



Agenda: Battle Creek City Commission

Meeting Date: June 2, 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. Katsarsky-Smith.

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
Shannon Bagley, Police Chief	Aaron Kuhn, Revenue Services Director
Chad Frein, IT Director	Steve Skalski, Public Works Director
Phil Kroll, Aviation Director	Olivia Heuermann, IT Service Desk Tech
Helen Guzzo, Community Development Manager	

CHAIR NOTES ADDED OR DELETED RESOLUTIONS

There were no added or deleted resolutions.

PETITIONS COMMUNICATIONS REPORTS

A communication was received from Joe Harris regarding Resolution 390.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

A Public Hearing to receive public comment on the 2026 Annual Action Plan and Proposed Use of Funds for the federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and the HOME Investment Partnership programs for Program Year 2026 (July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027).

Mayor Behnke declared the public hearing open, inviting attendees to provide public comment.

Jason Milliman shared his experience with recovery, which has given him a second chance with his family and friends, helping to assist others on the journey to recovery.

Kathy Antaya expressed support of the 2026 Annual Action Plan and proposed use of funds, stating stable housing is the foundation for recovery, also expressing support for the Minor Home Repair program.

Tyler Okay, peer recovery coach, stated recovery housing provides the structure, support and accountability to help residents rebuild a productive life.

David Moore expressed agreement with the need for funding housing options and repairs.

Lyle Holmes, recovery coach and house manager, stated recovery housing provides the foundation to build a sober life and an opportunity to become a responsible, productive adult.

Darin Clay shared his experience with substance abuse beginning at age 13, stating recovery housing provided him the support to rebuild his life.

Nathan Butler stated he was in recovery and a peer recovery coach, stating recovery housing provides stability and accountability for those suffering from addiction, and is an investment in people and families.

John Kennefick expressed his opinion tax dollars should not be used for the programs funded by CDBG and HOME investment funds.

Hearing no additional public comments, Mayor Behnke adjourned the public hearing.

PUBLIC COMMENT REGARDING ANY REMAINING AGENDA ITEMS

John Kennefick commented on resolution 403 regarding the Fee, Bond & Insurance schedule, stating there were 131 cost increases, also commenting on resolution 404 to consider the 2026-2027 fiscal year budget and millage rates.

David Moore commented on the use of taxpayer money.

COMMISSION COMMENT REGARDING MEETING BUSINESS

Vice Mayor Sofia requested resolution 390 be moved from the consent agenda to the regular resolution section of the agenda.

CONSENT AGENDA

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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 May 19, 2026 City Commission Regular Meeting

Petitions, Communications, Reports

City Manager's Report for June 2, 2026

Proclamations Awards

Proclamation for Men's Health Week

Resolutions

389 - A Resolution seeking to make permanent Temporary Traffic Control Order #1741.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

391 - A Resolution accepting the proposal of best value for benefits broker from Advantage Benefits Group, Inc., in an estimated annual amount of \$100,000.00.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

392 - A Resolution seeking authorization for the City Manager to enter into a permanent Easement For Electric Facilities agreement to Consumers Energy Company upon a portion of 339 West Michigan Avenue, Parcel No. 52-0256-00-050-0, for the purpose of installing and maintaining electricity power transmission infrastructure to support the City owned electric vehicle charging station.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

393 - A Resolution seeking adoption of the fiscal year 2026-2027 budget for the Battle Creek Downtown Development Authority (BCDDA).

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

394 - A Resolution seeking adoption of the fiscal year 2026-2027 budget for the Lakeview Downtown Development Authority (LDDA).

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

395 - A Resolution seeking approval of the fiscal year 2025-2026 amended budget for the Battle Creek Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BCBRA).

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

396 - A Resolution seeking adoption of the fiscal year 2026-2027 budget for the Battle Creek Brownfield Redevelopment Authority (BCBRA).

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

397 - A Resolution seeking approval of the fiscal year 2025-2026 amended General Operating budget for the Battle Creek Tax Increment Finance Authority (BCTIFA).

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

398 - A Resolution seeking adoption of the fiscal year 2026-2027 General Operating budget for the Battle Creek Tax Increment Finance Authority (BCTIFA).

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

399 - A Resolution seeking approval of the fiscal year 2025-2026 amended Capital Projects budget for the Battle Creek Tax Increment Finance Authority (BCTIFA).

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

400 - A Resolution seeking adoption of the fiscal year 2026-2027 Capital Projects budget for the Battle Creek Tax Increment Finance Authority (BCTIFA).

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

401 - A Resolution seeking approval of the fiscal year 2025-2026 amended budget for the Battle Creek Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA).

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

402 - A Resolution seeking adoption of the fiscal year 2026-2027 budget for the Battle Creek Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA).

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

390 - A Resolution seeking to make permanent Temporary Traffic Control Order #1742.

Amanda Zimmerlin, City Manager, noted this resolution was to make permanent the recently installed traffic control device, a 4-way stop, at LaVista and Territorial.

Vice Mayor Sofia expressed opposition to the resolution, stating she understood there were particular times when this intersection was busy, but that it was not busy 24 hours of every day. Vice Mayor Sofia stated there are many intersections throughout the City that present challenges, such as Highland and Territorial, Woodrow and Arbor, and Garfield and North Avenue, asking if staff should consider traffic control devices at all intersections that present a challenge. Vice Mayor Sofia suggested drivers pay attention and follow all traffic laws.

Comm. O'Donnell, expressing support of the resolution, suggested better traffic enforcement along Territorial Road, along with reducing the speed limit and possibly a light at this intersection, not a 4-way stop. Comm. O'Donnell agreed more traffic enforcement should be a priority throughout the City.

Comm. Katsarsky Smith asked if the City has completed a comparative study of traffic accidents or incidences since the 4-way stop was installed, also asking for the number of traffic accidents at Territorial and 28th street.

Ms. Zimmerlin noted the 8 crashes over 3 years met the required threshold, but a current study for the 3 months the 4-way stop was in place has not been conducted, but she could look at crash data during those 3 months.

Darren Campbell, Traffic Engineer, noting a resident requested better traffic control at this intersection, stated the 4-way stop was put in place while there was also construction occurring which slowed traffic, stating he believed otherwise there may have been 12 crashes in the 3-year period. Mr. Campbell stated 6 crashes over 3 years meets the threshold and 8 crashes are considered significant. Mr. Campbell also noted better traffic control after adding a sign at 28th and Territorial informing everyone that cross traffic does not stop.

Comm. Simmons stated he is an advocate for additional traffic-calming measures along Territorial from 20th Street to Capital Avenue SW, which is mostly residential. Comm. Simmons stated LaVista, being a boulevard, lends itself to considering other measures. Comm. Simmons agreed the City may need to consider other intersections throughout the City to protect citizens and reduce accidents.

Comm. LaCosse reminded everyone that DPW has to go through a progression of traffic-calming measures, they do not go directly to installing stop lights.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

Nays: Sherry Sofia

Abstain: None

MOTION Passed

403 - A Resolution seeking approval for amendments to the "2026-2027 Fee, Bond and Insurance Schedule" for the City of Battle Creek.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

404 - A Resolution seeking approval of the 2026 Millage Rates and seeking adoption of the General Fund and Special Funds Budgets for the fiscal year 2026-2027.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance

Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

Mayor Behnke expressed appreciation to Ms. Zimmerlin for considering the numerous requests from the Commission, stating it was a good decision to reduce the millage rate and using down some of the general fund balance was also a good decision.

405 - A Resolution seeking to establish residential refuse collection rates beginning July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2030.

Mayor Behnke noted the City receives great refuse service for the cost, but cautioned future discussion may be needed relative to unlimited garbage pick up.

Motion/Vote 1

Motion to Approve

Moved By: James Lance
Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

406 - A Resolution seeking authorization for Police Sergeant Nicholas Woolman to purchase 12 months of military time for the purpose of increasing his service credit toward retirement.

Responding to Comm. LaCosse, Aaron Kuhn, Revenue Services Director, noted PA 145 of 1987, allows a municipality to grant the purchase of military time for retirement purposes for police and fire personnel, stating the City Commission previously approved the purchase of up to 12 months.

Motion/Vote 1
Motion to Approve
Moved By: James Lance
Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

407 - A Resolution seeking approval of the 2026 Annual Action Plan and Proposed Use of Funds for Program Year 2026 (July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027) for the Community Development Block Grant in the amount of \$1,172,453 and HOME Investment Partnership in the amount of \$238,167.87.

Comm. O'Donnell thanked everyone for sharing their experiences with recovery and the benefit of the services.

Motion/Vote 1
Motion to Approve
Moved By: James Lance
Supported By: Carla Reynolds

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

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENT

(Limited to three minutes per individual)

David Moore commented on resolution 390, stating he had a friend who lost his life due to an accident at a busy intersection, also commenting on low income residents.

Mary Fields shared information on MDOT properties that will be available for auction in the next 12 months.

Sarah Edwards, Small Business Administration, informed everyone of a disaster loan program for residents and businesses that suffered any damage from recent storms, stating applications were available at [SBA.gov/disaster](https://www.sba.gov/disaster).

Kathy Antaya asked where residents could get compost soils, also encouraging everyone to attend the Juneteenth Celebration on June 19th & 20th at Claud Evans Park.

Dean Worden thanked DPW staff for the restoration of local baseball diamonds, thanked BCPD for patrolling the Riverside area to keep everyone safe, and the Streets department for the No Parking signs placed on Golden Ave. Mr. Worden also asked the Planning Commission to reconsider the maintenance of lawns when new homes are built.

Autumn Smith commented about transparency and the treatment of a former BCPD officer, stating he and his family were not treated fairly.

Joan Marshall, mother of a former police officer, asked the commission to focus on facts, not personalities, when investigating and reviewing instances.

John Kennefick commented on the use of federal funds, such as HUD funds, being used for non-profits and charities, including taxpayer funds being used for city properties and facilities.

COMMISSION COMMENTS

Comm. O'Donnell reminded everyone there are ordinances and zoning regulations regarding housing in the City, stating it is not always best to follow current trends, but to consider what is best for our community. Comm. O'Donnell also acknowledged the challenges faced by many to build new homes as the costs have continually increased. Comm. O'Donnell commented on the early release of one of the people involved in the murder of a local teenager, stating he did not feel justice was served. Comm. O'Donnell encouraged the public to participate in the goal setting workshop for our City Manager on June 25th and to attend the many special events in the City throughout the summer. Comm. O'Donnell expressed condolences to the family of Joe Schwarz, a former city and state elected official.

Comm. LaCosse commented on the River Restoration project, sharing information about the flood remediation plan. Comm. LaCosse expressed condolences to Ms. Guzzo for recent family losses.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Behnke adjourned the meeting at 8:16 pm.