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MINUTES
Committee of the Whole
Monday, May 4, 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
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
Jake Brower, Chief Strategy Officer
Jackson Mills, Budget
Charles Randall, Controller
Judge Buchanan
Judge Ward
Anethia Brewer, Court Administrator
Jason Gabriel, City TV
Cathleen Edgerly, DLI
Elizabeth O'Leary, HR Director
Kyla Moore, Deputy HR Director
Crystal Thomas, Finance Director
Christopher R. Wright, Treasurer
Christopher Mumby, Deputy Mayor
Deborah Mulcahey
Loretta Stanaway

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER PEHLIVANOGLU TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM APRIL 20, 2026 AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

Public Comment

Ms. Mulcahey spoke on the budget with concerns on the size of the Mayor's budget, concern on retirees and returning as contracted employees. She then spoke on an issues on the CSO project and a neighbor whose water service was impacted and still not working, her concerns with the lack of enforcement on homes that need repair, addressing traffic and speeding.

Ms. Stanaway spoke on the budget and asked for more officers on the streets, asked the change to the approach to the budget with more funding to parks/recreation, police and fire, and then after those funded and staffed, funding 5-6 people in the mayor's office.

Presentations

Council Member Hussain stepped away at 5:07 p.m.

Department Budget Presentations

Council President Spadafore noted 15 minutes as a guideline, as they did at the last meeting.

District Court

Judge Buchanan and Ms. Brewer went through the provided questions and shared items happening in the courts.

Council Member Hussain returned to the meeting 5:08 p.m.

QUESTION 1 -What are three accomplishments your department achieved last year. Working on assessing fines via financial empowerment office, and working on paying assessment form so they have financial details in advance of court determination. Landlord tenant cases, with judges evaluating the court process and created additional days a month for each case load. Lein certification training, receiving the highest ranking that is possible, acknowledging the staff.

QUESTION 2 – What are three priorities or goals your department aims to accomplish this year. AOT project – assisted outpatient treatment – treatment in the community instead of a hospital. A community based program that provides assistance and services. Fire arm relinquish project. Moving and transition to the new complex.

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

QUESTION 4 – How are staffing levels and vacancies affecting your budget and operations. Staffing levels are well staffed, only issues could be court officer or court reporter.

QUESTION 5 – What steps is your department taking to optimize the budget and contain costs. They asked for nothing this year, and plan to keep the budget status quo. Currently the management team is working on logistics, because in the new building there will be location changes in the offices.

QUESTION 6 – What internal metrics or performance based strategies ensure operational efficiency. For Michigan courts, there are monthly, quarterly and yearly stats that have to be submitted, which means a state guideline, and they continue to beat the state average on reporting.

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Council Member Kost asked about the line item budget, and if they utilize 311, and it was confirmed they do and they get stats from them. Council Member Kost asked Mr. Brower why their budget does not include 311. Mr. Brower stated that in the budget court is treated as a separate entity, so their 311 is under general fund cost, but would discuss with them. Council Member Kost asked if they are treated like a separate entity, would Council be considered separate entity. Mr. Brower stated Council is legislative, and Mayor is administrative, and court is a judicial court funding, and they do work together well. Council Member Kost stated that with Council being legislative they should not have 311 charge either.

Council Member Carter asked about the AOT program, asking if they expect any staffing or help with that. Judge Buchanan said this is coordination with probate court, this is to direct to probate, and do not expect additional staffing.

Council Member Hussain asked about funds in 2022 States Eviction Center, and asked if the program was for 2 years, and asked what the impact has been since that program went away, and also have any courts across Michigan that got those same funds, did they continue after the 2 years. Ms. Brewer stated that the legal aid office and agencies, have continued to work with courts in their landlord courts, they just do not have that one on one person to assist. As far as other courts across country, the goal was to be self sustaining, and some have taken it and run, and there are others that have come to a stand still like this court. They would like to come back to Council in the future to start the option again. Council Member Hussain, with this budget proposed there was nothing in the request, and Ms. Brewer stated they did not.

Council Member Nevarez Martinez asked why they did not ask to input that position back in the budget, and Ms. Brewer stated she did not have an answer for that at this time.

Mayor and Community Media

Mr. Mumby, Mr. Gabriel and Mr. Lawrence spoke on the departments.

Council Member Kost stepped away from the meeting at 5:24 p.m.

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

Mr. Lawrence went through the Mayor's office on the question:

Attended over 200+ meetings and events.

Worked with department directors and leaders to move Lansing forward on the three City projects.

Work with City staff on constituent questions.

Navigating relationship with new partners; LEPFA/Legends Global, new treasure and finance director.

Mr. Gabriel went through the City TV responses to the questions.

Strengthened community engagement, expanded with new programs in the schools, provided production and promotional support for Wilson Center, Everett, and LCC.

Expanded and modernized the equipment.

Increased media services; 159 meetings, 109 infield programs, and 68 programs produced.

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

Complete three facilities.

Council Member Kost returned to the meeting at 5:26 p.m.

Three CBA to negotiate this year.

Apply for competitive grants.

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Mr. Gabriel outlined their goals, including transition to their new location. Relocating and modernizing to the new City Hall in August, and lastly aiming to address new creators, and events.

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

No changes in the Mayor's budget

Mr. Gabriel stated their budget remains largely unchanged.

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

No staffing changes in the Mayor's office; fully staffed, and not expecting retirements.

Mr. Gabriel stated there are no new staffing changes, and operating a full staff with support, with only one vacancy recently in March.

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

Mayor's office evaluated office supplies, and borrow/share with other departments.

Mr. Gabriel explained they continue to maximize services to avoid spending and use internal services.

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

Tracking City credit ratings, via the Mayor's office.

Mr. Gabriel explained they rely on two; production data, editing turn around times, and equipment utilization data on check out rates, and replacement planning and resources.

Council Member Kost asked if City TV uses 311, and was told no. Council Member Kost asked about the Advanced Peace line item is, and Mr. Brower stated 25% to new location and still funding for \$325,000, matched with GF transfer. Council Member Kost asked what comes from the Sister Cities. Mr. Lawrence stated there is one in Turkey, South Korea, Japan, China, and Mr. Brower stated they do programming for international exchange, bringing students from school districts and expanding horizons and connecting Lansing to other areas, and could bring more information.

Council Member Garza asked Mayor's office, that IT went up \$50,000 and property allocation went up, and asked what that is for. Mr. Brower stated same purpose for everyone, making each department pay for the space they occupy and manage by public service. Regarding the IT increase, was a factor across City departments for all allocations. Mr. Mumby noted they did not add any new items in IT, everyone is paying more.

Council Member Spadafore noted that with those allocations; IT, property maintenance, 311, it is important to understand it is not removed from budget and put somewhere else but a percentage share of utilities. Mr. Brower confirmed that is accurate. With this you can bring in enterprise funds across the City to cover those costs.

Council Member Kost asked Mr. Brower about the property maintenance line item, and asked why courts is half of what Mayor is paying. Mr. Brower stated it is two buildings, and would have to look at those differences. Council Member Kost asked the information to be emailed. The funds would have to be reallocated, if the funds were not being spent, and not necessarily a cost savings, 311 will be cost share city wide. Council Member Kost asked to clarify, with the budget they do not have to spend all dollars brought in. Mr. Brower stated across the board they put in the raining day fund, which is 12% minimum in the raining day fund. Council Member Spadafore stated the property maintenance costs exists no matter where they are spread across. Mr. Brower stated to reduce 311 would have to reduce the 311 budget and the majority is staffing. Council Member Kost on the property maintenance, if every department is

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being charged, and they do not need it because we are prepaying for potential maintenance, is there a possibility that these departments could have excess funding. Mr. Brower, confirmed and stated with this funding model they can spread across, all the savings would go to the GF, and that costs can be averaged out over time so not large increases or decreases over years.

Council Member Spadafore noted that Council and Mayor have neglected maintenance and this is good maintaining.

Downtown Lansing, Inc.

Ms. Edgerly went through the questions provided in advance.

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

As PSD assessment to not cover all their budget, fund raising and grant funding has raised funds for services, supplies for tenant improvement, supports partnerships.

Role in future funding, track businesses, residents, visitors, retaining and recruiting businesses.

Partner with State on small business program for Middle Village to 67 local business owners.

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

Held a State of Downtown Workshop on priorities from stakeholders.

Develop grant program supporting business with a total of \$250,000, for 5 businesses.

QUESTION 3 – What has changed in your budget request, and what is one-time vs. ongoing. Decreased this year by \$750,000.

QUESTION 4 – How are staffing levels and vacancies affecting your budget and operations. There are no staffing vacancies.

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

They secure grants, to allow for public space improvements.

Trash and snow removal.

Partnered with departments on programs and campaigns for efficiency.

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

Monthly and annual reviews by Board and CPA, they review their goals and objectives, and use numbers for upcoming years, operational efficiencies, major impacts for the upcoming years.

Centralized reporting to stream line tasks.

Council Member Hussain asked about the 2023 food concept and fundraising, and is there somewhere to go. (Mucala-Knapps building). Ms. Edgerly stated they spent 3 years to make sure it was constructed to redesign for a flexible space, and the costs continued to grow and there was a fundraising gap and they could not continue, and maybe someday it will get picked up, but at this time DLI cannot afford. Council Member Hussain asked about downtown liability, how important is it to see state workers come back, or partner with state to off load some of their properties. Ms. Edgerly stated that remote work is not going away, the business model for downtown reliance on one business model, and to continue moving forward it so diversify business model downtown. There needs to be clarity on the plan on moving forward.

Council Member Spadafore asked about the businesses that were already having conversations with moving into Mucala-Knapps. Ms. Edgerly stated they did not have

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contracts with anyone, and they have been connecting them to existing spaces and vacant space and there are resources.

Human Resources

Ms. O'Leary and Ms. Moore went through the questions.

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

Streamline processes

Training platform

Electronic filing and storage

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

Performance management platform.

Creating new training plan for all employees

Streamlining process and partner with IT for off-boarding process.

Policy and procedure flow.

Filling vacancies.

QUESTION 3 – What has changed in your budget request, and what is one-time vs. ongoing. There are no significant changes in the budget.

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

Fully staffed with no vacancies, and 2 eligible for retirement and when they do there are succession plans.

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

Costs are scrutinized by directors.

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

Relatively small, and meet weekly for open dialogue and allows to stay up to date.

Debrief after process; example seasonal hiring process.

Continuing at areas of improvement.

Finance

Ms. Thomas and Mr. Randall went through the questions.

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

Received a number of awards on excellence with procurement practices.

Received the annual comprehensive report award for their reporting.

New leadership and establishing trust on new audit system.

Worked on developing processes where there were gaps/breakdowns/silos, and worked with Treasury, leadership and public services, looking where to collaborate and work with each other.

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

System for bank reconciliations, making timely balance, and based on actual roll.

Month, quarter and year end closing procedures; they have a calendar now that keep them on track to catalog.

Moving banks; 28 accounts.

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QUESTION 3 – What has changed in your budget request, and what is one-time vs. ongoing.
Received a modest increase; standard, so no changes.

QUESTION 4 – How are staffing levels and vacancies affecting your budget and operations.
Fully staffed and not a lot of turnover in the department. If there are funds, they could use more positions, but understand the funds are not available right now.

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

They utilize college interns, low cost/low hours.

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

Mr. Randall stated they are addressing the large number of bank accounts they are reconciling, investment accounts, and with this stated change earlier, with 750 reconciliations yearly, monitoring the bank reconciliations and statements.

Weekly updating meetings with staff.

Task reporting system;; Share point

Cross training staff.

Attempting to automate as much as possible.

Council Member Hussain stepped away at 6:22 p.m.

Council Member Pehlivanoglu asked about the banking institutions and why are they proposing changing them. Ms. Thomas stated she could not provide the answer to “why”, it was in process when she took over, and can research and provide at a later date on “why”. At this time it had to do with services, but cannot speak specifically at this time.

Treasury

Mr. Wright went through the questions.

Council Member Hussain returned to the meeting at 6:24 p.m.

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

The CSR- Customer Service Reps – 37,000 transaction by 3 individuals.

Office collected \$266 million in taxes.

Integrated technology in offices; refined the optic scanner, partnered with company on AI, and moved to cloud.

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

Work on more processes.

Deepen focus on deadlines and efficiency; being more proactive instead of playing catchup.

Conduct a process review on the scanner.

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

There have been funds shifted to overtime and also training.

Increase in training for required certifications and continuing education.

Shrink and keep line items the same to make up funds with efficiencies.

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

Income tax side, have had difficulty filling 2 vacancies. This has added work to other staff, so reallocated to temporary staff.

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

Optimization in organization; why and how of work to focus on what needs to be done.

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

BS&A along with City Tax, and ingrate internal clocks.

Council Member Spadafore noted that City Council will work on the budget over the next three weeks, and asked for any proposed changes before the next meeting or at the latest by 5:15 p.m. on Friday, May 15th.

Discussion/Action

RESOLUTION –Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plan for Fiscal Year 2026-2027, funding allocations

Council Member Pehlivanoglu recapped the memo from Mr. Van Fossen in the packet. Council President Spadafore noted this is an amended resolution since they now have the final numbers.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER PEHLIVANOGLU TO APPROVE THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT (CDBG) ANNUAL ACTIONPLAN FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027. MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

RESOLUTION – Reappointments to Multiple Boards and Commissions

Board of Fire Commissioners: Krishna Singh;
Board of Police Commissioners: Randy Watkins, Samuel Brewster;
Board of Review: Sharon Civils;
Board of Water & Light: David Price;
Board of Zoning Appeals: Kurt Berryman, Heath Lowry, Stephen Robertson;
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Board: Emily Sorroche;
Downtown Lansing, Inc. Board: Joshua Pugh;
Historic District Commission: Melissa Riba;
Lansing Entertainment and Public Facilities Authority Board of Commissioners: Patrick Spyke;
Next Michigan Development Corporation Board: Kris Klein;
Saginaw Street Corridor Improvement Authority Board of Directors: Diane Sanborn, Paul Schmidt;
Potter Park Zoo Board: Samantha Harkins;
Joint Building Authority Board of Commissioners: Jake Brower;
Board of Public Service: Samara Morgan, Hugh McNichol

Council Member Pehlivanoglu read the resolution:

Board of Fire Commissioners:
Krishna Singh as an At-Large Member for a term to expire June 30, 2030;
Board of Police Commissioners:
Randy Watkins as an At-Large Member for a term to expire June 30, 2030;
Samuel Brewster as the 2nd Ward Member for a term to expire June 30, 2030;
Board of Review:
Sharon Civils as an At-Large Member for a term to expire June 30, 2029;
Board of Water & Light:
David Price as an At-Large Member for a term to expire June 30, 2030;
Board of Zoning Appeals:
Kurt Berryman as an At-Large Member for a term to expire June 30, 2029;
Heath Lowry as an At-Large Member for a term to expire June 30, 2029;
Stephen Robertson as an At-Large Member for a term to expire June 30, 2029;
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Board:
Emily Sorroche as an At-Large Member with a term to expire June 30, 2030;

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Downtown Lansing, Inc. Board:

Joshua Pugh as an Adjacent Neighborhood Resident for a term to expire June 30, 2030;

Historic District Commission:

Melissa Riba as an At-Large Member for a term to expire June 30, 2029;

Lansing Entertainment and Public Facilities Authority Board of Commissioners:

Patrick Spyke as an At-Large Member for a term to expire June 30, 2029;

Next Michigan Development Corporation Board:

Kris Klein as an At-Large Member for a term to expire April 15, 2028;

Saginaw Street Corridor Improvement Authority Board of Directors:

Diane Sanborn as a Member for a term to expire June 30, 2030;

Paul Schmidt as a Member for a term to expire June 30, 2030;

Potter Park Zoo Board:

Samantha Harkins as a City of Lansing Member for a term to expire December 31, 2029;

Joint Building Authority Board of Commissioners:

Jake Brower as City of Lansing Appointee for a term to expire June 30, 2030;

Board of Public Service:

Samara Morgan as an At -Large Member for a term to expire June 30, 2030;

Hugh McNichol as the 2nd Ward Member for a term to expire June 30, 2030;

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER PEHLIVANOGLU TO APPROVE THE RESOLUTION FOR THE ANNUAL REAPPOINTMENTS TO MULTIPLE BOARDS AND COMMISSION AS FOLLOWS:

Board of Fire Commissioners: Krishna Singh;

Board of Police Commissioners: Randy Watkins, Samuel Brewster;

Board of Review: Sharon Civils;

Board of Water & Light: David Price;

Board of Zoning Appeals: Kurt Berryman, Heath Lowry, Stephen Robertson;

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Board: Emily Sorroche;

Downtown Lansing, Inc. Board: Joshua Pugh;

Historic District Commission: Melissa Riba;

Lansing Entertainment and Public Facilities Authority Board of Commissioners: Patrick Spyke;

Next Michigan Development Corporation Board: Kris Klein;

Saginaw Street Corridor Improvement Authority Board of Directors: Diane Sanborn, Paul Schmidt;

Potter Park Zoo Board: Samantha Harkins;

Joint Building Authority Board of Commissioners: Jake Brower;

Board of Public Service: Samara Morgan, Hugh McNichol

Council President Spadafore noted this is due the first meeting in June.

MOTION CARRIED 8-0.

DISCUSSION – Budget Policies to be adopted as part of the FY2026/2027 Budget

Council President Spadafore noted these are up for discussion, and there are lined out items not relevant. Page 2, added current practice into vacancy report, removed Charter Commission because they have disbanded, page 3 removed the Financial Health Team because they no longer exist. If there are proposed changes, if there, please work with OCA to make sure the language conforms.

OTHER

No other topics.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at: 6:38 pm

Respectfully Submitted by,

Sherrie Boak, Recording Secretary, Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee