



MINUTES
Committee of the Whole
Monday, March 30, 2026 @ 5:00 p.m.
Tony Benavides Lansing City Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Spadafore called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Councilmember Tamera Carter
Councilmember Jeremy Garza
Councilmember Adam Hussain- excused
Councilmember Ryan Kost
Councilmember Clara Martinez
Councilmember Deyanira Nevarez Martinez
Councilmember Trini Pehlivanoglu
Councilmember Peter Spadafore

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Staff
Greg Venker, City Attorney
Lisa Hagen-Lawrence, City Attorney
Mark Lawrence, Mayors Office
Brett Kaschinske, Parks and Recreation
Jake Brower, Chief Strategy Officer
Jackson Mills, Budget
Kris Klein, LEDC
Kirby Doidge, LEPFA
Tony Watson, Legends Global/LEPFA
Doris Witherspoon, EDP
Erin Buitendorp, EDP
Chief Edwards-Clemons, LFD Chief
Brad Clark
Loretta Stanaway
John Page, Legends Global
Maureen Saxton, LEPFA Chairperson

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER PEHLIVANOGLU TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM MARCH 23, 2026 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

Public Comment

Mr. Clark spoke on the provisional \$1 million in the proposed budget from the potential data center sale. He asked that \$200,000 from those funds be designated for a study on informational and economic growth.

Ms. Stanaway spoke on the budget and parks/recreation impact on cemeteries and the fees.

Presentations

Budget Overview

Mr. Brower and Mr. Mills went through the proposed budget presentation, beginning with the budget assumptions of \$307.2 Million. The next slides explained the budget book, information summaries, budget timeline, role of Council, budget processes, and moved into the general fund sources.

Council Member Kost stepped away from the meeting at 5:09 p.m.

Mr. Brower summarized the budget document on GF uses, property tax revenue, property tax assumptions, property taxes, income tax assumptions, State revenue assumptions, and budgeting personnel.

Council Member Kost returned to the meeting at 5:12 p.m.

Mr. Brower highlighted the major sources of revenue and major expenditures which included retirement, police/fire, public service, community/recreation and general government. There was a brief overview of the state revenue on public safety and road reforms. Regarding budgeting for personnel the slide reflects wages, fringes, retirement, dental and health. Mr. Brower spoke on proposed fee changes in the proposed budget for City Clerk, Economic Development, Parking, Public Service and Parks and Recreation. Included in the presentation was a list of proposed operational positions including detention staff, officers, firefighters, 311 call center staff, solid waste operators, and investment into programs. In the proposal was an estimate for a proposed Data Center subject to Council consideration, if the data center is approved. In a direct response to the study on homelessness, they have proposed a Project NOVA for construction and maintenance.

Council Member Spadafore referred to the slide where it was \$1.3 million on Nova and \$800,000 additional, is that \$2.2 million one time. Mr. Brower confirmed, and stated part of that was carry forward of HRCS funding, \$1.3 million in construction from Ingham County, carryforward. He referred to Section 2, page 67 of the budget book it breaks down the NOVA, and in the slide presentation. For the balance needed, they are looking into multiple resources. Council Member Spadafore asked where the carry forward came from, and Mr. Brower stated 1.25% from HRCS GF. They were distributed last year, and carry forward \$1.4 million, spending down through HRCS on services, but setting aside to use towards this project.

Council Member Kost, asked about the Data Center slide, and when the funding would be reflected. Mr. Brower stated it would be up to 18 months before the City would see the revenue captured. Council Member Kost then asked about the 311 line item in the City Council budget and asked for in sight on \$1800. Mr. Brower stated that the 311 takes calls from Council activities and those operators might be able to answer those questions, and not send to Council staff, proportional out to what 311 has taken for Council. Council Member Kost asked if department has opportunity to opt out of 311, and Mr. Brower confirmed that they do, and for example Assessing has opted out because of technical calls. Mr. Brower stated Council can speak to the 311 Department about what 311 does for Council.

