Birmingham City Commission Minutes
June 9, 2025
Municipal Building, 151 Martin
7:30 p.m.
Vimeo Link: https://vimeo.com/1092255026

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: City Manager Ecker; City Clerk Bingham, City Planner Blizinski, Finance Director Chavez, Assistant City Manager Clemence, Planning Director Dupuis, Assistant City Manager Fairbairn, Parking Services Manager Ford, City Attorney Kucharek, Police Captain Wald

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

Announcements
Oakland County Commissioner Charlie Cavell – District 19

Appointments

06-194-25 Public Arts Board

Lia Jamerson was interviewed for the appointment.

MOTION: Motion by Long:
To appoint Lia Jamerson as a regular member to the Public Arts Board serve the remainder of a three-year term to expire January 28, 2028.

VOICE VOTE
Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Schafer, Baller, Host, Longe, Long
Nays: None

CC Bingham swore in the appointee.

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

David Bloom commented regarding the City's Memorial Day observance and regarding how tax assessments might be handled in the community moving forward.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

06-195-25 Consent Agenda

MOTION: Motion by Baller, seconded by Long:
To move the consent agenda with the exception of Items F, J, K, M, and N.

ROLL CALL VOTE
Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Schafer, Baller, Host, Longe, Long
Nays: None

A. Resolution to approve the City Commission regular meeting minutes of May 19, 2025.

B. Resolution to approve the warrant list, including Automated Clearing House payments, dated May 22, 2025 in the amount of $498,064.53.

C. Resolution to approve the warrant list, including Automated Clearing House payments, dated May 28, 2025 in the amount of $797,956.43.

D. Resolution to approve the warrant list, including Automated Clearing House payments, dated June 5, 2025 in the amount of $659,669.58.

E. Resolution to approve the appropriations and amendments to the fiscal year 2024-2025 budget as follows:

General Fund:

Expenditures:		
Judicial	101.0-286.000-959.0300	$ 108,040
Public Works	101.0-444.000-981.0100	$ (108,040)
Total Expenditure Adjustments		$ 0

Library Fund:

Revenues:		
Draw from Fund Balance	271.0-000.000-400.0000	$ 30,000
Expenditures:		
Furniture	271.0-790.000-972.0000	$ 30,000

G. Resolution to appoint Melissa Coatta as Representative and Jana Ecker as Alternate Representative of the City of Birmingham on the SOCWA Board of Trustees for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2025.

H. Resolution to appoint Jana Ecker as Representative and Scott Zielinski as Alternate Representative of the City of Birmingham on the SOCRRA Board of Trustees for the fiscal year starting July 1, 2025.

I. Resolution to approve the Joint and Cooperative Agreement for Use of Personnel and Equipment during Emergencies via the City's membership with SCOPWA. In addition, to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the agreement on behalf of the City.

L. Resolution to prepay in full the assessment for the Evergreen-Farmington Sanitary Drain Drainage District, Corrective Action Plan Walnut Lake No. 1 Drain Bond Series 2025 in the amount of $15,400.00; to authorize the City Engineer to notify the Drain Board by June 27, 2025 of the intent to prepay; and further to charge this assessment to account number 590.0-537.000-811.0000.

O. Resolution to award the 2025 Spring Tree Purchase and Plant project for 208 trees to be installed by KLM Landscape, for a total cost of $111,438.00 paid from the following accounts:

- $22,287.60 from the Major Streets-Operating Supplies (202.0-449.005-729.0000)
- $22,287.60 from the Local Streets-Operating Supplies (203.0-449.005-729.0000)
- $22,287.60 from the Major Streets-Forestry Service Contractual Services (202.0-449.005-819.0000)
- $22,287.60 from the Local Streets-Forestry Service Contractual Services (203.0-449.005-819.0000)
- $22,287.60 from the Parks-Forestry Services (101.1-751.000-729.0000)

Further, to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the agreement on behalf of the City.

06-196-25 Consolidating Election Precincts and Polling Places (Item F)

Commissioner Baller pulled Item F from the consent agenda. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners noted the following aspects about the item:

- Voting precincts and locations would be changing for a number of voters within the City. More information will be available on the City's website.
- Many people went from voting in person on Election Day to voting absentee or early.
- These changes would represent a cost savings for the City.
- Ballots would be distributed in respect to the voters' appropriate legislative and county commissioner districts.
- These changes would be in effect for the November 4, 2025 election.

MOTION: Motion by Baller, seconded by Long:
To make a motion adopting a resolution to approve the proposed consolidation of the nine existing election precinct boundaries to five election precincts.

VOICE VOTE:
Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Schafer, Baller, Host, Longe, Long
Nays: None

06-197-25 Water and Sewer Rate and Connection Fee Study Service Agreement (Item J)

Commissioner Baller pulled Item J from the consent agenda. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners noted the following aspects about the item:

- Street ratings are re-evaluated by the City every year.

MOTION: Motion by Baller, seconded by Long:
To approve a professional service agreement for the 2025 Water/Sewer Rate and Connection Fee Study with Hubbell, Roth & Clark, Inc. with a term ending September 30, 2025. In addition, to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the Agreement on behalf of the City.

ROLL CALL VOTE:
Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Schafer, Baller, Host, Longe, Long
Nays: None

06-198-25 Award of the Quarton Lake Maintenance Dredging Project Contract #15-24 (M) (Item K)

Commissioner Haig pulled Item J from the consent agenda. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners noted the following aspects about the item:

- 380 cubic feet and 380 cubic yards are different amounts.
- The City needs to benchmark its received bids versus other local municipalities' bids.
- Dredging this area regularly is necessary for resident comfort.

MOTION: Motion by Haig, seconded by Host:
To award the Quarton Lake Maintenance Dredging Project Contract #15-24 (M) to Mid-American Group in the amount of $593,008.29 plus a 10% contingency for a total of $652,309.13. 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 the insurance and bond requirements by Mid-American Group.

ROLL CALL VOTE:
Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Schafer, Baller, Host, Longe, Long
Nays: None

06-199-25 Special Land Use Permit and Final Site Plan & Design Review Application for 479 S. Old Woodward (Item M)

Commissioner Haig pulled Item J from the consent agenda. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners noted the following aspects about the item:
- 'Permit' should be changed to 'review'.

MOTION: Motion by Haig, seconded by Host:
To set a public hearing date of July 14, 2025 to consider the Special Land Use Permit and Final Site Plan & Design Review application for 479 S. Old Woodward, to review the modification of the approved floor plans and the issuance of a waiver for 49 off-street parking spaces pursuant to Article 3, Section 3.04 (D)(3)(a) of the Zoning Ordinance.

ROLL CALL VOTE:
Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Schafer, Baller, Host, Longe, Long
Nays: None

06-200-25 Local Road Improvement Program Cost Participation Agreement (Item N)

Commissioner Haig pulled Item N from the consent agenda. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners noted the following aspects about the item:
- This is for a downtown, public road.
- Assistance may be available from the State for this project.
- The City should petition for more support for street improvements in order to reduce impact on residents. Even focusing on financial support for major streets would be beneficial.
- It was positive that the City pursued and received financial support from the State for this project.

MOTION: Motion by Haig, seconded by Long:
To approve the Local Road Improvement Program Cost Participation Agreement between Oakland County and the City of Birmingham. In addition, to authorize the Mayor to sign the agreement on behalf of the City. Funding for this project has been budgeted in accounts 202.0-449.001-981.0100, 590.0-537.000-981.0100, and 591.0-544.000-981.0100.

ROLL CALL VOTE:
Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Schafer, Baller, Host, Longe, Long
Nays: None

VI. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

06-201-25 Public Hearing for 280 E. Lincoln – Grace Baptist Church – Special Land Use Permit Amendment, Final Site Plan & Design Review

Mayor Longe opened the public hearing at 8:29 p.m.

CP Blizinski presented the item.

Andrew Walters of Metro Consulting Associates spoke on behalf of the project.

Seeing no public comment, Mayor Longe closed the public hearing at 8:36 p.m.

Staff and the applicant team answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners raised the following points during discussion:

- It would be possible to create a circular flow without opportunity for counterflow between the north and south lots.
- The proposed design might allow people in the north lot to reverse and accidentally turn left into people entering one way into the south lot. The proposed signage would likely address this concern.
- There have not been traffic or parking problems associated with 280 E. Lincoln. This is a good neighbor within the neighborhood. The egress lane in the southern lot was a benefit.

MOTION: Motion by Emerine, seconded by Long:
To adopt the findings of the Planning Board and approve the Special Land Use Permit Amendment and Final Site Plan & Design Review application for 280 E. Lincoln, to permit the renovation of an existing religious institution and associated parking lot.

ROLL CALL VOTE
Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Schafer, Baller, Host, Longe, Long
Nays: None

06-202-25 Resolution in opposition to Oakland County Board of Commissioners Resolution #2025-5051

CM Ecker presented the item and answered informational questions from the Commission.

MOTION: Motion by Long, seconded by Haig:
To make a resolution in opposition to Oakland County Board of Commissioners Resolution #2025-5051 as set forth on pages two and three of 8B of the packet.

ROLL CALL VOTE
Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Schafer, Baller, Host, Longe, Long
Nays: None

06-203-25 Contract for Oakland County Equalization Division Assessing Services

FD Chavez presented the item. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners raised the following points during discussion:

- There are two reputable local firms that can do the necessary work. It is yet to be determined whether these firms would have capacity for Birmingham's assessments. The City may be able to enter into a contract with one of those firms.
- The City would have the ability to exit the contract with the County with 90 days notice if needed.
- It would be worth looking into whether the City could charge Oakland County or other entities for the collection activity the City undertakes on their behalf.
- The City may have a better sense of assessments that should be charged, which might result in an increase in assessment revenue.
- Concerns were raised about how the County might respond to a private entity's work. There may be more opportunities for audit or challenge at the County or State level. Audits and challenges could result in further costs.

MOTION: Motion by Long, seconded by Haig:
To approve a three-year contract between the City and Oakland County for assessing services for the period of July 1, 2025 through June 30, 2028 and to authorize the Mayor and the City Clerk to sign the agreement on behalf of the City and to direct the City Manager to investigate alternate assessing service providers.

ROLL CALL VOTE
Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Schafer, Baller, Host, Longe, Long
Nays: None

06-204-25 Change Order – Chester Garage Accent Paint

PSM Ford presented the item. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners raised the following points during discussion:

- The parking fund has sufficient monies to cover this cost.
- These changes would move the scope up.
- If the Parking Systems Manager does not recommend painting brick walls, it would be appropriate to follow that recommendation.
- The cost increase stems from the precision needed to paint some areas with multiple colors.
- This seems like an excessive cost increase. It is important to understand why some of the items that were originally budgeted for include cost increases.
- It would be important to know the warranty on the paint.
- A panel could be laid over a brick wall in order to add graphics.

MOTION: Motion by Baller, seconded by Host:
To approve an addendum to the original agreement between the City of Birmingham and RAM Construction Services, Inc. for 2024 Chester St. Parking Structure Repair Project in the amount of $430,927.20; further, to charge this expense to account number 514.1-594.008-977.000; to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the addendum on behalf of the City; and further to appropriate and amend the 2024-2025 Automobile Parking System Fund budget as follows:

<u>Revenues</u>		
514.1-000.000-400.0000	Draw from Net Position	$430,927.20
<u>Expenses</u>		
514.1-594.008-977.0000	Buildings	$430,927.20

ROLL CALL VOTE
Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Schafer, Baller, Host, Longe, Long
Nays: None

NEXT Financial Update

Next Executive Direction Cris Braun presented the item and answered informational questions from the Commission.

Commissioners raised the following points during discussion:
- There was a $500,000 increase in assets with no specified source. The statement does not show the transfer. This results in the money flow looking strange.
- In the shorter to medium term, all participating municipalities should match Birmingham's per capita contributions. In the longer term, the amount of all municipalities' contributions per capita should be increased as well.
- Increasing municipal contributions would allow Next to spend more on seniors. This would allow Next to better reach its goal of expanding its program offerings by 5% each year.
- This interlocal agreement could be renegotiated to create that increase.
- Ms. Braun received thanks for all of her work.
- Quasi-endowments are board-designated endowments.
- Next's quasi-endowment has grown meaningfully since 2012.
- It would be beneficial for Commissioners to receive a presentation on Next's forward-looking planning.
- The Commission looked forward to receiving this presentation on an annual basis, and the presentation by Ms. Braun was appreciated.

06-205-25 Amendment to City Code Chapter 2 - Administration, Article II. – City Commission, Sec. 2-26

CA Kucharek presented the item. Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

MOTION: Motion by Long, seconded by Haig:
To adopt an amendment to City Code Chapter 2 - Administration, Article II. – City Commission, Sec. 2-26 to move all City Commission meetings that fall on a holiday to alternate Mondays as needed.

ROLL CALL VOTE
Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Schafer, Baller, Host, Longe, Long
Nays: None

Commission Items for Future Discussion
Commission Discussion On Items From A Prior Meeting

06-206-25 Resident Survey

Commissioner Haig presented the proposed item.

MOTION: Motion by Haig, seconded by Host:
To proceed with a community survey to understand residents' priorities.

VOICE VOTE
Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Schafer, Baller, Host, Longe, Long
Nays: None

06-207-25 City Service Standards

MPT Baller presented the proposed item.

MOTION: Motion by Longe, seconded by Haig:
To discuss City service standards or guidelines as a full agenda item.

VOICE VOTE
Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Schafer, Baller, Host, Longe, Long
Nays: None

IV. REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

X. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Communications regarding the Birmingham Community and Senior Center
B. Communication regarding Memorial Day Service
C. Communication regarding the Woodward Corridor Plan

It was noted that MDOT would be soliciting feedback on the Woodward Corridor Plan at two upcoming meetings.

XI. REPORTS

A. Commissioner Reports

Commissioner Host reported back from a recent ride along with the Birmingham Police Department.

Commissioner Host noted that a reading library in honor of Pat Andrews had been opened, noted two other significant Birmingham residents, and opined that City personnel should not be honored by the community and residents should be honored by the community.

B. Commissioner Comments

The Commission discussed ways the City presently reduces noise-generating activity on Woodward, and ways noise-generating activity on Woodward might be further discouraged.

Commissioner Haig shared his observations from the Birmingham Community Fair, commending the Police Department's management, supporting the continuation of the Fair, supporting having further conversations about improving safety, and recommending louder megaphones for the Police Department.

The Mayor concurred with Commissioner Haig, adding that no Birmingham school students were involved in altercations.

Commissioner Long concurred with Commissioner Haig and the Mayor, and encouraged stringent prosecution of those involved in altercations at the fair.

Commissioner Long raised concerns about grass that was causing line of sight issues on the median of Woodward south of Maple.

Commissioner Host said that resident concerns remained about speed remediation on Arlington and Shirley.

C. Advisory Boards, Committees, Commissions' Reports and Agendas
D. Legislation
E. City Staff

INFORMATION ONLY

XII. ADJOURN

The Commission motioned to adjourn at 10:34 p.m.

Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk

Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist