



Agenda: Battle Creek City Commission

Meeting Date: July 21, 2026 - 7:00 PM
Location: City Commission Chambers
Chair: Mayor Mark A. Behnke
Title: Battle Creek City Hall - City Commission Chambers - 3rd Floor

INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Comm. O'Donnell.

ROLL CALL

City Commission

Mayor Mark Behnke

Commissioner Jessica LaCosse

Commissioner Jenasia Morris

Commissioner Paige Katsarsky-Smith

Commissioner Patrick O'Donnell

Commissioner Carla Reynolds

Commissioner Jim Lance

Commissioner Chris Simmons, attending
remotely

Absent: Vice Mayor Sherry Sofia

City Staff

Amanda Zimmerlin, City Manager

Marcie Gillette, Assistant City Manager

Shannon Bagley, Police Chief

William Kim, City Attorney

Victoria Houser, City Clerk

Bush McCarthy, Fire Chief

Aaron Kuhn, Revenue Services Director

Chad Frein, IT Director

Jason Francisco, Community Services Manager

Darcy Schmitt, Planning Manager

Steve Skalski, Director of Public Works

Helen Guzzo, Community Development
Manager

PROCLAMATIONS AWARDS

Beautiful Battle Creek Awards for July 2026

Mayor Behnke presented the Beautiful Battle Creek Awards.

Random Act of Kindness Certificate - Michele Vogel

Mayor Behnke presented a Certificate to Michele Vogel, recognizing her random act of kindness to prevent further injury to a resident and saving his life.

CHAIR NOTES ADDED OR DELETED RESOLUTIONS

There were no added or deleted resolutions.

PETITIONS COMMUNICATIONS REPORTS

There were no petitions, communications or reports.

PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ANY REMAINING AGENDA ITEMS

Joe Harris expressed opposition to the introduction of ordinance 16-2026, asking the commission to table the ordinance.

Autumn Smith expressed her opinion ordinance 16-2026 was a government overreach and the city benefits from the fines.

John Kenefick commented on the proposed Administrative Hearing Bureau and resolution 437 that was to amend water and sewer rates for surrounding municipalities.

INTRODUCTION OF ORDINANCES

#16-2026 - A Proposed Ordinance, #16-2026, to amend Chapter 298 of the Battle Creek Code of Ordinances to establish an Administrative Hearings Bureau.

THIS RESOLUTION WAS TABLED UNTIL FURTHER COMMISSION DISCUSSION.

Comm. Simmons, noting the City Charter only allowed the Commission to hire a city manager and city attorney, asked if would be appropriate to allow the Commission to hire an independent official.

Attorney Kim confirmed the ordinance proposal was drafted to follow the City Charter, which did not include an allowance for the Commission to hire other city staff or officials.

Mayor Behnke suggested the ordinance introduction be tabled to allow time to establish an ad hoc committee consisting of 4 commissioners and 9 residents chosen by each commissioner.

Comm. Simmons stated he would support a committee, but felt a 13 member committee was onerous, suggesting a smaller number of committee members.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Table

Moved By: Mark Behnke

Supported By: Jessica Lacosse

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Mark Behnke, Patrick O'Donnell, Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, James Lance

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

ADOPTION OF ORDINANCES

426 - A Resolution adopting Ordinance 14-2026 to amend Chapter 1240 Zoning Districts and Map, Chapter 1241 Schedule of Regulations, and Chapter 1250, Section 1250.04 Form-based development standards for T-3, T-4, and T-5 of the zoning code to add a T-6 zoning district that will encompass part of the Lakeview District; specifically, those properties that are currently zoned B-2 and make minor corrections to each Chapter. The new district will include regulations that reflect the recommendations of the Lakeview District Subplan to create a mixed-use walkable district.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Paige Katsarky-Smith

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Mark Behnke, Patrick O'Donnell, Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, James Lance

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

427 - A Resolution adopting Ordinance 15-2026 to rezone 84 parcels located along the Beckley Road Corridor from B-2 Regional Commercial District to T-6 Lakeview Business District.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Paige Katsarky-Smith

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Mark Behnke, Patrick O'Donnell, Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, James Lance

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

COMMISSION COMMENT REGARDING MEETING BUSINESS

There were no Commission comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Paige Katsarky-Smith

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Mark Behnke, Patrick O'Donnell, Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, James Lance

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

Minutes

Minutes for the July 7, 2026 City Commission Regular Meeting

Petitions, Communications, Reports

City Manager's Report for July 21, 2026

Review Committee Meeting Minutes for July 14, 2026

Resolutions

428 - A Resolution reappointing Kara Beer to the Battle Creek Downtown Development Authority.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Paige Katsarky-Smith

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Mark Behnke, Patrick O'Donnell, Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, James Lance

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

429 - A Resolution reappointing Marcie Gillette as a member to the Battle Creek Housing Commission.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Paige Katsarky-Smith

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Mark Behnke, Patrick O'Donnell, Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, James Lance

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

430 - A Resolution reappointing Mark Stephens and Clare Tanner to the Community Oversight Board.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Paige Katsarky-Smith

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Mark Behnke, Patrick O'Donnell, Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, James Lance

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

431 - A Resolution appointing Loraine Smith as the Dangerous Building Hearings Officer.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Paige Katsarky-Smith

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Mark Behnke, Patrick O'Donnell, Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, James Lance

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

432 - A Resolution reappointing Mark Stephens to the Sustainable Battle Creek Committee.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Paige Katsarky-Smith

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Mark Behnke, Patrick O'Donnell, Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, James Lance

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

433 - A Resolution appointing Grace Hernandez to the Post Franklin Neighborhood Planning Council #1.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Paige Katsarky-Smith

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Mark Behnke, Patrick O'Donnell, Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, James Lance

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

434 - A Resolution appointing Rochelle Hatcher to North Central Neighborhood Planning Council #2

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Paige Katsarky-Smith

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Mark Behnke, Patrick O'Donnell, Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, James Lance

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

435 - A Resolution seeking approval for the City of Battle Creek to participate in the funding of the FY 2027 local share cost of the Battle Creek Area Transportation Study.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Paige Katsarky-Smith

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Mark Behnke, Patrick O'Donnell, Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, James Lance

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

436 - A Resolution seeking approval to distribute the proposed Housing Strategy Subplan of the Master Plan for review and comment, pursuant to the Municipal Planning Act (PA 33 of 2008). Upon approval to distribute, the Planning and Zoning staff will send notices to contiguous municipalities and townships, county and regional planning commissions, and utility and railroad companies.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Paige Katsarky-Smith

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Mark Behnke, Patrick O'Donnell, Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, James Lance

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

RESOLUTIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE CONSENT AGENDA

437 - A Resolution Amending Water and Sewer System Rates for Certain Non-City Customers for FY2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, and 2030.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Paige Katsarky-Smith

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Mark Behnke, Patrick O'Donnell, Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, James Lance

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

(Limited to three minutes per individual)

Katherine LaValley, NPC 5 chairperson, expressed concern the area storm sirens were not

working properly. Ms. LaValley also invited everyone to the NPC meeting at Christ United Methodist Church, August 10th, to discuss the future of the church.

Mary Fields commented on potential future uses of Fire Station #3 and boarded up properties in the city. Ms. Fields also congratulated the commission on the success of the ballot proposal for 4-year terms.

Sharlene Van Luven urged realtors to better educate new homeowners of uncapping property values, resulting in tax increases, after a property is purchased.

Autumn Smith invited everyone to the Calhoun County Tea Party Patriots meeting on Thursday, July 23rd at 6:30 at the Base Bar & Grill in Springfield.

Damon Brown requested the Commission review the documents he shared regarding the ARPA grant funds that were designated for his organization.

John Kenefick commented on the rights of property owners, but the actions of city staff and city committees regarding properties.

Reece Adkins thanked the Commission and City Manager for the start of housing construction at the former K-Mart location.

Joe Harris commented on the Commission's power and authority as designated in the City Charter, which does not state they cannot hire an AHB official.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Comm. Simmons advised Ms. Van Luven to appeal the new assessed value of her property with the Board of Review, recommending her realtor help her with comparable property values.

Comm. Simmons, noting he has received many calls about recent high water bills, questioned the new software program and the lack of details on the bills.

Comm. O'Donnell reminded everyone of the important role the NPCs have in the community.

Comm. LaCosse thanked Ms. LaValley for reminding everyone of the issue with the storm notification sirens.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Behnke adjourned the meeting at 7:56 pm.