A regular meeting of the Kalamazoo City Commission was held on Monday, February 17, 2025 at 7:01 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers at City Hall.

Roll Call

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.

Invocation

The invocation, given by Chaplain Michael Kemple from Missional Chaplains, was followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Proclamation
2025-08-01

Vice Mayor Hess read a proclamation entitled *Friendship Village 50th Anniversary*. Tim Cain, Executive Director of Friendship Village, received the proclamation.

Adoption of the Agenda

By unanimous consent the City Commission adopted its meeting agenda with the following changes:

> Commissioner Praedel requested that Item G-1, construction engineering contract for the Westnedge (Vine to Michigan) project be moved to the Regular Agenda.
>
> Commissioner Hoffman requested that Item G-5, authorization to release the draft *2025-2029 Consolidated Plan* and *2025 Action Plan* for public comment, be moved to the Regular Agenda.

Public Comments

Next, when an opportunity was given for general public comments, the following people addressed the City Commission:

> Ryan Smith, City resident and Co-Chair of the Southwest Michigan Chapter of the Democratic Socialists of America, regarding the needs of the unhoused and the status of the downtown public restroom project.
>
> Ray Sweany, City resident, regarding funding for the homeless in the City's 2025 budget and the importance of the USAID program.
>
> Tina McClinton, City resident, regarding call-in public comments and flooding in the Southtown neighborhood.
>
> Caleb Leonard, City resident, regarding President Trump's executive orders and their potential impact on the City's federal funding.
>
> Amanda Charbonneau, City resident, distributed socks to Commissioners and asked them to personally give the socks to the unhoused.
>
> Jerry Herman, non-resident and Co-Chair of the Democratic Socialists of America, regarding the resources available to the unhoused in Kalamazoo.

Public Comments (cont'd)

Angela Manning, non-resident, regarding Judy Lowery and her methods for helping the unhoused.

Amy Boley, non-resident, regarding federal tax policy, the housing crisis, and homelessness.

David Burkey, City resident, regarding the need for more shelters for the unhoused.

Quincy Ellis, City resident, regarding homelessness and Judy Lowrey.

Todd Price, City resident, regarding his experience being homeless.

Crystal Coy, City resident and affiliated with Kalamazoo for the Unhoused, regarding Judy Lowrey.

Patrick White, regarding his experience of being unhoused and Judy Lowrey.

Ian, a non-resident, regarding homelessness and the downtown public restroom project.

Charles Hannah, City resident, regarding his efforts to help the unhoused.

Shona Espinoza, City resident, regarding the need for 24-hour wrap around services to help the unhoused with mental health issues.

Drew Duncan, City resident, regarding the housing crisis in Kalamazoo and the mental health needs of the unhoused.

Kyle Patenaude, City resident, regarding the need for more transitional housing and low-barrier shelters and the downtown public restroom project.

Consent Agenda

Consent Agenda items were presented as follows with a recommendation to approve the items and authorize the City Manager to sign all related documents on behalf of the city:

- approval of an annual renewal agreement with Rapid7 for Vulnerability Management and Insight Intrusion Detection and Response software services through the MiDeal Cooperative Purchasing Program in the amount of $129,846. **2025-08-02**

- approval of a professional service agreement with Viridis for Arcadia Creek Festival Place architectural services in the amount of $609,000. **2025-08-03**

- approval of a contract supplemental and change order with USP Technologies for 2025 Pri-Tech Odor Control Services in the amount of $627,000. **2025-08-04**

- approval of a Youth Mobility Fund Project Services Agreement with Kalamazoo Public Schools and the Central County Transportation Authority to fund bus fare and administrative costs for students in Kalamazoo Public Schools, grades 9 through 12. **2025-08-05**

2025-08-06

- acceptance of Michigan Commission on Law Enforcement Standards Continuing Professional Education Funds to provide required law enforcement training in the amount of $343,500.

2025-08-07

- approval of the appointment of **Erin Adams** to the Kalamazoo Municipal Golf Association Board of Directors for a term expiring on January 1, 2028.

Commissioner Cooney, seconded by Commissioner Hoffman, moved to approve the consent agenda requests and authorize the City Manager to sign all related documents on behalf of the City.

With a roll call vote this motion passed 7-0.

AYES: Commissioners Cooney, Decker, Hoffman, Praedel, Wilson, Vice Mayor Hess, Mayor Anderson

NAYS: None

Regular Agenda

Regular Agenda items were considered next.

2025-08-08
Contract for Well Drilling at Pumping Stations 5 and 14

Public Services Director James Baker provided an overview of the installation of drinking water production wells at Water Pumping Stations 5 and 14.

Commissioner questions: none

Public comments: none

Commissioner Praedel, seconded by Vice Mayor Hess, moved to approve a professional service agreement with Peerless Midwest for the installation of drinking water production wells at Water Pumping Stations No. 5 and No. 14 in the amount of $1,292,750.

With a roll call vote this motion passed 7-0.

AYES: Commissioners Cooney, Decker, Hoffman, Praedel, Wilson, Vice Mayor Hess, Mayor Anderson

NAYS: None

2025-08-09
Resolution 25-09 Establishing the City Center Neighborhood Enterprise Zone

Assistant City Planner Bobby Durkee reviewed the proposed Neighborhood Enterprise Zone for the property bounded by East Michigan Avenue, South Edwards Street, East South Street, and Portage Street.

Commissioner Questions: none

Public Comments: none

Commissioner Decker, seconded by Commissioner Wilson, moved to adopt a **RESOLUTION** establishing a Neighborhood Enterprise Zone between East Michigan Avenue, South Edwards Street, East South Street, and Portage Street.

With a roll call vote this motion passed 7-0.

AYES: Commissioners Cooney, Decker, Hoffman, Praedel, Wilson, Vice Mayor Hess, Mayor Anderson

NAYS: None

2025-08-10
Contract for Engineering Services for the Westnedge Avenue Project (Vine to Michigan)

City Manager Ritsema introduced a professional service agreement with Wightman & Associates for construction engineering services for the Westnedge (Vine To Michigan) project in the amount of $115,500.

Commissioner Questions:

Director Baker responded to Commissioners' questions regarding the scope of this project compared to the 2024 Westnedge Avenue project; the project timeline; the status of maintenance work and funding related to the jurisdictional transfer of streets from the state in 2017; and the plan for outreach to affected businesses prior to the start of the 2025 construction season.

Public Comments: none

Commissioner Cooney, seconded by Vice Mayor Hess, moved to approve a professional service agreement with Wightman & Associates for construction engineering services for the Westnedge (Vine To Michigan) project in the amount of $115,500.

With a roll call vote this motion passed 7-0.

AYES: Commissioners Cooney, Decker, Hoffman, Praedel, Wilson, Vice Mayor Hess, Mayor Anderson

NAYS: None

2025-08-11
Release of the 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan and 2025 Action Plan for Public Comment

City Manager Ritsema introduced a request for the City Commission to authorize the release of the draft 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan and 2025 Action Plan for public comment.

Commissioner Questions:

Compliance Specialist Julie Johnston responded to Commissioners' questions regarding opportunities and tools for the public to give input on the plans; contingency plans for the potential elimination of the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and its funding; methods for community outreach about the plans; and whether the plans would be available in Spanish.

Public Comments:

Amanda Charbonneau, City resident, regarding ways to promote and publicize the draft plans and the public comment period.

Commissioner Hoffman, seconded by Commissioner Wilson, moved to authorize the release of the draft 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan, which included the Program Year 2025 Action Plan, for a 30-day public comment period to begin on March 3, 2025 and end on April 1, 2025.

2025-08-11
Release of the 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan and 2025 Action Plan for Public Comment (cont'd)

With a roll call vote this motion passed 6-0 with one abstention.

AYES: Commissioners Cooney, Decker, Hoffman, Wilson, Vice Mayor Hess, Mayor Anderson

NAYS: None

ABSTAIN: Commissioner Praedel

City Manager's Report

City Manager Ritsema provided an update on the downtown public restroom project; announced that enrollment for the Rx Kids program was open; and announced four public meetings in March for the Plan It! phase of Imagine Kalamazoo 2035 (IK 2035).

Management Services Director and Chief Financial Officer Steve Vicenzi discussed the City's exposure in the face of a potential loss of federal funds. Director Vicenzi reported the City received approximately $120 million in federal grants, of which $100 million was for street and water system improvements.

Commissioner Comments

Next, an opportunity was given for miscellaneous comments from City Commissioners.

Commissioner Cooney spoke out against mass deportations and cuts in federal funding.

Commissioner Hoffman spoke about the need for creative City action to meet the needs of the unhoused today, rather than waiting for someone else to address housing issues.

Mayor Anderson offered remarks on the death of Dean Houck, owner of the Michigan News Agency.

Closed Session

Commissioner Cooney, seconded by Commissioner Decker, moved that the City Commission go into closed session to discuss an attorney-client privileged communication.

Prior to a vote on the motion, Mayor Anderson announced the City Commission would not be returning to open session.

With a roll call vote the motion passed 7-0.

AYES: Commissioners Cooney, Decker, Hoffman, Praedel, Wilson, Vice Mayor Hess, Mayor Anderson

NAYS: None

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Scott A. Borling
City Clerk

Approved by the City Commission on: ____________________________

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