



MINUTES
Committee of the Whole
Monday, August 11, 2025 @ 5:30 p.m.
Tony Benavides Lansing City Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Council President Kost called the meeting to order at 5:30p.m.

PRESENT

Councilmember Jeffrey Brown
Councilmember Peter Spadafore
Councilmember Tamera Carter
Councilmember Trini Pehlivanoglu
Councilmember Jeremy Garza-excused
Councilmember Ryan Kost
Councilmember Adam Hussain
Councilmember Brian T. Jackson

OTHERS PRESENT

Renee Richmond, Council Staff
Mark Lawrence, Mayor's Office
Mayor Schor
Greg Venker, City Attorney
Lisa Hagen-Lawrence, City Attorney
Brad Funkhouser, CATA
Jake Brower, CSO
Roy Plowman, Construction Manager
Delveta Moses, HRCS
Daphine Whitfield, HRCS
Loretta Stanaway
Clinton Mireles
Sean Gehle
Melissa Horste
Joanne Galloway
Kelsea Hector
Jonh-Marc Ormechea
Patricia Braman
Mike Karl
Sean French
Mike Gorishek
Joe McDonald
Michael Hopson
Roselyn Williams
Brad Clark
Dana Watson
Emily Sorroche

Sej Ennicoc
Connor Holguin
Mike Lynn
Erica Lynn
Dr. Thomas Woods

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER CARTER TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM JULY 28, 2025, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Public Comment

Mr. Lynn spoke in support of the ModPods, and coming to a compromise and sense of urgency.

Ms. Lynn spoke in support of step one and trying the ModPods, urges to have a plan, this didn't happen overnight and won't be solved overnight.

Ms. Holguin concurred with Mr. & Mrs. Lynn on the ModPods stating the opportunity to be leaders for this model.

Ms. Gallaway spoke in support of the ModPods, this provides stability, sustainability, transparency and timeliness. This is a meaningful and tangible step.

Mr. French spoke in support of the ModPods, he would like to partner with the city in hopes of figuring it out national life infrastructure of America.

Ms. Stanaway spoke in partial support of the ModPods, asking who's community is being resolved. Many of the homeless come from other states and communities outside of Lansing, is there a way to establish residency.

Mr. Karl spoke on needing to get people into housing and using the guidelines of HUD.

Ms. Williams spoke on the ModPods and likes idea but what about family pods, and noted that those that are couch homeless are not documented. Should use the resource already available, many vacant houses/buildings can be used.

Mr. Mireles spoke in support of the ModPods and is a student at MSU, and was affected by housing. These are more than a shelter, are cost saving, and create stability.

Ms. Braman spoke in support of the ModPods, she is with Advent House and the Director of Housing Assessment & Resource Agency (HARA), they directly track those in need for housing crisis by doing centralized intake and housing assessments. This is going to need support from shelters.

Mr. Gorishek spoke in support of the ModPods but must include those currently unhoused, and get them into legal housing.

Mr. McDonald spoke in support of the ModPods, it is humane and safe facility, not replacing shelters but will supplement current capacity. Tailored to fit Lansing's needs. Noting about the wraparound services, can also be disassembled and reassembled. Top two reasons they may not to seek shelter are LGBTQ and those with pets. Like all programs there will be a residency requirement, will have 24/7 security with fencing, controlled facility, wraparound services including counseling, employment, training and housing navigation. This is a great investment.

Mr. Hopson read two letters in support of the ModPods that are included in the packet from Dr. Terry Frasier and Byron Haskins.

Ms. Horste is on the HRCS Advisory Board and urged the Council to support the ModPods, community input is key.

Ms. Sorroche lives in Ward 4 and spoke in support of the ModPods, provides a compassionate step forward with wraparound services.

Mr. Gehle is on the HRCS Advisory Board and urged support of the ModPods, this is just one aspect and component but great step forward.

Councilmember Brown stepped away at 6:09pm
Councilmember Brown returned to the meeting at 6:10pm

Mr. Clark spoke on the encampment and lives less within 1 mile of it, he is in strong support of clearing the encampment. Three reasons are crime, home values, and economic development. His home value increased but not significantly, believes the encampment is part of the reason, there is a vacant supermarket and who is going to want to redevelop.

Ms. Hector spoke in support of the ModPods, many people are agreeing on the same things, dreaming, and supporting something like this. Spoke about unhoused residents who are excited and skeptical. Excited with the respect that comes with a key and space, but worried with the status quo with the shelters and will flow over. Suggested a coalition to run this, someone that is invested and going to have great input and transparency. Noted LGBTQ that have experience harassment, this is unique and removes that. And to think strategically for long term affect.

Ms. Watson is with the East Lansing City Council, spoke on strong support of the ModPods.

Dr. Thomas Woods is on the HRCS Advisory Board and spoke on support of the ModPods, and is concerned about bottle neck in terms of what needs to be done. There will be issues but don't give up.

Ms. Cancro joined via online, she is with Advent House and spoke in support of the ModPod concept, however, they are not shelters or permanent housing. Are more like a hotel room with a bed, shower, and receive services. They do not accommodate families., and need to invest in a solution.

Sara (last name unknown) is a member of the Rent is to Damn High, played a recording from another individual in support of the ModPods. Sara then spoke about people with different disabilities, and this is an amazing first step.

Mr. Allen is a Team Outreach Lead for Advent House, and in the Ingham County CoC Board, supports the ModPods and feels beneficial, will give dignity.

Mr. Ennicoc lives in the 1st Ward, moved from North Carolina in 2020. Supports the ModPods and reiterated Ms. Hector's sentiment on those that avoid shelters because of the stigma and over policing.

Councilmember Jackson stepped away at 6:29pm
Karl (last name unknown didn't sign in) is the Founder and Program Manager of One Day Industries, great idea for stop gap measure, can do better though. He was a product of homelessness. His idea is to turn a tiny house village into a cooperative. Have the people, energy, and ability.

Councilmember Jackson returned to the meeting at 6:32pm

Rev. John-Marc Ormechea spoke on housing, the growing of unhoused, and hope for the support of the ModPods.

Presentations:

Councilmember Kost moved Agenda item C and Agenda Item D to the August 25, 2025 .

Capital Area Transportation Authority

Mr. Funkhouser commented on the previous public comment, that CATA would like to be involved and would love to assist with whatever the city does, get passes for everyone.

Councilmember Spadafore stepped away at 6:38pm

Councilmember Spadafore returned to the meeting at 6:39pm

He gave an update on CATA, in 2024 they donated 36,361 bus passes to 60 organizations, feels they can do more. During the pandemic in 2020 they did 3 million rides, and are closing in on 10 million for 2025. Lansing has the largest ridership of paratransit in the State of Michigan. They had questions on holidays and do four holidays and are highly successful. They launched CATA contactless payment, and will see soon the tap and go. They redid 10 bus shelters, added 5, with 12 more on the way. Public input is important, they designed a system called Listening Bus, instead of people coming to public meetings that are inconvenient, they have the meeting on the bus. Since 2023, they have had 28 sessions, 27 routes, and 565 responses. Also launched a language line translation service, and a call line of up to 240 languages including sign language. Upcoming is COA which is a big comprehensive transit study. Acquired their first 40ft electric bus, currently have 8 other vehicles that are electric. Last year, they opened Safe Place initiative for vulnerable youths for individuals under 18 if at risk they can contact a driver and get picked up. Lastly, regional mobility which is a seamless network of transit connections across jurisdictional boundaries. Proud to announce Delta Township putting a 75 mills public transit on the ballot. A new website is coming soon, they bought the old greyhound building downtown, it will have a large community center on the side of the building.

Councilmember Hussain mentioned with the move downtown, there is concern with the southside and fear a hole will be left, what is the future of the Tranter site. Mr. Funkhouser answered they are not moving the Tranter facility maintenance operations will stay at Tranter, the idea is to bring customer facing folks downtown to provide fact-to-face service.

Councilmember Hussain asked him to speak on the partnership with LSD, how is that faring. Mr. Funkhouser noted they've had great success with LSD, they meet monthly with the Superintendent, and layout goals every new school year, very pleased with the partnership. Councilmember Hussain asked two questions, why wasn't work in terms of diversifying revenue streams explored, first what has the financial impact of the bus wrap advertising and second whether other similar opportunities were explored. Mr. Funkhouser responded, he couldn't speak to why revenue streams weren't explored can be a catch 22, there are some heavy restrictions on what advertisements can be on the buses, second yes they have other ideas like the Delta Township partnership.

Councilmember Carter asked what the top feedback of the Listening Bus was and how are you using that. Mr. Funkhouser indicated the most common comments are about better service/frequency, that allows them to look at bus locations/routing/hours. Councilmember Carter continued they have a potential 10% federal cut, how will they accommodate the capacity with growth with the proposal on ballot in November to expand routes. Mr. Funkhouser said the extension of services outside of the Authority are grant funded or contracted. i.e. MSU is contracted. Could get more service if they combine the contracts services.

Councilmember Kost commented he occasionally rides the bus and sees Mr. Funkhouser, and is very excited for tap and go and appreciate his responsiveness.

LEDC Presentation on Development Incentives – Director Kris Klein

Moved to the next meeting on 8/25

Update on the Ovation Project

Moved to the next meeting on 8/25

Discussion/Action:

RESOLUTION – Budget Amendment: Human Relations and Community Services (HRCS)

Carry Forwards from Fiscal Year 2024-2025 to Fiscal Year 2025-2026 – Emergency

Transitional Housing

Mr. Brower began with an overview of the Resolution in the packet. HRCS completed a homelessness study addressing the direct needs of Lansing residents experiencing homelessness, and the obtained an opportunity to purchase at a reduced price from the original RFP of 1.3 million dollars. They identified the ModPod structures to purchase a total of 50, 34 units measuring 8x8x8 and 16 units measuring 8x8x16. HRCS has identified three accounts that amount to approximately \$645,000 unspent and would like to carryforward.

Ms. Moses briefly spoke on the ModPods, reiterating some of what was already mentioned about the housing crisis, bringing necessity, dignity, respect, health & well-being. Shelter villages/ModPods bring access to social services, stability, safety and dignity to transition out of homelessness. This is in line with their homelessness study where it recommends consideration of outdoor spaces. She referenced the sizes of the ModPods that would include onsite security and staff 24/7, anticipate resource center including but not limited to case management., work force development, showers, laundry, locker rooms, community room with a TV, transportation assistance, and having pets allowed with criteria to be determined. A screening process to make sure they are a City of Lansing or Ingham County resident. They hope to at minimum impact 66 guests annually. They will send out an RFP at the appropriate time for an Operating Plan. If approved tonight they will begin finalizing the timeline that includes zoning requirements, licensing process that takes approximately 9 months, then break ground. Hoping March 2026 for that, no location has been selected at this time, would like to use city-owned prop or private land. Noting they hope to learn from other success and failures.

Councilmember Spadafore stated since they don't anticipate groundbreaking until March 2026, explain the cost of storing the ModPods and relocation. Mr. Plowman answered logistics fee for relocation, product handling, storage will be one-time not to exceed \$20,000 includes a no cost to city. Councilmember Spadafore asked if that included in the \$645,000 transfer they are looking at tonight, Mr. Brower confirmed. Councilmember Spadafore then stated they mentioned city sites, noting one hurdle of Kalamazoo was sighting costs that was between 3.5-5 million, what is the anticipated cost to set up in Lansing. Mr. Brower noted they are still discussing with the Code Department and Public Service, still looking whether to use city property vs private land, or other partnerships. Councilmember Spadafore added they spoke on all the great services hoping to offer on site, do they know the operational cost. Mr. Brower deferred to HRCS study, stating it expects \$750,000 for yearly operation, they have this immediate carryforward and HRCS is investigating federal & state grants. Councilmember Spadafore asked if they could define transitional housing, so they know what the expectation of using the ModPods for are. Ms. Whitfield answered it is housing that is used short term, individuals that are ready or have certain things in place on their way to perm housing. ModPods are designed to be 3-6 months to get the wraparound services and support to move forward. Councilmember Spadafore clarified it is not an emergency rehousing move, and to be clear tonight it is just authorizing the purchase of the Mod Pods, it is a long way before

operational. Mr. Brower confirmed they will need subsequent zoning, city council, and regulatory approval through State of Michigan.

Councilmember Brown asked how the structure with weather and temperatures is supported with inclement weather. Ms. Whitfield stated the ModPods are made of aluminum, treated with she believes ARDZEL a substance to ward off moisture, includes a bed, storage, heating/cooling unit, fire retardant. In terms for weather has slanted ceiling, roofs can handle 4ft of snow with drifts, and for rain they have what is called an e-lock system ensuring the seal that rain won't get in, windows in the back are egress so can get out if an issue arises. Councilmember Brown asked how they are making sure the pods continue to be up to code standard. Mr. Brower stated they have been directly coordinating with Code, they've sent a list of requirements, and they're gathering information of the manufacturer, assembly & construction of the units, and what is required to put them in place. Councilmember Brown finished asking if Code feels positive this is a good purchase, Mr. Brower indicated they are mostly concerned about code aspects.

Councilmember Pehlivanoglu mentioned with the screening process what if they lose their ID, is there a Plan B without Documentation. Ms. Moses believes so, HRCS has a process now, but that will be taken in consideration. Councilmember Pehlivanoglu finished encouraging Council as they speak through budget priorities, if moving forward to purchase the ModPods to keep the measures in mind when it comes to sustainable funding in the future.

Councilmember Carter stated Mr. McDonald mentioned the ModPods can collapse, in the event how quickly if have to seek shelter and be moved. Ms. Moses confirmed there will be conversations and taken into consideration. Councilmember Carter asked what the double ones consist of. Ms. Whitfield indicated they understand dire situation for families, they are taking direction from the study, and it did reference family issue but spoke more to the single and veterans. Councilmember Carter asked if there is storage in the ModPods, is it adequate for belongings. Ms. Whitfield responded there is storage, but there will be sizeable lockers available too. Councilmember Carter concluded by asking if the operational cost includes the resource center. Mr. Brower answered the resolution only speaks to the ModPods themselves, that will be separate proposal.

Councilmember Brown referenced the timeframe of 3-6 months of transitioning, and looking at the matrix and screening process will it be community led for transparency, also, speaking of medical conditions and disabilities, will they get evicted if a situation happens and it is longer than 6 months. Ms. Moses noted they don't anticipate kicking anybody out, but want to make sure the wraparound services are intentional and intensive to get them where they need to be.

Councilmember Jackson stepped away at 7:35pm

Ms. Moses added they will be using the CoC and utilizing the HUD requirements since waiting for approval on this resolution.

Councilmember Jackson returned to the meeting at 7:36pm

Councilmember Hussain asked in terms of the RFP how many responses was 1.3 million the lowest received and has any other companies reached out saying they can beat that number. Ms. Moses believes most of the RFPs bordered that number. Mr. Brower added those are available and he can send them. Councilmember Hussain noted other communities like Grand Rapids, Ann Arbor, Kalamazoo, and Detroit, numbers to support annually were anywhere from \$60,000-\$80,000 per ModPod so where did the \$750,000 come from. Ms. Whitfield said in their research, they had 6 RFP's, and they were far beyond budget. The \$750,000 came from research and what other organizations have done, after looking at what needed to be done, the won't actually know until they get going. Councilmember Hussain continued that whether they move forward with the resolution with the aspect of the budget

exceeding the \$750,000 and not feasible to sustain, what is next and have they thought of community engagement. Ms. Moses responded they have discussed and would love a community meeting. Councilmember Hussain lastly stated there have been internal conversations from the Administration on 14-15 sites, heard Stabenow and Comstock Parks and why those sites. Mayor Schor answered those were referenced by him and apologized, those two have the biggest bathrooms and facilities to easily convert into showers, however it has not been determined. Councilmember Hussain noted he believes it needs to be a community driven conversation.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER CARTER TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE BUDGET AMENDMENT FOR EMERGENCY TRANSITIONAL HOUSING. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Other

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:45pm

Respectfully Submitted by,

Renee Richmond, Recording Secretary,
Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee August 25, 2025