

Birmingham City Commission Minutes
July 14, 2025
Municipal Building, 151 Martin
7:30 p.m.
Vimeo Link: <https://vimeo.com/1101319145>

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
Commissioner Emerine
Commissioner Haig
Commissioner Host
Commissioner Long

Absent: MPT Baller
Commissioner Schafer

Staff: City Manager Ecker; City Clerk Bingham, Assistant City Manager Clemence, City Engineer Coatta, Planning Director Dupuis, City Attorney Gaudenzi, Police Captain Wald, Department of Public Services Director Zielinski

07-223-25 Temporary Mayor Pro Tem

MOTION: Motion by Emerine:
To appoint Commissioner Anthony Long to be Mayor Pro Tem.

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

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

Announcements

Proclamation recognizing July as Parks and Recreation Month

Appointments

07-224-25 Multi-Modal Transportation Board

Josh Dobrowitsky was interviewed for the appointment.

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

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

Isabella Mikhail was interviewed for appointment to the Ethics Board. The Commission indicated that Ms. Mikhail might be better suited to another City board, and no appointment to the Ethics Board was made.

CC Bingham swore in Mr. Dobrowitsky.

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

David Bloom commented regarding negotiations between Baldwin Public Library and the City administration.

V. CONSENT AGENDA

07-225-25 Consent Agenda

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

ROLL CALL VOTE

Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Host, Longe, Long

Nays: None

- A. Resolution to approve the Joint City Commission and Planning Board meeting minutes of June 16, 2025.
- C. Resolution to approve the warrant list, including Automated Clearing House payments, dated June 26, 2025 in the amount of \$870,614.98.
- D. Resolution to approve the warrant list, including Automated Clearing House payments, dated July 3, 2025 in the amount of \$1,072,422.16.
- E. Resolution to approve the warrant list, including Automated Clearing House payments, dated July 9, 2025 in the amount of \$1,219,568.74.
- F. Resolution to approve a special event permit as requested by the Piety Hill Chapter, NSDAR to hold the Veterans Day 2025 Annual Wreath-Laying Ceremony on November 11, 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.
- H. Resolution to approve the purchase of a John Deere Backhoe 320P, located at 56555 Pontiac Trail, New Hudson, MI 48165, per the State of Michigan MiDeal contract #240000000158, in an amount not to exceed \$149,617.61, upon the completion of a signed contract by AIS Construction Equipment Corp & John Deere. 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 2025-2026 Auto Equipment Fund account #661.0-441.006.971.0100.
- I. Resolution to approve the purchase of a 2025 street sweeper from Bell Equipment Company, located at 78 Northpointe Drive, Lake Orion, MI 48359, through the MiDeal Contract #071B7700091, in an amount not to exceed \$302,500.00, upon the completion of signed contract by Bell Equipment. 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 2025-2026 Auto Equipment Fund account #661.0-441.006.971.0100.
- K. Resolution to approve a one-year extension to the Construction Staging Area and Construction Coordination Agreement with Markus Management Group, LLC and The Alan Group for the coordination of construction activities related to 479 S. Old Woodward on Hazel Street and S. Old Woodward and authorize the Mayor and the City Clerk to sign the agreement on behalf of the City.
- L. Resolution to approve the purchase of 6 vehicles totaling \$304,503.00; specifically (2) 2025 Jeep Wrangler 4-door Sport Right Hand Drive for \$50,013.00 each, the total amount not to exceed \$100,026.00 from LaFontaine CDJR located at 6131 S. Pennsylvania Ave, Lansing MI 48911 through the State of Michigan Contract# MA 240000001206,

AND

To approve the purchase of (1) 2025 Ford F150 Super Crew 4x4 XLT Hybrid Pickup 5 1/2' Box for \$57,246.00, (1) 2025 Ford F150 Super Crew 4x4 XLT Hybrid Pickup 6 1/2' Box for \$57,896.00, (1) 2026 Ford F250 Super Cab 4x4 XL Pickup 6 1/2' Box for \$52,977.00, and (1) 2026 Ford Escape ST-Line Hybrid All-Wheel Drive for \$36,358.00, the total amount not to exceed \$204,477.00 from Lunghamer Ford of Owosso, LLC located at 1960 E Main St Owosso, MI 48867, through the State of Michigan Contact# MA 240000001208,

AND
In addition, to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the agreements with LaFontaine CDJR and Lunghamer Ford, on behalf of the City. Funds for these purchases are available in the FY 2025-2026 Auto Equipment Fund account #661.0-441.006.971.0100.

07-226-25 Commission Meeting Minutes of June 23, 2025 (Item B)

Mayor Longe pulled Item B from the consent agenda, noting a potential correction submitted by MPT Baller.

MOTION: Motion by Longe, seconded by Host:
To move approval of the Commission meeting minutes.

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

07-227-25 Set Public Hearing to amend Article 4, Section 4.30, Open Space Standards, to add Additional Open Space Standards for single-family residential zoned properties, Article 4, Section 4.31, Open Space Standards, to modify the Paved Surface Limitations in the R1, R1A, R2 and R3 Zoning Districts, and Article 9, Section 9.02, Definitions, to modify the definition for Impervious Surface. (Item G)

tMPT Long pulled Item G from the consent agenda, noting the topic for the public.

MOTION: Motion by Long, seconded by Host:
To set a public hearing date of August 11, 2025 to consider ordinance amendments to Article 4, Section 4.30, Open Space Standards, to add Additional Open Space Standards for single-family residential zoned properties, Article 4, Section 4.31, Open Space Standards, to modify the Paved Surface Limitations in the R1, R1A, R2 and R3 Zoning Districts, and Article 9, Section 9.02, Definitions, to modify the definition for Impervious Surface.

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

07-228-25 Cummings and Davis Stop Sign Evaluation (Item J)

tMPT Long pulled Item J. tMPT Long and Commissioner Emerine commended the Multi-Modal Transportation Board for their work on improving this intersection.

MOTION: Motion by Long, seconded by Host:
To replace the two-way yield control for east and west traffic at the intersection of Cummings Ave. & Davis Ave. with two-way stop control, as recommended by the Multi-Modal Transportation Board.

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

VI. CITY MANAGER’S REPORT

VII. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VIII. NEW BUSINESS

07-229-25 Public Hearing - 479 S. Old Woodward – Birmingham Tower – Special Land Use Permit, Final Site Plan & Design Review (REQUEST TO POSTPONE)

Mayor Longe opened the public hearing at 7:50 p.m.

CM Ecker presented the requested postponement.

Seeing no public comment, Mayor Longe closed the public hearing at 7:54 p.m.

Staff answered informational questions from the Commission.

MOTION: Motion by Haig, seconded by Long:

To postpone the Special Land Use Permit and Final Site Plan & Design Review application for 479 S. Old Woodward, to permit 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 to a date certain of August 11, 2025.

Commissioner comment on the motion was as follows:

- This item would be before the Planning Board on July 23, 2025.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Host, Longe, Long

Nays: None

07-230-25 Willits & Bates Paving Project Contract #8-25(P) Contract Award

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

Commissioner comment was as follows:

- The cost came within 1% of the engineer's estimated cost for the project.
- It is appropriate that the City is planning to cost-compare projects with comparable work performed in other local municipalities moving forward in order to ensure that the City is receiving comparable rates.

MOTION: Motion by Long, seconded by Host:

To award the Willits & Bates Paving Project #8-25(P) to Al's Asphalt Paving Co. in the amount of \$1,020,795.50 plus a 10% construction contingency for a total of \$1,122,875.06. 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 Al's Asphalt Paving Co.

The fund account, fund ID, project award, 10% contingencies, and total amounts are set forth on page three of 8B of the packet.

AND

To approve the appropriation and amendment of the fiscal year 2025/2026 budget as also set forth on page three of 8B of the packet.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Host, Longe, Long

Nays: None

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

07-231-25 Tree Discussion

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

Commissioners raised the following points during discussion of the item:

- Decay that is severe enough to necessitate tree removal may not always be immediately apparent to residents.
- Having four certified arborists on staff is valuable, and DPS staff does a great job managing the City's trees.
- Some residents maintain their own trees in order to avoid potential intervention by DTE.
- DTE has guidelines for vegetation near power lines.
- It could be beneficial to establish a tree-related board within the City. They might be able to interface with residents regarding trees, and to make suggestions regarding the City's tree management practices.
- More than one group of residents has expressed interest in getting more involved in the City's tree management.

MOTION: Motion by Host, seconded by Haig:

To place on the next reasonable agenda further discussion of citizen input on tree policy and procedure for public tree preservation.

Commissioner comment was as follows:

- With each tree, the City has to evaluate whether it is safe and/or fiscally responsible to try and preserve a decaying tree for what might be only a few more years.
- On occasion, small groups of neighbors will fund attempts to preserve a particular City tree for a bit longer.
- The City plants more trees than it removes annually.
- The City has updated its policy to purchase and plant larger, more mature trees than the prior policy called for. At the same time, newly-planted trees cannot be too mature in order to promote survival.
- Birmingham's tree maintenance is well done compared to some other nearby municipalities.
- Decaying trees can cause significant risk to public safety and property.
- At the next discussion, it would be beneficial to have Parks & Forestry Specialist Wynn present, and to hear more City Manager input on the topic as well.
- This item and future related items only pertain to trees on public property.
- Mr. Lockwood should email the City Clerk so that this item can be scheduled for a day he is able to attend, per his request.

Public Comment

Patrice Lockwood supported the occasional use of outside evaluations, any possible options for staggering tree removal, and the establishment of a tree-related board.

Rodney Lockwood commented regarding the City's tree evaluation and removal practices, and supported the creation of a citizens' advisory committee regarding the City's tree practices.

VOICE VOTE

Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Host, Longe, Long

Nays: None

07-232-25 Landscaper's Code of Conduct

The Commission agreed to table the item until all Commissioners could be present.

MOTION: Motion by Host, seconded by Long:

To table this to a reasonable meeting that we are at full force and have a robust discussion.

VOICE VOTE

Ayes: Emerine, Haig, Host, Longe, Long

Nays: None

IV. REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

X. COMMUNICATIONS

A. Communication regarding Wimbledon cape seal

- B. Communication regarding the naming of parks
- C. Communication regarding a community survey
- D. Communication regarding parking
- E. Communication regarding tree preservation

XI. REPORTS

- A. Commissioner Reports
 - 1. Notice of intention to appoint to the Advisory Parking Committee
- B. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Host and Mayor Longe explained how to keep pets safer during periods of extreme heat.

It was noted that if one cannot keep their hand on pavement for longer than five seconds, one should walk one’s pets on grass and should otherwise keep them in a climate-controlled environment.

Commissioner Haig recommended that the Commission begin planning ahead for the City’s longer-term economic robustness. He noted one estimate that projected a significant decline in the state’s population by 2050, and noted some closures of significant businesses in western Michigan.

The Mayor noted that Michigan and nearby states may be a climate change haven in future years.

tMPT Long reiterated his request that the mandatory left turn from Oakland Avenue onto S. Old Woodward be indicated earlier in order to increase the safety of the intersection. He noted that drivers are also becoming confused by the left turn from Willits onto S. Old Woodward, and that they are turning into the bus stop lane. He recommended that be reviewed for safety improvements as well.

Commissioner Host concurred with tMPT Long.

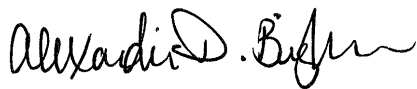
Commissioner Host noted that a Birmingham home was featured in the Wall Street Journal on June 5, 2025. Commissioner Host also stated that PD Dupuis represented himself well in a July 14, 2025 article in Crain’s Detroit Business.

- C. Advisory Boards, Committees, Commissions’ Reports and Agendas
- D. Legislation
- E. City Staff
 - 1. Parking Validation Program
 - 2. Dumpster Report

INFORMATION ONLY

XII. ADJOURN

The Commission motioned to adjourn at 9:33 p.m.



Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist