

Birmingham City Commission Minutes
April 7, 2025
Municipal Building, 151 Martin
7:30 p.m.
Vimeo Link: <https://vimeo.com/1073347734>

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 Emerine
Commissioner Haig
Commissioner Host
Commissioner Long
Commissioner Schafer

Absent: None

Staff: Assistant City Manager Fairbairn; City Clerk Bingham, City Planner Blizinski,
Assistant City Manager Clemence, City Engineer Coatta, Planning Director Dupuis,
City Attorney Kucharek, Police Captain Wald, Fire Chief Wells, Department of Public
Services Director Zielinski

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

Announcements

Happy Birthday Commissioner Schafer

Appointments

04-060-25 Architectural Review Committee

Charles Heid was interviewed for the appointment.

MOTION: Motion by Long:
To appoint Charles Heid as a regular member to the Architectural Review Committee to serve a three-year term to expire April 11, 2028.

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

Nays, None

04-061-25 Cablecasting Board

Jim Cleary was interviewed for the appointment.

MOTION: Motion by Baller:

To appoint Jim Cleary to the Cablecasting Board as a regular member to serve a three-year term to expire March 30, 2028.

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

Nays, None

CC Bingham swore in the appointees.

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

Kathleen Devereaux commented that the City should take action regarding a tree-related concern on Rivenoak.

David Bloom commented regarding other municipalities contributing to the 400 E. Lincoln project.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

04-062-25 Consent Agenda

MOTION: Motion by Haig, seconded by Long:
To approve the consent agenda except for Items A, F, and G.

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

Nays, None

- B. Resolution to approve the warrant list, including Automated Clearing House payments, dated March 27, 2025 in the amount of \$1,057,918.42.
- C. Resolution to approve the warrant list, including Automated Clearing House payments, dated April 3, 2025 in the amount of \$282,336.70.
- D. Resolution to approve a special event permit as requested by the City of Birmingham Department of Public Services to hold the Pumpkin Patch event on October 25, 2025 contingent upon compliance with all permit and insurance requirements and payment of all fees and, further pursuant to any minor modifications that may be deemed necessary by administrative staff at the time of the event, or event cancellation that may be deemed necessary by administrative staff, leading up to or at the time of the event.
- E. Resolution to receive reimbursement from Oakland County for the purchased larvicide materials from Clarke Mosquito Control.

04-063-25 Meeting Minutes – March 24, 2025 (Item A)

Commissioners Emerine and Host pulled Item A, correcting one vote count and recalling a discussion point differently than the minutes showed, respectively.

Staff was asked to check the record regarding Commissioner Host’s comment.

MOTION: Motion by Emerine, seconded by Host:
To motion to approve the City Commission regular meeting minutes of March 24, 2025 with

corrections.

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

Nays, None

04-064-25 Change to Retiree Health Care Fund Investment Policy Statement (Item F)

Mayor Longe pulled Item A and provided background information on the item.

Public Comment

Kristy Barrett supported securing the retiree health care funds and commented regarding other City expenditures.

MOTION: Motion by Longe, seconded by Long:
To amend the asset allocation table in the Retiree Health Care Fund Investment Policy Statement as recommended by the Retiree Health Care Investment Committee.

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

Nays, None

04-065-25 Bird Phase 1A Project, Contract #7-25(W) Set Public Hearing Dates for Notice of Necessity and Confirmation of Roll for Sewer and Water Lateral Special Assessments District (SAD) (Item G)

Commissioner Long pulled Item G in order to highlight the public hearing for residents.

Commissioner comment was as follows:

- This project would focus only on water and sewer improvements, since Bird’s surface is already improved.

MOTION: Motion by Long, seconded by Baller:
Move item G.

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

Nays, None

VI. CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

None.

