



Minutes
Committee on Equity, Diversity & Inclusion
Tuesday, September 1, 2026 @ 4:00 p.m.
City Council Conference Room

CALL TO ORDER

Council Member Kost called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Council Member Kost, Chair
Council Member Pehlivanoglu, Vice-Chair
Council Member Nevarez Martinez, Member

OTHERS PRESENT

Sherrie Boak, Council Office Manager
Lisa Hagen-Lawrence, OCA
Delvata Moses, HRCS
Amy Crank, HRCS
Rawley Van Fosse, EDP
Andy Kilpatrick, Public Service
Chris Swope, City Clerk

Minutes

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER PEHLIVANOGLU TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM AUGUST 18, 2026, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment at this time.

DISCUSSION/ACTION

Services to Senior Citizens in the City of Lansing

Council Member Kost recapped the last meeting on details that were presented then.

Ms. Moses and Ms. Crank summarized what HRCS offers in programs for seniors. This included initiatives and resources and try to prioritize to make everything accessible. If they need assistance for services, they make that available. They have critical services teams for utilities and eviction assistance and partner with other agencies with those. They have a birth certificate program, they do emergency transportation, along with community mediation and community rights complaints. In addition, if the public contacts them, for a service that the City does not offer, they will navigate to help them get the service they need. They have done site visits at senior housing, checking on seniors, and emergency hoteling assistance for medically challenged seniors. At the senior fair, the department did provide fresh produce to the seniors. They do a housing resource fair, allowing them to ask questions on their specific senior issues, rent smart and tenant landlord complaints. The HRCS does offer funding to senior agencies, including 5 specific to seniors. DAP sources and resources; Forester Woods which is an adult

day service, team with RSVP – Retired or Senior Volunteer Program, Southside Community Coalition, Tri County Office of Aging, and then 19 other program not specific to seniors, but have been told that a large portion of their members are seniors.

Council Member Kost asked when the housing fair is, and was told in a couple months, because they did one in April, and intend on 2 a year. Council Member Kost asked for details on Rent Smart. Ms. Moses stated it prepares renters on what look for in a lease, what is legal and what is not, how to inspect, questions they should ask the landlord, and educate them on the rental process. They are finalizing the date on that one, planning end of September or early October. Council Member Kost asked if they had any budget priority Council can ask for, something they don't have they would benefit from. Ms. Moses said she considered providing fresh produce to the seniors occasionally, and taking to them. They will reach out to the seniors and see where the gap is.

Council Member Pehlivanoglu asked if there are dedicated staff in HRCS to bridge the digital gap with the seniors. Ms. Moses stated they do not have anything specific, and if they call the office they do take them through the process and will look into that. Council Member Kost asked if maybe the 311 can provide that assistance to senior citizens.

Council Member Nevarez Martinez asked if they have witnessed something going on that has caused impact on the seniors. Ms. Moses and Ms. Crank stated there has been a larger impact on the homeless seniors. The committee spoke briefly on home prices, rents, and values.

Handicap Parking and Enforcement

Mr. Van Fossen stated that parking services does enforce handicap in the City, and as a backup there are 4 officers. Not all on the same shift, with one going as late as 8 pm. They have daily routes; handicap on the downtown, Old Town, REO Town streets, major streets, parking lots at hospitals, and other areas are enforced on complaint based. Those complaints can be added via Lansing Connect. The three violations carry the \$110 fine, then to \$120 after 14 days, then \$150 after 21 days. Failure to display the placard, expired, or blocking a handicap aisle. From 1/1/2026 to 8/19/2026 they have issued 1397 violations to handicap parking, Permitting for handicap parking is either permanent, or temporary, and the City has no involvement in the issuance of that.

Council Member Kost referred to private lots (Kroger and Meijer), and Mr. Van Fossen stated it is a complaint based.

Council Member Pehlivanoglu asked Mr. Van Fossen if there is anything he would need Council to ask for in budget priorities. Mr. Van Fossen stated he would add to senior services, the City is using CDBG funds for Tuesday Toolman, which is a volunteer effort of retired individuals to build ramps for seniors, and that was renewed, but to expand that and not seniors specifically, then housing, access to safe housing, and growing incentive tools.

Council Member Kost said he and Council Member Carter spoke to OCA on options to move forward on housing.

Council Member Kost asked if they have lost code officers, and Mr. Van Fossen confirmed one person did leave.

Council Member Kost asked about the number of parking, and it was confirmed 4 dedicated. Mr. Van Fossen confirmed they have always had 4 in his time here, and would have to work with HR and see if enforcement staff was higher or lower. Mr. Kilpatrick stated there at one time was 9, but priorities might be different now. Council Member Kost stated council could consider

adding, and Mr. Van Fossen stated parking is a enterprise fund, and if Council wants to explore they can look into it.

Council Member Nevarez Martinez stated she would normally not support asking for fees just to ask for fees, but would support if they hired another employee specific for handicap parking and see the impact, and need a study that it is real, and people are being burdened.

Mr. Van Fossen stated he wanted to let the Committee know that Mr. King was not able to be here, and sent his regrets.

Maintenance Goals for raingardens on Michigan Avenue

Council Member Kost noted a report in the packet from 2008 when the rain gardens were installed. He then asked Mr. Kilpatrick, on moving forward, what can be done on maintenance, are there volunteers or students. Mr. Kilpatrick stated they are doing what they are meant to do, the fences are there for safety because they are low. The design was changed in some areas, and the fences were removed. The area up to Larch are maintained by DLI, and so it leaves the area up to Pennsylvania. A program for adopt a rain garden would be something, the State or U of M might adopt, and in some areas where there is trash they can look at other designs. Mr. Kilpatrick stated for what they are engineered for, it is doing the job. Open for discussions on what can be done, maybe different planted, and they do have to be specific for the areas. Council Member Kost noted the one by Stober's and Moriarity some people might have stepped in those, they do flood, and Mr. Kilpatrick stated he can look at those. Council Member Kost asked about an adopt a garden, and specific plants, can the neighboring businesses let them know what to do. Mr. Kilpatrick stated they do have a consultant. Council Member Nevarez Martinez asked if there would be a cost to train, and Mr. Kilpatrick stated they would advise for free, and Council Member Nevarez Martinez spoke on students and groups at MSU that would be interested in adopting one.

Council Members asked Mr. Kilpatrick on his budget priorities, and Mr. Kilpatrick noted that there are a lot of old sewer leads, maybe a revolving loan program, and impact on senior housing. Ms. Hagen Lawrence stated OCA can be involved in the discussion, and Mr. Kilpatrick stated in the sanitary sewer program enterprise fund, and would have to reflect. Council Member Nevarez Martinez asked if there is something Council can do, and Mr. Kilpatrick stated with the enterprise funds you have to justify and subsidize those funds. Council Member Kost asked about a loan out of the enterprise fund, and how far can they go on a loan like that for sewer similar to sidewalks. Mr. Kilpatrick stated sidewalks loans are 10 year, but private sewer you cannot. Ms. Hagen Lawrence stated they are limited on the enterprise funds.

RESOLUTION – Introduce and Set Public Hearing – Add Chapter 873, Section 873.01-873.11; Licensing & Regulations for Virtual Currency Machines

Council Member Kost recapped this would set penalties and regulate the bitcoin machines, require registration, and appear like ATM, but some people are putting money in them unknown and scammed.

Council Member Pehlivanoglu reviewed the ordinance, and it lays out the definition of the moving parts, provisions on a dollar threshold, licensed required to operate, illegal to operate without, provisions on the application, location, customer service help line, and essentially consumer protection. It does list penalties, fines and revocation if the ordinance is violated.

Council Member Kost this would be a yearly requirement, and believed it is ready to move forward.

Mr. Swope stated he was present to speak on the new license, and there are many types like this where it is in another business where they are chasing people to register. The owner of

the business sometimes doesn't know that the business coming in does not know of this requirement, which puts his office in a role of tracking people and enforcing where some have a license and some don't. With a requirement of a business license, his office will have a hard time of tracking them down. Council Member Nevarez Martinez noted at that last meeting she asked about how is this going to be enforced. Mr. Swope stated if they hear a complaint, they enforce. Council Member Nevarez Martinez stated they already know where some are, can they send a post card; Dairy Queen, etc. Mr. Swope stated that would be helpful and would have to look at violations to see if it impacts the business housing, etc. Council Member Pehlivanoglu stated this ordinance will address it will be both the provider and the provider of where it is housed. Mr. Swope stated they used regulate towing companies, and then there was litigation and with state regulation, the City was pushed out, and asked if Council researched into what other regulation there is that would block this. Council Member Kost asked Mr. Thiel and he confirmed this is a gray area. Ms. Hagen Lawrence that was reviewed, and what is regulated at the State level, and it is silent so there is some room for the City to handle through this ordinance. Mr. Swope encouraged the Council to add a resolution to ask the State to address. Mr. Swope said he does not have the staff to enforce the underlying requirements and do not have the ability to enforce, and has no investigatory ability, and they might want to consider carefully if each location is a license, or each business a license and if a violation is specific to all locations or that specific locations. Council Member Pehlivanoglu noted the enforcement, if the administration does not have the capacity to enforce, how do they move forward for what the intent is. Typically the first call would be LPD, police report, and not really the clerk. With it comes to revocation, is it just the machine, the place, all places of business. Council Member Kost asked OCA if they need time for answers, and Ms. Hagen Lawrence stated possibly the wording in the draft could be worded to address. LPD would be the enforcing body to write civil infraction, and regarding if license is location, it would be each individual location, so the revocation would be the individual location. Council Member Kost asked for additional discussion with OCA, Clerk and Council Member Pehlivanoglu. Ms. Hagen Lawrence stated the Clerk would issue the license and the LPD would enforce. She was asked if the ordinance needs to reflect complaint based. Ms. Hagen Lawrence stated there is nothing in the ordinance that would stop LPD from seeing one and addressing it. Mr. Swope stated you do not want to require complaint based.

MOTION BY COUNCIL MEMBER PEHLIVANOGLU TO TABLE UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING.
MOTION CARRIED 3-0.

The Committee chose the next meeting to be September 15, 2026 at 4 pm.

DISCUSSION – Budget Priorities for FY 2027/2028

Council Member Kost noted the items in the packet. One at the last meeting on the list was the Veterans Assistance program, and with the Executive Order from 2019 he spoke to the Mayor, and he has struggled on getting meeting together. He suggested removing item 3 from the list, since there is a commission.

With the first item. Housing Support- keep

Council Member Pehlivanoglu spoke on item #2 – Citizen Complaint, HRCS has a tri-fold on details on how to lodge a human rights complaint. The list of complaints are anyone, not city employees. This was created before 311 and maybe they should consider suggesting \$50,000 towards one suggestion submitted earlier from Council Member Nevarez Martinez. Council Member Nevarez Martinez asked if they can add Lansing Connect.

Council Member Kost referred to 273.06 on Examination of complaints; hearings and studies. Ms. Hagen Lawrence stated that ordinance goes beyond the scope of what an advisory committee can do, and OCA issued an opinion that it is unenforceable, and recommended it be repealed. Council Member Kost asked what that means since it was not repealed, and was told it is on the books, unenforceable, and not operational. Council Member Kost stated that at the time Council said it was not repealed because Council did not agree with and asked for outside

Counsel and the OCA told them they could not have reviewed by outside counsel. Council Member Nevarez Martinez asked if the new City Attorney holds the same opinion, and Ms. Hagen -Lawrence stated her opinion that they do believe, and there were other changes at the time there were other changes. Council Member Nevarez Martinez asked if the current OCA that Council can't look at other counsel. Ms. Hagen Lawrence stated she cannot answer that and would speak to Mr. Venker. This can be brought at the next meeting. Council Member Pehlivanoglu stated that when the HRCS Complaint is filed in the flyer it is different then the 273.06. Ms. Hagen Lawrence stated the function in question, that is a function by the department not the Advisory Board. Council Member Kost asked how it was on the books since 1997, and then in 2023 it was problem, and the OCA then said it was not enforceable. Council Member Nevarez Martinez asked if there is anything in then 273 can stop people from filing through the Lansing Connect or 311. This should be modified.

Item 3 – strike

Item 4 – strike

Item 6 – Council Member Pehlivanoglu noted that through parks and recreation, there seems to be a gap with a portion of the community (low functioning with autism, that have aged out of the education system and are adults) have not activities to do in the city. This could be partnering with other agencies.

Council Member Nevarez Martinez went through the list:

\$100,000 – Citywide Language Access & Accessibility: Dedicated funding for translation of essential City materials, interpretation at meetings and resident appointments, ASL/CART services, multilingual outreach, and development/implementation of a citywide language access plan.

\$250,000 – Increase Basic Human Services/Racial Justice & Equity funding: An additional investment in community-based organizations addressing housing instability, food insecurity, language/immigration barriers, disability/accessibility needs, and other disparities affecting Lansing residents.

\$100,000 – Equitable Contracting & Small Business Access: Fund an assessment of disparities/barriers in City procurement and contracting, along with technical assistance to help small, local, minority-, women-, and immigrant-owned businesses compete for City contracts.

The consensus of the Committee was interested in adding the three items.
The work will be finished at the next meeting.

Other

No other topics of discussion.

Adjourn

Adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

Submitted, Sherrie Boak

Recording Secretary, Lansing City Council

Approved by the Committee on