Council Member Garza asked about the revenue slide, and asked if there is someone monitoring the income tax payments, and if so who. Mr. Brower stated that income tax auditors does have access to State of Michigan tapes, and treasury does keep an eye on organizations in the City, and a frequent topic with finance and treasury.

Ms. Buitendorp acknowledged Ms. Witherspoon. Ms. Witherspoon then went through the presentation on the proposed action plan.

As part of that it was noted this was submitted every five (5) years, and every year after that an Action Plan. Current is 2022 – 2026, so this is the last year of the current five year plan, and they will start working in the 2027-2031. The five year plan is the government use for the plan on needs, how to distribute the HUD funds, activities including housing, homelessness issues, and economic development. The City follows the citizen participation plan, they hold public hearings annually. With the federal funds the City of Lansing receives CDBG/HOME/ESG grants. The CDBG provides funding for community revitalization, and builds one of three community benefits. Those funds can go towards public services, facilities, housing and economic development. The HOME provides for new construction and down payment assistance. The ESG program provides funding to assist homeless person; homeless prevention, emergency shelter and administration. The presentation did provide a 1 year layout of the spending. They anticipate the federal funding will arrive in the next couple days, but cannot submit until they get those funds. The Planning Commission held public hearings in December and March. They open up a timeframe for public input. They anticipate the public hearing in front of Council on April 20th.

Council Member Nevarez Martinez referred to the history amounts slide, and asked if it is based on applications or needs. Ms. Witherspoon stated those allocations are done by HUD based on census tracking, and formulas with HUD; federal data and local.

Council Member Pehlivanoglu referred to the report, and there is a portion on evaluation of past performances. It does not give examples of what was accomplished, and asked for some examples of how the funds have been allocated. Ms. Buitendorp stated they have partnered with CAHP on down payment assistance; \$14,999. They have been approved for more, and the need is there, so they are working on more. So far this year they have provided two (2) for CAHP homes. Other things they have addressed is closing out the Lead Safe Phase 4 program, and will get \$8 million for Lead Safe Phase 5. A highlight is Walter French Phase 1, partner with Capital Area Services and in house served 8 clients. There is emergency home repair, lead abatement, and continuum care, emergent solutions dollars and partnering with HRCS. Council Member Pehlivanoglu asked how many FTE, and Ms. Buitendorp stated 7 including herself.

Council Member Carter acknowledged Ms. Witherspoon, and wanted to know about the marketing of the programs and economic development. Ms. Buitendorp stated that is more with LEDC, but they helped with the facade improvement program. With kids camp, they help support parks and recreation, tool library with CAP, and public services.

Council Member Martinez asked about the 30 day input timeline, and asked what those methods are. Ms. Witherspoon stated the 30 day public input is a requirement. When they get the funding they do an environmental review of those. The comment period is published in the City Pulse, CDBG mailing list, mailed to continuum of care, on the website, utilize all tools to let people know. This period starts 1st day after advertising is published.

Department Budget Presentations

Council President Spadafore noted 15 minutes as a guideline.

Fire Department

Chief Edwards-Clemons went through the list of questions provided by Council leadership and acknowledged Council and her staff.

QUESTION 1 -What are three accomplishments your department achieved last year. Data driven decision making; emergency reporting, national emergency response system, predictive analytics, real-time dash board on the website.

Secondly the opening of Fire Station #2.

Thirdly they secured PFAS free gear for the fire fighters, and cancer screening.

QUESTION 2 – What are three priorities or goals your department aims to accomplish this year.

They would like to focus on the “*Business of Fire*”, providing statistics on the number of calls.

The purpose is to make sure they are self-sufficient, and focusing on specialist teams.

Some basic calls are being handled by shared services, so they are hoping that if something happens to those shared services they can continue to provide services.

They hope to become the central hub for training services; fire and EMT training.

QUESTION 3 – What has changed in your budget request, and what is one-time vs. ongoing.

Assessing the areas of needs of the services they are providing.

Continued education for maintaining the standards and certifications.

QUESTION 4 – How are staffing levels and vacancies affecting your budget and operations.

The department have front loaded with paramedics, training and reducing staff on call, but understand there is time to train, and to support that they are sending all new hires to paramedics school. Most staffing levels are minimum with 41 per shift.

They have a focus on fire fighter mental health as well.

QUESTION 5 – What steps is your department taking to optimize the budget and contain costs.

They are reviewing their fee schedules to make sure they are compatible with surrounding communities. They are seeking federal and state funding for equipment and staff. They are modernizing the stations to provide a better living environment for their firefighters. As funding is available they would be increasing their fire trucks.

They have shorted the timeline from 8 months to 4 months, with the assistance from HR.

They have applied with the State initiative for cancer screening, and they continue to review.

With training, they will look into in-house training to lesson the time for training off site and cost.

They have looked into a partnership with MSU on an assessment of the needs and services.

QUESTION 6 – What internet metrics or performance based strategies ensure operational efficiency.

They have yearly evaluations, collected data in real-time, “crew sense” to monitor sick leave and overview overtime, have an ESO system, and tracking of the buildings, businesses and what they are doing in the community, leading to making sure the buildings are inspected, and members are training, licenses and renewed.

Council Member Garza asked with the number of calls, will the proposed 3 new hires, will that keep up with those retiring. Chief stated that many fire fighters leave, getting trained, then leave to other departments because they cannot make them stay. They need 3 but can always use more. Council Member Garza asked if they need a new ladder truck, and Chief stated that it go 104’ but they need to focus on water rescue, specialized teams, training with specialized equipment. There is no ladder truck that will go that high, that is why they are focusing on specialized teams, but can always use another ladder truck.

Council Member Nevarez Martinez asked about predictive analytics and what they are predicting. Chief stated they are looking at past history on types, if they had fire alarms, smoke alarms, and this now allows them to focus resources to identify an area where services they provide is needed. They look at data, trending, the community, where most fires, and then focus on the details of the fire. Council Member Nevarez Martinez noted that the Mayor noted if Data Center went in, and there would be funds from that for hazmat, and asked if the department been engaged in the conversations with the proposed data center and if the amount proposed is what is actually needed. Chief stated they have been in conversations with what they need, the whole environment of what fire is what is needed.

Council Member Pehlivanoglu referred to the Data Center slide from the budget presentation, and noted there are items listed for needs, because it ties those items to potential data center revenue, and asked if those needs could be addressed without the data center revenue. She asked for new projections of the budget depending on how the vote goes on the data center, because they just heard about large buildings being build per the Chief on needs to address those risks.

Parks and Recreation

Mr. Kaschinske went through the list of questions provided by Council leadership.

QUESTION 1 -What are three accomplishments your department achieved last year.
Parks millage.

Council President Spadafore stepped away at 6:28 p.m.

Passing of the five year plan.
Opening of the fish ladder music park.

Council President Spadafore returned to the meeting at 6:29 p.m.

Tying all the areas together along the river trail.

QUESTION 2 – What are three priorities or goals your department aims to accomplish this year.

Opening Moores Park pool on June 10th with ribbon cutting, and open 7 days beginning June 13th.

Community Center study, encouraging everyone to fill out the survey.

Grants and capital improvement projects; expansion of river trail (section 2-89) in the budget for CIP.

QUESTION 3 – What has changed in your budget request, and what is one-time vs. ongoing. There are new fees in the budget for cemeteries, community centers services, and special events.

With bringing on Moore's Park Pool, there is a need for staffing and security.

QUESTION 4 – How are staffing levels and vacancies affecting your budget and operations.

There is a need for life guards, and is a tough market to hire for Hunter and Moores and swim lessons at Alfreda Schmidt. There is a Parks Supervisory position open currently, and a posting for manager of leisure services.

QUESTION 5 – What steps is your department taking to optimize the budget and contain costs.

Fees, which they always look at, make sure to keep up with cost of living and rising employee.

There is a millage coming for Ingham County in August; in terms of the amount of funding the City has received towards maintenance of River Trail, which is over 25 miles.

With establishing the Parks Foundation they have the access to 501c3 grants, they can apply for to optimize the budget and maintain costs.

QUESTION 6 – What internet metrics or performance based strategies ensure operational efficiency.

There is a focus on the millage, the City is high above the average on park acreage, with a 73% approval rate of the parks. The data they gather on classes and programs, they do that survey a lot to see the input on what they can do better.

Council Member Garza asked about a Ward 2 recreation center, and why the community recreation survey does not speak to Ward 2. Mr. Kaschinske stated in the Ward 3 community center, and they started at Alfreda Center, it was a school, and so they are getting "squeezed out", and what is on the horizon is "where is ward 2" because of Charter there will now be 5 wards and not sure where that will be drawn. They are thinking about that placement Council Member Garza asked him to commit it will be in south Lansing, and Mr. Kaschinske stated he could not commit at this time, but there will not be a shortage of input.

Council Member Nevarez Martinez acknowledged no commitment but will focus on getting south Lansing to complete the survey.

Lansing Economic Development Corporation (LEDC)

Mr. Klein went through the list of questions provided by Council leadership.

QUESTION 1 -What are three accomplishments your department achieved last year.

With developments over the last year, there has been job growth, housing growth, advancing economic development initiative. The empower program, an enhanced program for small businesses. The launch of the target development program.

QUESTION 2 – What are three priorities or goals your department aims to accomplish this year.

Build on momentum of current development, improve incentive policies, promote sites and market local area and region.

Grow marketing, and made updates to the website which now included profiles of past or current development.

Expand business access including retention program, site visits, a more defined process to help businesses grow.

QUESTION 3 – What has changed in your budget request, and what is one-time vs. ongoing.

Budget stays the same, inflation increases from sources, decline in bank and loan interest.

There is an increase in contractual services.

QUESTION 4 – How are staffing levels and vacancies affecting your budget and operations.

The team maintains at 9 staff; salary and exempt. They are not City of Lansing employees.

There was some turnover in 2025.

QUESTION 5 – What steps is your department taking to optimize the budget and contain costs.

The City contract amount stays the same, but there are several increases with LEDC, 9.5%, and they are taking approaches to be productive and keep budget in check. Currently looking at review of fee schedule to have Board consider for the upcoming fiscal year.

QUESTION 6 – What internet metrics or performance based strategies ensure operational efficiency.

Look at efforts internally and externally.

Council Member Garza stepped away at 6:56 p.m.

Launched a new project manager development tool, providing data and provide a dash board report.

Council Member Garza returned to the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

Council Member Carter asked about the priority of marketing and what their strategy to get people into the City. Mr. Klein stated their task is to have resources for improvements, making sure those sites are ready to go, profiles of the sites are correct. Defining the base to sites City wide.

Lansing Entertainment Public Facilities Authority (LEPFA)

Ms. Saxton provided introductions.

Mr. Watson and Mr. Doidge went through the list of questions provided by Council leadership.

QUESTION 1 -What are three accomplishments your department achieved last year.

Mr. Watson spoke on the accomplishments, included the economic impact, increase of visitors, social impact; \$35.1 million economic impact, return on investment of \$4 million. Reduction in the operating.

Council Member Kost stepped away from the meeting at 7:02 p.m.

PHP insurance change to employees, and state cuts.

Working with Choose Lansing

QUESTION 2 – What are three priorities or goals your department aims to accomplish this year.

Want to move to Legends Global priorities, upgrading to customer experience, implemented new surveys, client surveys.

Increase overall event revenue.

QUESTION 3 – What has changed in your budget request, and what is one-time vs. ongoing. Mr. Doidge stated they have not new funding, and still asking for \$1.49 million, and with the current they have increase efficiencies to cover the operating increases, and covering the property insurance for the three facilities.

The increase to employee health insurance, the increase to minimum wage, and aging infrastructure and utilities. They have done studies on if they went off steam their expenses would decrease. Majority of budget is operational expenses, and there is a an expense with the TMO contract with the Stadium.

Council Member Kost returned to the meeting at 7:06 p.m.

QUESTION 4 – How are staffing levels and vacancies affecting your budget and operations. Mr. Watson stated they are similar to past years and they do utilize overtime due to size of events.

Council Member Nevarez Martinez stepped away at 7:07p.m.

Currently have key positions open. There are no official retirements made but one further in the year.

QUESTION 5 – What steps is your department taking to optimize the budget and contain costs.

Looking at more sponsorships, and implemented Legends best practices to look at maintenance on facilities. Working with Legends vendor lists that can give them shared services, and working with the City of Lansing on shared contracts when needs for repair.

QUESTION 6 – What internet metrics or performance based strategies ensure operational efficiency.

Mr. Doidge noted they track days of events, attendance, customer satisfaction surveys.

Council Member Nevarez Martinez returned to the meeting at 7:10 p.m.

Track the number of rounds at Groesbeck, track attendance and impact, special events.

Council Member Garza asked about the operational costs that were up due to PHP removal, and Mr. Doidge confirmed. Council Member Garza asked about operational efficiencies, and Mr. Doidge stated they are implementing Legends best practices, people are working more than 40. They are attempting to be pro-active in stead of reactive. Council Member Garza stated the City is going down by 35%, and Mr. Brower stated that is correct. It is going down at Lansing Center and towards the stadium. They are staying equal. Council Member Garza asked them to take a hard look at the subsidy, and was concerned with employee burn out.

Council Member Kost asked about the increase in green fees for Groesbeck. Mr. Doidge stated they have increased revenues and fees, and with that they insure the rates are the best value. Council Member Kost spoke on the stadium, with the structure aging, and asked if there is an effort to increase revenue through marketing to boost attendance over 300,000. Mr. Doidge says they do not handle that, but Lugnuts has overall operation of baseball, LEPFA has the stadium. Council Member Kost stated that with HVAC repairs at the stadium, in the past Lugnuts had to wait for LEPFA to call on service, asking if that has been fixed. Mr. Watson stated it has not been fixed, but he has gotten a good relationship with the property management and working on that. Before LEGENDS took over, Lugnuts could make initial

contact but there were billings that were not defined with LEPFA, so they took it back. Mr. Doidge stated the budget does not have that kind of support for Lugnuts to call on repairs, and they are aware there needs to be an investment and they are working with the City on grants. There is not an up to date estimate on HVAC but pre-covid it was \$3 million. Council Member Kost asked if they had ideas on how to generate the revenue to fix. Mr. Doidge stated they do not get revenue for that, just City funding. Mr. Brower currently they are taking a two-prong approach to address facilities. Right now they have Legend/Global and LEPFA managing the facilities to free up revenue from the City, and if that is possible they can invest properly. They are partnering on getting quotes to getting up to proper standards. They are looking at grants, financial opportunities, and revenue sources from City is one time to contribute to the investment. Council Member Kost asked if Ovation find funding, and free up PEG fees, can those be used to this ball park. Mr. Venker stated no. Council Member Kost asked if they can use bonds. Mr. Venker stated that PEG fees have to be used to arts and education, and stadium would be exempt from that. There could be a portion from the ticket fees or full faith credit, vote of the people to get a millage to pay for that.

Discussion/Action

RESOLUTION – Set Public Hearing; Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plan for Fiscal year 2026-2027 Funding Allocations

MOTION BY COUNCIL PEHLIVANOGLU TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO SET THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE CDBG ACTION PLAN FOR FY 2026/2027 FOR APRIL 20, 2026.

Council President Spadafore reiterated that the numbers in the plan are “place holders” and they will get the final numbers once those come in from the Federal government.

MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

RESOLUTION – Set Public Hearing; Fiscal Year Budget 2026/2027

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER PEHLIVANOGLU TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO SET THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE 2026/2027 BUDGET FOR MAY 4, 2026. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

RESOLUTION – Introduction & Set Public Hearing; Ordinance Amendment for Re-adoption of Codified Ordinances

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER PEHLIVANOGLU TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION TO SET THE PUBLIC HEARING TO AMEND THE ORDINANCE FOR RECODIFICATION FOR MAY 4, 2026. MOTION CARRIED 7-0.

OTHER

There was not other topics of discussion.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at: 7:24 pm

Respectfully Submitted by,

Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary, Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee April 6, 2026