



Agenda: Battle Creek City Commission

Meeting Date: August 18, 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 Vice Mayor Sofia.

ROLL CALL

City Commission

Mayor Mark Behnke	Commissioner Paige Katsarsky-Smith
Commissioner Jessica LaCosse	Commissioner Jim Lance
Commissioner Jenasia Morris	Commissioner Carla Reynolds
Commissioner Patrick O'Donnell	Vice Mayor Sherry Sofia
Commissioner Christopher Simmons, attending remotely	

City Staff

Amanda Zimmerlin, City Manager	William Kim, City Attorney
Marcie Gillette, Assistant City Manager	Victoria Houser, City Clerk
Jim Martens, Police Captain	Bush McCarthy, Fire Chief

PROCLAMATIONS AWARDS

Beautiful Battle Creek Awards for August 2026

Mayor Behnke presented the Beautiful Battle Creek Awards.

Random Act of Kindness Certificate of Recognition - Chad Curtis, Matthew Curtis, Andy Helmboldt, Marty McKibbin and Cory Vincent

Mayor Behnke presented a Certificate of Recognition for their Random Act of Kindness maintaining the disc golf course at Irving Park.

Random Act of Kindness Certificate of Recognition - Emily Hawkins

Mayor Behnke presented a Certificate of Recognition to Emily Hawkins for her Random Act of Kindness helping to save a dog from danger on the road.

PRESENTATIONS

Interim Financial Statements through June 30, 2026, by Revenue Services Director Aaron Kuhn

Aaron Kuhn, Revenue Services Director, presented the Interim Financial Statements through June 30, 2026.

CHAIR NOTES ADDED OR DELETED RESOLUTIONS

Clerk Houser noted resolution 451 was added to the agenda.

PETITIONS COMMUNICATIONS REPORTS

There were no petitions, communications or reports.

PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ANY REMAINING AGENDA ITEMS

Malik Goodwin, consultant for New Level Sports, commented on resolution 448, regarding the expansion of an after-school childcare program.

Joe Harris commented on resolution 451 regarding House Bill 5123 which references local video franchises.

Autumn Smith commented on resolution 444 regarding committee appointments.

COMMISSION COMMENT REGARDING MEETING BUSINESS

There were no Commission comments.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: Jenasia Morris

Supported By: Patrick O'Donnell

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

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

Minutes

Minutes for the August 11, 2026 City Commission Regular Meeting

Petitions, Communications, Reports

City Manager's Report for August 18, 2026

Review Committee Meeting Minutes for August 11, 2026

Ambulance Report for July 2026

Resolutions

444 - A Resolution appointing Rebecca Parker as a new member and appointing James McGee as an alternate member for the Community Oversight Board.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: Jenasia Morris

Supported By: Patrick O'Donnell

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

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

445 - A Resolution appointing Commissioner Katsarsky-Smith as the City of Battle Creek's official representative and Commissioner LaCosse as the official alternative as the 2026 Annual Business Meeting of the Michigan Municipal League.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: Jenasia Morris

Supported By: Patrick O'Donnell

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

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

446 - A Resolution approving an amendment to the lease agreement with Dimor concerning the WACO Site at the Battle Creek Executive Airport.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: Jenasia Morris

Supported By: Patrick O'Donnell

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

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

RESOLUTIONS NOT INCLUDED IN THE CONSENT AGENDA

447 - A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to execute an agreement between the City of Battle Creek and the Leila Arboretum Society for the provision of educational programming, park stewardship, urban forestry consultation to the City and its citizens, as well as installation and maintenance of the Seasonal Planting Plan and Winter Display for Downtown Battle Creek for FY 2026/2027.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: Jenasia Morris

Supported By: Patrick O'Donnell

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

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

448 - A Resolution authorizing the City Manager to sign an agreement with New Level Sports Ministries for federal Community Development Block Grant funding of up to \$490,000 for renovations and expansion of an after-school childcare program at 400 W. Michigan, and the signing of other necessary documents related to this matter with the approval of the City Attorney.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: Jenasia Morris

Supported By: Patrick O'Donnell

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

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

449 - A Resolution seeking authorization for the City Manager to enter into a Police Officer Liaison Agreement for the 2026-2027 school year with Battle Creek Public Schools.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: Jenasia Morris

Supported By: Patrick O'Donnell

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

Nays: None

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

450 - A Resolution objecting to the transfer of a Specially Designated Distributor license with Sunday Sales and a Specially Designated Merchant license.

Comm. Lance stated he was opposed to the resolution, stating he did not believe the Commission had legal grounds to deny it, expressing his belief this action would suppress business investment in the City.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: Jenasia Morris

Supported By: Patrick O'Donnell

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Mark Behnke, Sherry Sofia

Nays: Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Patrick O'Donnell, Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, James Lance

Abstain: None

MOTION Failed

451 - A Resolution opposing House Bill 5123 and Senate Bill 719, which would limit local video franchise authority and exclude streaming video services from the Uniform Video Services Local Franchise Act.

Comm. O'Donnell noted the franchise fees are collected by local governments to maintain the right-of-way infrastructure that is used by video franchise services, expressing his concern the state government is taking local authority from municipalities.

Vice Mayor Sofia, noting she was opposed to the resolution, stated it was not appropriate for the Commission, as a body, to weigh in on state legislation. Vice Mayor Sofia also noted the Senate passed the proposed legislation a few months ago, with a vote of 75-31.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: Jenasia Morris

Supported By: Patrick O'Donnell

Ayes: Paige Katsarky-Smith, Jessica Lacosse, Jenasia Morris, Mark Behnke, Patrick O'Donnell

Nays: Carla Reynolds, Christopher Simmons, Sherry Sofia, James Lance

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

(Limited to three minutes per individual)

John Harper expressed appreciation of the Commission's responsibility, emphasizing the importance of knowing & telling the story of Battle Creek.

Autumn Smith criticized the Battle Creek Police Department and City Hall administration, stating they continue to ignore claims of corruption.

Kathy Antaya expressed appreciation when the Commissioners explain the resolutions. Ms. Antaya requested all Commissioners give public speakers their full attention.

Erich Gilg, Homer Township Deputy Clerk, gave thanks to the Battle Creek City Clerk's office for their assistance, guidance and training to improve the election process, stating they were vital to the township's ability to conclude Election Day 3 hours earlier than past elections, stating the City was fortunate to have such a talented and knowledgeable staff.

Monique French asked why NPC 2 was being asked to provide comments or concerns regarding a business on North Avenue, also commenting on complaints that youth are being harassed by the BCPD.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Comm. LaCosse shared updates on the temporary repairs to the RR crossing at Kendall and Dickman. Comm. LaCosse also noted the Planning Commission values the local NPC's input regarding activities in their specific areas.

Comm. O'Donnell stated the Planning Commission is asking NPC members if they support proposed new businesses in their neighborhoods, stating they want to ensure the neighborhood's voice is heard.

Vice Mayor Sofia shared the grand opening of a "Catio" at Companion Cats, thanking those who donated and worked on the patio project, stating it was a privilege to attend their ribbon-cutting event.

Comm. Morris apologized for her absence from last week's meeting.

Comm. Reynolds stated she was sending prayers to Comm. Morris and her family.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Behnke adjourned the meeting at 7:49 pm.