Birmingham City Commission Minutes
March 24, 2025
Municipal Building, 151 Martin
7:30 p.m.
Vimeo Link: https://vimeo.com/1069016786

I. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Therese Longe, Mayor, opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. ROLL CALL

City Clerk Bingham called the roll.

Present: Mayor Longe
MPT Baller
Commissioner Haig
Commissioner Host
Commissioner Long

Absent: Commissioner Emerine
Commissioner Schafer

Staff: City Manager Ecker; City Clerk Bingham, Finance Director Designee Chavez, Human Resources Manager Ciluffo, Assistant City Manager Clemence, Library Director Craft, Planning Director Dupuis, Assistant City Manager Fairbairn, Police Captain Kearney, City Attorney Kucharek, Parks and Recreation Manager Laird, Human Resources Generalist Matti, Fire Marshall Scaife, Fire Chief Wells, Department of Public Services Director Zielinski, Building Official Designee Zielke

III. PROCLAMATIONS, CONGRATULATORY RESOLUTIONS, AWARDS, APPOINTMENTS, RESIGNATIONS AND CONFIRMATIONS, ADMINISTRATION OF OATHS, INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements

Oakland County Treasury Foreclosure Prevention

Appointments

03-046-25 Appointment of Mary Chavez to Finance Director/Treasurer

MOTION: Motion by Haig:
To confirm the City Manager's appointment of Mary Chavez to the position of Finance Director/Treasurer effective on March 31, 2025, to direct the Clerk to administer the oath of office, and to authorize Mary Chavez to be the primary authorized signer on all the City's bank accounts.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, MPT Baller
Commissioner Host
Commissioner Haig
Mayor Longe
Commissioner Long

Nays, None

03-047-25 Planning Board

Scott Clein was interviewed for the appointment.

MOTION: Motion by Haig:
To appoint Scott Clein as a regular member to serve a three-year term to expire March 28, 2028.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, MPT Baller

Commissioner Host
Commissioner Haig
Mayor Longe
Commissioner Long

Nays, None

03-048-25 Planning Board

Robert Boyle was interviewed for the appointment.

MOTION: Motion by Long:
To appoint Robert Boyle as a regular member to serve a three-year term to expire March 28, 2028.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, MPT Baller
Commissioner Host
Commissioner Haig
Mayor Longe
Commissioner Long

Nays, None

03-049-25 Planning Board

Duncan Currie was interviewed for the appointment.

MOTION: Motion by Host:
To appoint Duncan Currie as an alternate member to serve the remainder of a three-year term to expire March 28, 2027.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, MPT Baller
~~Commissioner Emerine~~[1]
Commissioner Host
Commissioner Haig
~~Commissioner Schafer~~[2]
Mayor Longe
Commissioner Long

Nays, None

03-050-25 Multi-Modal Transportation Board

Z. Rosie Koul was interviewed for the appointment.

MOTION: Motion by Haig:
To appoint Z. Rosie Koul as a regular member to the Multi-Modal Transportation Board to serve the remainder of a three-year term to expire March 24, 2028.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, MPT Baller
Commissioner Host
Commissioner Haig
Mayor Longe
Commissioner Long

Nays, None

03-051-25 Parks and Recreation Board

Anne Lipp was interviewed for the appointment.

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[1]As amended at the April 7, 2025 meeting.
[2]As amended at the April 7, 2025 meeting.

MOTION: Motion by Long:
To appoint Anne Lipp as a regular member to the Parks and Recreation Board to serve a three-year term to expire March 13, 2028.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, MPT Baller
Commissioner Host
Commissioner Haig
Mayor Longe
Commissioner Long

Nays, None

03-052-25 Parks and Recreation Board

Narlu Castellano was interviewed for the appointment.

MOTION: Motion by Baller:
To appoint Narlu Castellano as an alternate member to the Parks and Recreation Board to serve a three-year term to expire March 13, 2028.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, MPT Baller
Commissioner Host
Commissioner Haig
Mayor Longe
Commissioner Long

Nays, None

Jessica Einstein and Jerome Dixon were not interviewed, Jack Burns and Sandy Labovitz were interviewed for the Parks and Recreation Board but not appointed.

CC Bingham swore in the present appointees.

IV. OPEN TO THE PUBLIC FOR MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

Danielle Rumpel, Baldwin Library Board President, commented regarding the City's administrative service fees for Baldwin and the need for the City to provide financial information to Baldwin prior to Baldwin's board meetings.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

03-053-25 Consent Agenda

MOTION: Motion by Haig, seconded by Long:
To move the consent agenda as written with the exception of Items B, E, G, and J.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, MPT Baller
Commissioner Host
Commissioner Haig
Mayor Longe
Commissioner Long

Nays, None

A. Resolution to approve the City Commission workshop meeting minutes of March 10, 2025.

C. Resolution to approve the warrant list, including Automated Clearing House payments, dated March 13, 2025 in the amount of $2,595,263.83.

D. Resolution to approve the warrant list, including Automated Clearing House payments, dated March 20, 2025 in the amount of $1,533,958.95.

F. Resolution to approve the Interlocal Agreement between the City of Birmingham and

Oakland County and authorize the Mayor and City Manager to sign the agreement on behalf of the city.

H. Resolution to set a public hearing date of April 21, 2025 to consider the Special Land Use Permit for 1740 W. Maple to transfer ownership and grant a Special Land Use Permit to the proposed new owner, 10 & Main OOOM, LLC.

I. Resolution demonstrating support of the Derby Road bridge project committing to a 50% match to the cost of replacement, and submittal of an application to the Michigan Department of Transportation for fiscal year 2028 funding assistance under their Local Bridge Program.

K. Resolution to approve the purchase of a new 2025 TORO Multi Pro 5800-G 4WD Sprayer Cart from Spartan Distributors located at 1050 Opdyke Road, Auburn Hills, MI 48326, through the Intergovernmental Cooperative Purchasing Agreement, OMNIA Contract #2017025, in the amount not to exceed $75,549.64 upon the execution of a signed contract. In addition, to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the agreement on behalf of the City. Funds for this purchase are available in the FY 2024-2025 account Auto Equipment FY 2024-2025 account #661.0-441.006.971.0100.

L. Resolution approving the request for additional design and construction administration services with Grissim, Metz, Andriese for the amount of $108,200. Funds are available in the Park System Construction Fund, Land Improvements Account #408.2-901.751-979.0000. Further, to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the agreement addendum on behalf of the City.

M. Resolution to accept the resignation of Julie Sloan from the Birmingham Shopping District Board, to thank her for her service and to direct the City Clerk to begin the process of filling the vacancy.

03-054-25 Meeting Minutes – March 10, 2025 (Item B)

Commissioner Haig pulled Item B and offered a clarification regarding the referenced senior millage.

Commissioner comments were as follows:
- The referenced senior millage focused more on infrastructure than services.
- If a change to the disbursement process were to be contemplated, that would necessitate a discussion.

MOTION: Motion by Haig, seconded by Host:
To approve the City Commission regular meeting minutes of March 10, 2025 as written.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, MPT Baller
Commissioner Host
Commissioner Haig
Mayor Longe
Commissioner Long

Nays, None

03-055-25 Woodward Ave. Service Drive Parking Restrictions (Item E)

Commissioner Haig pulled Item E and noted the City's efforts towards reducing noise along Woodward.

Commissioner comments were as follows:
- The Multi-Modal Transportation Board and Police Department are working to reduce noise along Woodward within the constraints of what the City controls.
- This was a successful pilot program in 2024, and this motion would make these changes permanent.
- The Police Chief and Police Department deserved thanks for their efforts in this regard.

MOTION: Motion by Haig, seconded by Long:

To permanently enact Woodward Ave. service drive parking restrictions as recommended by the Multi-Modal Transportation Board as follows:

1. 15-Minute Parking, 7 PM to 6 AM, Friday through Sunday:
   Southbound Woodward
   - Oakland to Brown
   - Lincoln to Davis
   - North edge of 33301 Woodward to Bird

   Northbound Woodward
   - Elm to Maple
   - Emmons to S. Adams
   - S. Worth to the south edge of 34164 Woodward
   - North edge of 35032 Woodward to Lawndale
2. 15-Minute Parking, 7 PM to 6 AM, Friday through Sunday:
   - Northbound Woodward from Sheffield to Emmons
3. 15-Minute Parking, 7 PM to 6 AM, Friday through Sunday:
   - 30-minute parking: Southbound Woodward from Brown to Hazel

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, MPT Baller
Commissioner Host
Commissioner Haig
Mayor Longe
Commissioner Long

Nays, None

03-056-25 Green Kitchen, LLC, doing business as Bloom, is requesting approval to transfer ownership and Location of a Class C License from Tiger Hospitality Holdings, LLC, formerly located at 27522 Northwestern Hwy, Southfield MI, to Green Kitchen which will be located at 239 N. Old Woodward Ave, Birmingham, MI. (Item G)

Commissioner Haig pulled Item G, recommending a small change in verbiage.

MOTION: Motion by Haig, seconded by Long:
To authorize the City Clerk to complete the Local Approval Notice at the request of Green Kitchen LLC, to approve the request for a transfer of ownership of the Class C liquor license, with Sunday sales from Tiger Hospitality Holdings LLC, formerly located at 27522 Northwestern Hwy, Southfield, MI to Green Kitchen that will be located at 239 N Old Woodward Ave, Birmingham, Oakland County, MI, changing 'restaurant' in the report to 'food and drink establishment' to eliminate potential future ambiguity.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, MPT Baller
Commissioner Host
Commissioner Haig
Mayor Longe
Commissioner Long

Nays, None

03-057-25 Birmingham Well Sites Park Designations (Item J)

Commissioner Host pulled Item J, recommending the Parks and Recreation Department consider name changes to the listed parks.

MOTION: Motion by Host, seconded by Haig:
To designate the following "well sites" as parks: Baldwin Well, Derby Tank, Pumphouse Park, Redding Well, and West Lincoln Well sites.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, MPT Baller
Commissioner Host
Commissioner Haig
Mayor Longe
Commissioner Long

Nays, None

VI. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

CM Ecker and HRM Ciluffo presented the report. CM Ecker answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners raised the following points during discussion:

- There were some concerns about the content of a recent City email regarding the proposed recreation center. The use of photos was questionable, and some of the statements presented as factual were either subjective or speculative.
- There is a need for community education. A year into this process, some members of the public are still confused about the general contours of the project. This indicates that more communication needs to occur.
- Educational campaigns regarding this project and containing validated information are appropriate, and should increase in frequency.
- The Commission could review communications to the public if deemed appropriate.
- Given some of the emotions around this project, the City's communications should be kept as careful, simple, and neutral as possible.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Schematic Design Progress and Test Fits - Birmingham Community and Senior Center

CM Ecker introduced the item, and Jim Stock of Neumann Smith and CM Ecker presented the item.

Commissioners raised the following points during discussion:

- The SCC felt option one was a more efficient use of space and more appropriate for Next's preferred uses.
- Changes to St. James Park could occur in conjunction with this project. Neighbors to the Park should be consulted on potential changes.
- While members of the SCC and the public raised some concerns about the test fit, it remained important to remember this is just one more part of a process that allows for revisions and modifications.
- Option one seemed to fit better in the neighborhood context.
- Toilets could be added to option one near the office area for shared Next/staff use, as well as a possible separate entrance for Next on the east side. The Next fitness room and the multipurpose room could be swapped in order to locate all of Next's walls closer together.
- Pool option three seemed more appropriate.
- If St. James Park is condensed to accommodate this building, it should be confirmed that baseballs would still be unlikely to affect the residential neighbors.
- Avoiding unmonitored space in the building would be necessary. Using keyfobs for Next entrances would be inappropriate.
- Resident comments regarding the pool have been valuable.
- The distance between accessible parking and the Midvale entrance is 180 feet. At the new facility, concerns about the distance between accessible parking and the entrance should not arise if it is under 180 feet.
- The proposal to have a rooftop deck raises some concerns.
- A local elementary school kitchen is 300 square feet. The new facility's proposed kitchen could likely be smaller.
- There are plans for stormwater retention on site which would help mitigate the loss of 42 feet of permeable space in St. James Park.
- The City may be aiming to fit too many features or programs into the available space.
- Concerns about the methodicalness of this process remain.
- The City must evaluate whether a new facility is necessary for service delivery, since service delivery is the goal.
- Using a small portion of St. James Park for parking had been contemplated and approved for a different project in the past.
- Some Next users would prefer to stay at Midvale, or would prefer to have their own space, as opposed to a shared space at this facility.

Public Comment
David Bloom commented regarding community use of the facility and supported the project's review by the Planning Board.

Camille Jayne, Board President of The Community House, supported Next having one location to house most of its services and opposed this potential project having 'community' in the title.

Christine Allen, board member of Next, commented that Next board members communicate on behalf of Next's membership, that the kitchen would be for community use in addition to Next use, and that Next should have one location to house most of its services.

Frank Pisano supported the third pool option and increased resident education about the project overall.

Mike Clift supported a covered entrance to the facility.

YMCA/Next – Senior Services

CM Ecker introduced the item, and Patrick McGow of Miller Canfield and CM Ecker presented the item. Mr. McGow and staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners raised the following points during discussion:
- It may be appropriate to state within the ballot question that Next and the YMCA are involved in this project.
- It may be appropriate to mention interest or an estimated total cost for the bond.
- Any time after the first ten years, bonds can be refinanced and/or paid off early.
- The presently proposed bond language would allow the City to replace the tenants of the building as appropriate.
- Since Next and the YMCA, as two private non-profit organizations, would have use of this building, there would need to be a public hearing regarding the bond issue. That public hearing should be added to the project timeline.
- The City's recent senior millage should be factored in more clearly to the discussion of funding for this project.
- The average Birmingham resident may see a slight decrease in taxes, even with the bond issue, if certain changes to the senior millage, Library levy, and City's operating levy are effectuated.
- It is likely the City will require a Headlee override in the future, and this project and other capital projects should be considered within that context.
- Concerns were shared about the City administration's approach to communication with the Library, and the City administration's approach to communication with the Commission and the public about the Library.
- All parties must figure out how to negotiate on funding collaboratively in order to reach the most optimal outcome for all involved.
- A 20 year bond would be more favorable than a 25 year bond.
- The 2016 Commission and City administration deserved commendation for its fiscal stewardship vis-a-vis the Library renovation project.
- The interlocal agreements should be discussed in the future.
- 'Community' could be changed to 'recreation' in the working title of the 400 E. Lincoln project.