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

04-066-25 Capital Improvements Project – Willits Street from Chester/Maple to N. Old Woodward and Bates Street from Maple to Willits

CE Coatta, DPSD Zelinski, and Julie Kroll from Fleis and VandenBrink presented the item and answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioner comments were as follows:

- Conditions shown like the one in Exhibit A2 occur frequently throughout the City. It was not clear why that condition would be avoided in this circumstance.
- The Commission should decide whether it wants to retain the remaining portions of the ring road.
- If more traffic stoppages occurred in this area, it might deter cut-through traffic.
- Installing traffic lights and stop lights within 100 yards does not seem meaningfully different than installing a traffic light 100 yards from a roundabout or two traffic lights within 100 yards of each other.
- If Stop signs are installed at Bates and Maple, it could disrupt nearby signal timing. If that occurred, it would lead to stopped vehicles on Maple. It could also negatively affect the pedestrian experience.
- The MMTB appropriately disqualified Exhibit A2 based on Ms. Kroll’s recommendation.
- It may be worth considering a roundabout at this intersection.
- The driveway conflicts shown in exhibit A2 would be challenging for the residents of those properties.
- The Commission has avoided replicating this condition elsewhere.
- This area should be kept aesthetically pleasing. Grass should be planted and monitored by DPS, and input from the adjacent residents should be sought.
- Increasing the leading pedestrian interval at this intersection could be explored.

MOTION: Motion by Long, seconded by Emerine:

To approve the proposed design for the Willits and Bates Project by converting Bates Street from Maple to Willits down to 2 lanes (Conceptual Recommendation C), to approve that the intersection of Willits and Chester to be designed to remove the current island as indicated in Exhibit A, bump outs to be installed at the intersection of Willits and Bates as shown in Exhibit B and have F&V review if the pedestrian crossing time can be extended further, and to install a bump out at the southeast corner of Willits and Bates intersection with a mountable curb as shown in Exhibit D.

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

Nays, None

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

04-067-25 Public Hearing of Necessity - Wimbledon Phase 1 Project, Contract #6-25(W) Sewer and Water Lateral Special Assessment District (SAD)

Mayor Longe opened the public hearing at 8:22 p.m.

CE Coatta and FC Wells presented the item and staff answered informational questions from the public.

Sally Swift commented that it was inconvenient for her property to be included in two different phases of the project.

Rick Brodsky commented that he did not challenge the necessity of updating the water and sewer laterals and that he was preserving his right to protest these costs as part of the broader assessment.

Chris Bidlake commented that he was preserving his right to protest, citing concerns about the cost estimate for his home.

Tim Bradley, Jack McInerney, Danny Hill, Sean Vaughn, BethAnn Michel, Cliff Rager, Travis Bouchard, Dan Roovers, Sue Hornung, and Jeff Fairless preserved their rights to protest.

Rita Rossi was in attendance online but did not speak when offered the opportunity. Rick Brodsky noted that she may have been intending to reserve her right to protest, and that she may have encountered technical difficulties in doing so.

Mr. Roovers confirmed he spoke with Ms. Rossi while she was experiencing technical difficulties and that she did intend to reserve her right to protest.

The Mayor closed the public hearing at 8:50 p.m.

Commissioners raised the following points discussion:

- The City will fund the replacement of the mains due to health, safety, and welfare concerns. The residents will then contribute via this special assessment district to replace their laterals.
- The City provided cost estimates for the lateral replacements at an August 2024 neighborhood meeting. The more recently updated estimates are about ⅓ greater than the original estimates.
- Residents may be able to hire a contractor during this project to update the water and sewer lines on their private properties.
- Interested residents could either hire a contractor together, which could lower costs, or could each hire a contractor individually.
- Performing private water and sewer lateral repairs during a municipal water and sewer lateral replacement project tends to also lower costs for residents. Social media can provide residents with reviews for potential contractors.
- Staff earned thanks for the breadth of information in the presentation.
- This project would help meaningfully improve parts of the City's water and sewer infrastructure.
- While this project will separate some of the combined system into two separate storm and sanitary systems, future projects will continue that work further. This is part of the City's goals for its infrastructure.
- Because the project was divided into two phases, one property had to be selected as the stopping point for the first phase and the beginning point for the second phase.
- Experiencing construction on one's street is not so inconvenient. The contractors are very accommodating and put in effort to control dust and other potential environmental impacts. The contractors also provide a drivable approach into each driveway during construction.

MOTION: Motion by Long, seconded by Host:

WHEREAS, Notice was given pursuant to Section 94-7 of the City Code, to each owner or party in-interest of property and lots to be assessed, by first class mail, and by publication in a newspaper generally circulated in the City; and

WHEREAS, The City Commission has conducted a public hearing and has determined it is necessary to proceed with the project replacing sewer services 50 years of age or older or constructed of material that is not acceptable for City standards and replacing water services that are 60 years or older or less than 1 inch in diameter on Wimbledon Drive from Woodward Ave. to Oxford Road, Abbey Street from Wimbledon south to the dead end, and Twin Oaks from Wimbledon north to the dead end; and

WHEREAS, The City has previously established a policy requiring replacement of sewer services 50 years of age or older or constructed of materials that are not acceptable for City standards and water services less than 1 inch in diameter and the City street is open for repairs or reconstruction; and

WHEREAS, The City Commission, after the public hearing, has determined that the Wimbledon Phase 1 Project, the replacement of sewer services that are 50 years of age or older or of material that is not acceptable for City standards, the replacement of water services that are 60 years or older or less than 1 inch in diameter, is a necessity and is in the best interest of the City; and

WHEREAS, The Commission has approved the detailed plans and estimates of cost prepared by the City Engineer; and

WHEREAS, Formal bids have been received and the actual cost of sewer service and water service replacement has been determined; and

WHEREAS, The City Engineer has determined the boundaries of sewer service lateral and water service laterals located within the limits of the following streets shall be installed as part of the Wimbledon Phase 1 Project (Contract #6-25(W)):

Wimbledon Drive - Woodward Ave. to Oxford Road
Abbey Street - Wimbledon south to the dead end
Twin Oaks - Wimbledon north to the dead end

WHEREAS, The formula used in making the assessment is 100% of the contractor's charge for replacing the lateral service that is 50 years of age or older or constructed of materials that are not acceptable and water service that is 60 years of age or older or less than 1 inch in diameter within the public right-of-way between the utility and the property line (calculated at the rate of \$100.00 per foot of 6" diameter sewer service pipe, \$90.00 per foot of 1-inch water service pipe).

THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED, The City Commission has determined that the scope of the public improvement as described is in the best interest of the City and will benefit the properties listed in the assessment roll and is a necessity, and the City Commission directs the Manager to prepare a Special Assessment Roll and present the same to the City Commission for confirmation and further set a Public Hearing of Confirmation on April 21, 2025 and give notice of same.

The sidwell numbers, street addresses, estimated sewer and water SAD costs are set forth on pages four and five of 8A of the packet.

Commissioner Schafer noted that residents sometimes express concerns about infrastructure improvements. She drew attention to this project as a meaningful investment in improving the City's infrastructure and its health, safety, and welfare.

Commissioner Long noted that replacing the water laterals would allow the Fire Department adequate water to combat fires in residents' homes.

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

Nays, None

04-068-25 Public Hearing of Necessity - Wimbledon Phase 1 Project, Contract #6-25(W) Wimbledon Phase 1 Project for Paving Special Assessment District (SAD)

Mayor Longe opened the public hearing at 9:25 p.m.

CE Coatta presented the item and staff answered informational questions from the public.

Mr. Hill commented regarding the cost increase from the August 2024 cost estimates to the present cost estimates, and regarding other residents' abilities to reserve their rights to protest.

Mr. Bradley commented regarding the cost increase and the 400 E. Lincoln project, and supported changes to this project and in the City's project bidding process.

Mr. Brodsky opposed finding this project necessary, and commented regarding the cost increase, his personal costs from the project, removing curbs and gutters from the project, and rebidding the capeseal.

Mr. Bidlake commented regarding the sidewalk shape, opposed finding this project necessary, and supported changes in the City's project bidding process.

Ms. Michel opposed finding this project necessary.

Mr. Rager commented regarding the cost increase, his appreciation for the City's work on this project, opposed finding this project necessary, and supported changes in the City's project bidding process.

Danny Seidman commented regarding prior capesealing on Wimbledon and the need for safety protocols on Wimbledon.

Josie Connolly and Messrs. Roovers and Fairless commented regarding vehicular speeds, traffic, and safety on Wimbledon.

Mr. McInerney commented regarding road design in the project and speeds on Wimbledon.

Mr. Roovers supported improving the water and sewer laterals in general and supported changes in the City's project bidding process.

Pieter Kriel and Messrs. Vaughn, Fairless, Bidlake, Brodsky, Seidman, Hill, Bradley, Roovers, and Rager reserved their rights to protest.

The Mayor closed the public hearing at 10:15 p.m.

Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioner raised the following points during discussion:

- It might be worthwhile to see if the contractor for the project on Adams would be interested in submitting a combined lower bid that would include this project.
- It might be possible to delay this project to next year and to reconstruct all of Wimbledon at once. A lot of the present road design could be replicated for the rest of Wimbledon.
- If parts of this project were postponed to the next fiscal year, the hope would be that the economy of scale would offset the possible price increases of the materials and labor, which is impossible to predict.
- Even if much of the road design could be replicated between E. and W. Wimbledon, the topographical survey and the specifics of the road design would still likely take at least 3 months.
- This project was announced by the City approximately three years ago. Residents should be aware that these projects are planned well in advance, and that there are ways to remain informed.
- The City should:
 - Explore how costs would change if curbs were excluded or if only capesealing were performed.
 - Consider paying for the overage between the August 2024 estimate and the present estimate.
 - Be able to provide residents with more accurate cost information earlier on in these project processes.
- The City did not refuse to pursue an informed bid estimate in August 2024. It was not possible to get a bid estimate while complying with the City's bidding process.
- Capital project costs and funding splits concern many residents.
- The Commission should not be managing the details of these processes.
- The reason why the Commission had previously decided on capeseal and curbs is because the curbs hold the capeseal together. If only capeseal is used, the road will need to be redone sooner.
- The water laterals in this area remain a safety concern.
- Prices for many goods and services have gone up nationally due to present federal actions and economic conditions. It is important to remember that construction projects are impacted by these actions and conditions as well.

MOTION: Motion by Haig, seconded by Host:

To postpone to a date certain the hearing of necessity on the Wimbledon phase one project, contract #6-25(W), to the date certain of April 21, 2025, and further to postpone the hearing on the confirmation of the roll to the date certain of May 5, 2025, and further to direct the Engineering Department to go to the three bidders to inform them of the potential of the

decreased scope of work, and to request bids for that decreased scope of work – capeseal only, no curbs.

Commissioner comment on the motion was as follows:

- The last part of the motion should be removed so that the administration can proceed as it deems appropriate.
- Alternatively, it is appropriate for the Commission to direct the administration as to its desired scope of work. The Commission approved the previous scope of work, and so it is appropriate for it to make that change.

Public Comment

Informational questions from Ms. Michel and Messrs. Roovers and Brodsky were answered.

Mr. Brodsky thanked the Commission and supported all of Wimbledon being completed as one project in order to benefit from economies of scale.

Mr. Bradley thanked the Commission, supported exploring capeseal only, and supported bidding out larger projects at once.

ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, Commissioner Emerine
 Commissioner Schafer
 Commissioner Host
 Commissioner Haig
 Mayor Longe
 Commissioner Long

Nays, MPT Baller

04-069-25 N Adams Road Resurfacing, Contract #12-24(P) Contract Award

CE Coatta presented the item and answered informational questions from the Commission.

- Commissioners raised the following points during discussion:
- This project may encounter challenges being completed.

MOTION: Motion by Baller, seconded by Longe:
Resolution to award the N Adams Road Resurfacing Project Contract #12-24(P) to DiPonio Contracting LLC in the amount of \$2,289,787.75 plus a 10% construction contingency for a total of \$2,518,766.53. In addition, to authorize the Mayor and Clerk to sign the agreement on behalf of the City contingent upon execution of the agreement and meeting all insurance and bond requirements by DiPonio Contracting LLC. Funding for this project has been budgeted in the following in the following years:

FY 2024/2025

Fund Account	Fund ID Number	Project Award	10% Contingencies	Total
Major Street Fund	202.0-449.001-981.0100	\$1,265,373.75	\$126,537.38	\$1,391,911.13
Sewer Fund	590.0-537.000-981.0100	\$422,683.00	\$42,268.30	\$464,951.30
Water Fund	591.0-544.000-981.0100	\$601,731.00	\$60,173.10	\$661,904.10

AND

Make a motion adopting a resolution to approve the appropriation and amendment to the fiscal year 2024/2025 budget as follows:

Major Street Fund:

Revenues:		
Draw from Fund Balance	202.0-000.000-400.0000	\$471,700
Expenditures:		
Public Improvement	202.0-449.001-981.0100	\$471,700

Revenues:

Draw from Net Position	590.0-000.000-400.0000	\$259,230
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Expenditures:

Public Improvements	590.0-537.000-981.0100	\$259,230
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Water Fund:

Revenues:

Draw from Net Position	591.0-000.000-400.0000	\$282,310
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Expenditures:

Public Improvement	591.0-544.000-981.0100	\$282,310
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ROLL CALL VOTE: Ayes, Commissioner Emerine
Commissioner Schafer
Commissioner Host
Commissioner Haig
Mayor Longe
Commissioner Long
MPT Baller

Nays, None

04-070-25 Shirley & Arlington Speed Mitigation Study

PD Dupuis presented the item and answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners raised the following points during discussion:

- Conducting resident input sessions on this project would be worthwhile.
- The MMTB recommended Option two to address pedestrian safety. This option could improve safety, cue drivers to further slow their speeds, and keep costs for the project low.
- Option two could be a good way to start addressing pedestrian safety, given that the streets are 33 feet wide and do not have sidewalks.
- It was a realistic assessment on the MMTB's part that residents in the area likely would not want permanent fixtures in the road or a prohibition of on-street parking.
- Option seven might also be worthwhile. Speed humps in some neighboring municipalities have had some benefits.
- Data reviewed by the MMTB determined that there was no issue with speed in this area. Speed humps would not address the pedestrian safety issue as effectively.
- Some residents on Arlington and Shirley report speed concerns.
- More than one approach for increasing safety and decreasing speeds should be implemented.
- It would have been pleasant to see more creative options, such as an island a short distance from the curb that could provide pedestrian space.

MOTION: Motion by Host, seconded by Long:
To take the MMTB presentation to the neighborhood.

Commissioner comments on the motion were as follows:

- The neighbors should be presented with all options.
- Principles of basic traffic calming and pedestrian safety should be part of the conversation with the neighbors.

Public Comment

Stuart Borman commented that he did not perceive speeding issues on Arlington and Shirley, that there would be other ways of addressing speeding issues, that paint would not be aesthetically pleasing, and that areas of rough road surface remained on Arlington and Shirley.

Paul DeLaRosa supported measures that would further reduce speeds on Arlington and Shirley.

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

Nays, None

Aging in Place Citywide Action Plan

ACM Clemence presented the item and answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners raised the following points during discussion:

- It would be beneficial to review this item at a workshop in order to encourage more resident participation and to allow for a further Commission review.
- ACM Clemence earned commendation for the report.

Commission Items for Future Discussion

04-071-25 Birmingham Community and Senior Center

MOTION: Motion by Host, seconded by Baller:
Birmingham Community and Senior Center: is this the name that we should be using for the YMCA site, is a question I think we ought to discuss.

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

Nays, None

04-072-25 Birmingham Community and Senior Center Expenditures

MOTION: Motion by Host, seconded by Baller:
To know how much money we are spending on the process.

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

Nays, None

04-073-25 Unimproved Roads

MOTION: Motion by Host, seconded by Haig:
I think we should have a workshop on the unimproved roads and the infrastructure, and during that workshop we should be talking and brainstorming.

VOICE VOTE: Ayes, Commissioner Emerine
 Commissioner Schafer
 Commissioner Host
 Commissioner Haig
 Mayor Longe
 Commissioner Long

MPT Baller

Nays, None

04-074-25 Community Priorities

MOTION: Motion by Haig, motion was seconded by Haig:¹
To have a discussion of looking at community priorities.

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

Nays, None

Commission Discussion On Items From A Prior Meeting

IV. REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

X. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Communications regarding the Birmingham Community and Senior Center

XI. REPORTS

- A. Commissioner Reports
- B. Commissioner Comments

The Commission gave direction for GovAlert submission topics to be included in the City Manager’s report. Staff was asked to think of other ways to aggregate and present data on resident topics of concern.

Commissioner Baller asked staff to provide a one-page report on the call frequency regarding unimproved roads.

Commissioners Baller and Haig supported further discussion of a contingency plan regarding the 400 E. Lincoln project given present federal actions and resulting economic conditions.

Commissioner Host noted that when the City sent out a letter to all residents regarding lead pipes, the communication was so thorough no calls were received.

- C. Advisory Boards, Committees, Commissions’ Reports and Agendas
- D. Legislation
- E. City Staff
 - 1. Pesticides

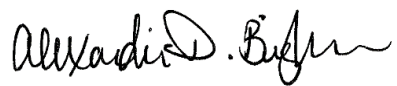
The Mayor noted staff’s success in using more sustainable methods and commended DPSD Zielinski.

INFORMATION ONLY

¹As amended at the April 21, 2025 meeting.

XII. ADJOURN

The Commission motioned to adjourn at 12:04 a.m.



Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist