

City of Kalamazoo
PLANNING COMMISSION
Meeting Minutes
September 4, 2025
FINAL

Members Present: Christine Dascenzo; Michelle Audette-Bauman; Mitchell Curtiss; Thomas Kostrzewa; Wendell Tolber

Members Excused: Zack Wilson; Jennifer Swan; Brian Pittelko

City Staff: Bobby Durkee, Assistant City Planner; Beth Cheeseman, Executive Administrative Assistant; Charlie Bear, Assistant City Attorney

A. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Commissioner Curtiss called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Planner Durkee proceeded with roll call and determined there was a quorum.

B. ADOPTION OF FORMAL AGENDA

Commissioner Curtiss confirmed with Planner Durkee that there were no changes to the agenda. The September 4, 2025 agenda was accepted by consensus as presented.

C. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Audette-Bauman, seconded by Commissioner Kostrzewa, moved approval of the July 9, 2025 minutes as presented. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

D. COMMUNICATIONS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

E. PUBLIC HEARINGS

None.

F. DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEMS

1. Recommendation from the interview committee on candidate, Roland Bissonnette, to fill the vacant Planning Commissioner seat.

Commissioner Curtiss stated that he and Commissioner Tolber interviewed the candidate. Planner Durkee asked them to share their thoughts and perspective on the recommendation. He explained that the Planning Commission’s recommendation would go on to the City Commission. Planner Durkee intended to put the candidate recommendation on the September 15 City Commission agenda. If the candidate was approved,

he would conduct an orientation session with him and the vacancy could be filled for the October Planning Commission meeting. Planner Durkee added that he thought Mr. Bissonnette was a great candidate.

Commissioner Tolber thought Mr. Bissonnette embodied much of what is in the Master Plan and the values of Kalamazoo. His experience aligns with that as well. Commissioner Curtiss believed the candidate's heart was in right place and that he would make a great addition to the Commission. Commissioner Kostrzewa added that he knows Mr. Bissonnette very well; he was a former student. Mr. Bissonnette has a tremendous amount of experience in the world; he's been very active. He is also articulate, accurate, and not afraid to speak his opinion.

Commissioner Tolber, seconded by Commissioner Kostrzewa, made a motion to recommend Roland Bissonnette to the City Commission to fill the vacant Planning Commissioner position.

A roll call vote was taken, and the motion passed unanimously.

G. REPORTS:

1. City Planner's Report

Planner Durkee Asked Commissioner Curtiss to give an update about the partners meeting for IK 2035. Commissioner Curtiss said the process is moving forward. He said he is looking forward to a draft of stated values and goals coming soon. When those are published on the website, the Planning Commission will look at those. That is what they will hold as their criteria for voting once the Master Plan is adopted.

2. Site Plan List

Planner Durkee gave a brief update about the list.

H. PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Commissioner Curtiss gave the number for call-in comments.

There were no in-person or call-in comments.

I. CITY COMMISSION LIAISON COMMENTS

Commissioner Praedel gave an update on the City Manager search process. He shared that the subcommittee meets every week. The job was posted nationwide. Commissioner Praedel stated that within the first week of the job being posted, there were 14 applicants which increased to healthy pool of 20 applicants. Commissioner Praedel spoke about surveys, community group hosted input sessions, and a meet and greet on Tuesday, October 14 at the Catalyst Center from 5:00-6:30pm. He said they will

conduct finalist interviews on October 15 at 4:00pm, which can be watched online. The public can comment at that meeting. A decision on candidates will be made on October 20.

Dr. Kostrzewa asked if there were a predetermined number of finalists. Commissioner Praedel said there are typically three to five final candidates.

J. MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS BY PLANNING COMMISSIONERS

Congratulations to Commissioner Tolber on a new baby!

K. ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Curtiss adjourned the meeting at 7:11 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Christina Anderson,
City Planner
Community Planning & Economic Development