The Commission motioned to take a five minute recess, and returned from recess.

Public Comment
LD Craft commented regarding the Baldwin Library's status as a Public Act 164 library, and the Library's plans to formalize its establishment.

Ms. Rumpel commented regarding how potential funding decreases by the City would affect the Baldwin Library.

Mr. Pisano commented that in addition to the City's potential funding decrease for the Library, a recent Presidential Executive Order would further limit library funding.

Melissa Mark and Jim Suhay commented regarding the 1998 millage for the Library, and the subsequent use of those funds.

Wendy Friedman commented regarding the Library's integration with the community.

Karen Rock supported the previous public comments regarding the Library, and supported good communication between the Library and the City.

George Dilgard supported negotiations between the City and the Library, supported a 25 year bond for the facility at 400 E. Lincoln, and supported the project at 400 E. Lincoln overall.

Mr. Bloom commented regarding the Library, the potential bond vote timing and language, and the potential financing of the project at 400 E. Lincoln.

Ms. Koul opposed the project at 400 E. Lincoln, citing perceptions of insufficient public support, Next's responsibility to maintain its own financial solvency, and perceived need for funds to be spent elsewhere in the City.

Kristy Barrett supported the other public comments given.

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

03-058-25 Public Hearing for 225 E. Maple – Social Kitchen & Bar – Special Land Use Permit Amendment, Final Site Plan & Design Review

Mayor Longe opened the public hearing at 11:40 p.m. and noted a request to postpone.

Seeing no public comment, the Mayor closed the public hearing at 11:41 p.m.

MOTION: Motion by Long, seconded by Host:
To postpone the public hearing date to April 21, 2025 to consider the Special Land Use Permit Amendment, Final Site Plan & Design Review application for 225 E. Maple, to permit the replacement of the current outdoor dining patio on the via (east) side of the building with an aluminum pergola with roof and enclosure systems and to permit a bistro with 76 outdoor dining seats.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, Commissioner Host
MPT Baller
Mayor Longe
Commissioner Long
Commissioner Haig

Nays, None

03-059-25 Public Hearing to amend Chapter 126, Zoning, Article 4, Accessory Structure Standards, Section 4.03, to add provisions for standby generators

Mayor Longe opened the public hearing at 11:42 p.m.

PD Dupuis presented the item

The Mayor closed the public hearing at 11:46 p.m.

Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioner raised the following points during discussion:
- The City should recommend that residents take steps to reduce the entry of generator exhaust into buildings when a generator is in operation.
- This is an effort to reduce the burden generators can place on emergency services, and to improve residents' health, safety, and welfare.

MOTION: Motion by Haig, seconded by Long:
To adopt an ordinance to amend Chapter 126, Zoning, Article 4, Accessory Structure Standards, Section 4.03, to add provisions for standby generators.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, Commissioner Host
MPT Baller
Mayor Longe
Commissioner Long
Commissioner Haig

Nays, None

Commission Items for Future Discussion

Commissioner Haig reiterated that interlocal agreements should be further discussed at a future meeting.

Commission Discussion On Items From A Prior Meeting

IV. REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

X. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Communications regarding the Birmingham Community and Senior Center
B. Communication regarding parks
C. Communication regarding roads

XI. REPORTS

A. Commissioner Reports
   1. Notice of Intention to appoint to the Building Trades Appeals
   2. Notice of Intention to appoint to the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority
   3. Notice of Intention to appoint to the Business Shopping District
B. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Host said he was sad that most who made public comment had to wait until discussion of the relevant item, which occurred later in the meeting.

Commissioners Long, Haig, and MPT Baller supported more actively encouraging student representatives on boards to attend, and potentially replacing student representatives who are regularly absent.

C. Advisory Boards, Committees, Commissions' Reports and Agendas
D. Legislation
E. City Staff
   1. Planning Department Annual Report

Commissioner comment was as follows:

- The graphics were impressive.

   2. Next Bylaws and Financial Information

INFORMATION ONLY

XII. ADJOURN

The Commission motioned to adjourn at 12:00 a.m.

Alexandria D. Bingham

Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk

Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist