatives from the following neighborhood associations were present and addressed the City Commission:

Eastside Neighborhood Association

Mike Seals, Board President
April Ouweleen, Board Vice President
Pat Taylor, Executive Director

Vine Neighborhood Association

Steve Walsh, Executive Director

Eastside Neighborhood Association

The Eastside Neighborhood Association representatives:

- reported on a number of summer activities and stated the Association was able to accomplish more this summer compared to previous years due to effective partnerships and collaborations with other organizations.
- distributed copies of the September/October 2017 edition of the Association newsletter.
- stated the Association had a new Vice President and Secretary.
- reported the Association had experienced success at renting out the neighborhood center.
- commented on the exciting initiatives around the City that were coming out of Imagine Kalamazoo 2025.
- recognized Thomas Andrews, former Director of ONEplace at the Kalamazoo Public Library, who recently passed away.

The Vine Neighborhood Association representative:

- commended the Parks and Recreation Department for their collaborative work with neighborhood residents.
- thanked Community Police Officer Ryan Shank for helping with issues associated with the return of college students for the fall.
- thanked the Parks and Recreation Department for supporting the recent festival in South Westnedge Park.
- reported Read and Write Kalamazoo would be renting the front portion of the Association's building.
- commended Community Planning and Development Director Rebekah Kik and City Planner Christina Anderson for their work on Imagine Kalamazoo 2025.
- indicated many new people were being assimilated into the Neighborhood and reported there were no incidents associated with the first Western Michigan University football game.
- requested diligent enforcement of ordinances affecting residents' quality of life, such as parking and trash violations.

Vine Neighborhood Association

When an opportunity was given for general citizen comments, the following people addressed the City Commission:

Citizen Comments

Keith Hook, City resident, spoke about negative interactions with Public Safety Officers and their failure to address issues.

Belinda Buchanan, City resident, asked why she did not see minority workers on construction jobs in Kalamazoo.

Jerry Hoffman, City resident and President of the Edison Neighborhood Association, welcomed the City Commission and thanked Commissioners for holding a meeting out in the community.

Leon Jones, City resident, thanked the Commission for hosting a meeting outdoors in a City neighborhood. Mr. Jones commented on the number of abandoned buildings in the surrounding area and expressed support for preserving older structures rather than destroying them.

Finally, an opportunity was given for miscellaneous comments by City Commissioners.

Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Urban expressed hope that the comments made during this meeting would reach the appropriate staff members. Commissioner Urban stated there needed to be a balance between restoring and demolishing buildings.

Commissioner
Comments (cont'd)

Vice Mayor Cooney announced the City Commission would be having a work session to discuss the built environment on September 25th. Vice Mayor Cooney thanked Public Safety Chief Hadley for talking with Mr. Hook.

Mayor Hopewell talked about the City's plan to implement a 311 system and encouraged people to contact City staff with questions or concerns rather than waiting to speak at a City Commission meeting. Mayor Hopewell welcomed his mother to the meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 6:29 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Scott A. Borling
City Clerk

For City Commission approval on October 2, 2017

Approved by: _____
Bobby J. Hopewell, Mayor
Dated: October 2, 2017

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