



**City Commission
Regular Meeting Minutes
Monday, December 15, 2025 - 7:30 p.m.
151 Martin Street, Birmingham, MI
City Commission Room 205
Vimeo Link: <https://vimeo.com/1146723070>**

1. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Clinton Baller, Mayor, opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. ROLL CALL

City Clerk Bingham called the roll.

Present: Mayor Clinton Baller
Mayor Pro Tem Anthony Long
Commissioner Andrew Haig
Commissioner Brad Host
Commissioner Kevin Kozlowski
Commissioner William Kolb
Commissioner Therese Longe

Absent: None

Staff: City Manager Ecker; City Planner Aldred-Arens, Fire Chief Bartalino, Finance Director Chavez,
Assistant City Manager Clemence, City Engineer Coatta, Planning Director Dupuis, Assistant City Manager Fairbairn, Parking Systems Manager Ford, Representatives from Fire Department Staff, City Attorney Gaudenzi, Police Chief Grewe, City Attorney Kucharek, Museum Director Pielack, Police Captain Wald

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

None.

APPOINTMENTS

12-344-25 Board of Review

Kathleen Devereaux was interviewed for the appointment.

MOTION: Motion by Host:

To appoint Kathleen Devereaux as a regular member to the Board of Review to serve a three-year term to expire December 31, 2028.

VOICE VOTE

Ayes: Longe, Baller, Long, Host, Kozlowski, Kolb, Haig

Nays: None

Recused: None

12-345-25 Board of Review

In Jill Stress’ absence, it was noted that she would be a re-appointment.

MOTION: Motion by Longe:
To appoint Jill Stress as a regular member to the Board of Review to serve a three-year term to expire December 31, 2028.

VOICE VOTE
Ayes: Longe, Baller, Long, Host, Kozlowski, Kolb, Haig
Nays: None
Recused: None

12-346-25 Appointment of Fire Chief

MOTION: Motion by Host, seconded by Haig:
To confirm the City Manager’s appointment of Assistant Fire Chief Matt Bartalino as Fire Chief, and direct the Clerk to administer the oath of office to Chief Bartalino.

VOICE VOTE
Ayes: Longe, Baller, Long, Host, Kozlowski, Kolb, Haig
Nays: None
Recused: None

CC Bingham swore in the present appointees.

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

Mike Clift supported renewed efforts in the new year to create a publicly accessible indoor fitness facility with a pool.

David Stanislaw supported resolving issues regarding the Community House as collaboratively as possible.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

12-347-25 Consent Agenda

MOTION: Motion by Long, seconded by Host:
To move the consent agenda, including Items A through J.

ROLL CALL VOTE
Ayes: Longe, Baller, Long, Host, Kozlowski, Kolb, Haig
Nays: None
Recused: None

- A. Resolution to approve the City Commission workshop meeting minutes of December 1, 2025.
- B. Resolution to approve the City Commission regular meeting minutes of December 1, 2025.
- C. Resolution to approve the warrant list, including Automated Clearing House payments, dated December 3, 2025, in the amount of \$660,342.20.
- D. Resolution to approve the warrant list, including Automated Clearing House and EFT payments, dated December 10, 2025, in the amount of \$2,082,512.90.
- E. Resolution to approve a 1 year agreement with the Michigan Department of Transportation

(MDOT) for Governmental Agencies as written on MDOT Form 2207B (05/21), and authorizing the following titles to apply to MDOT for the necessary Annual Permit, and other Individual Permits for work within the State Highway Right-of-Way on behalf of the City of Birmingham; Director of Public Services, Parks and Recreation Manager, Public Services Manager, Parks and Forestry Foreman and Assistant Foreman, Streets Sewer and Water Foreman, Assistant Director of Engineering and City Engineer. In addition, to authorize the City Clerk to sign the certification of the Performance Resolution For Governmental Agencies form required for the Annual Permit on behalf of the City.

- F. Resolution to amend the 2025 Schedule of Fees, Charges, Bonds and Insurance, under the Parking Department, to include the addition of a parking fee for private use of metered public parking space(s) equal to the established hourly meter rate for any authorized use of a metered public parking space(s) for private construction projects.
- G. Resolution to approve the administrative services agreement between the City and the Birmingham Shopping District (BSD), the term of which commences on July 1, 2025 and shall terminate on June 30, 2028 in the amount not to exceed \$30,929.00. Furthermore, each year on the anniversary date of execution, there will be an increase of three percent (3%) of the total charges due from the BSD to the City. In addition, to authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign the agreement on behalf of the City. Funding for this project has been budgeted in account #235.0-720.000-813.0000.
- H. Resolution to amend resolution #01-26-24 to modify the permanent Wayfinding and Branding Committee to introduce staggered terms and revise the appointment process for members of the Committee.
- I. Resolution to accept the resignation of Z. Rosie Koul from the Multi-Modal Transportation Board, to thank her for her service, and to direct the City Clerk to begin the process of filling the vacancy.
- J. Resolution to accept the resignation of Steve Sweeney from the Parks and Recreation Board, to thank him for his service, and to direct the City Clerk to begin the process of filling the vacancy.

6. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

CM Ecker presented the report.

7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

8. NEW BUSINESS

12-348-25 Public Hearing - 36977 Woodward - InvestWise - Special Land Use Permit, Final Site Plan & Design Review

The Mayor opened the public hearing at 7:57 p.m.

CP Aldred-Arens presented the item. Jeff Klatt, architect, spoke on behalf of the item.

Seeing no public comment, the public hearing was closed at 8:02 p.m.

Mr. Klatt answered a question from the Commission.

Commissioners raised the following points during discussion:

- This development will serve positively as a gateway to Birmingham.

MOTION: Motion by Long, seconded by Longe:

To adopt the findings of the Planning Board and approve the Special Land Use Permit and Final Site Plan & Design Review application for 36977 Woodward Ave – InvestWise Financial – to permit construction of a 3 (three) story commercial office building with an interior floor area over 4,000 sq. ft.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Ayes: Longe, Baller, Long, Host, Kozlowski, Kolb, Haig

Nays: None

Recused: None

Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Audit Presentation

FD Chavez introduced the item. Spencer Tawa of Plante Moran presented the item in Timothy St. Andrew’s absence. Mr. Tawa and staff answered questions from the Commission.

Commissioners raised the following points during discussion:

- The Commission is proud of the findings of this audit. Revenues have increased, expenses have decreased, and overall the City is financially healthy.
- In the future, the Commission might discuss whether it could be beneficial to increase the high end of the General Fund balance policy range beyond 40% of operating expenditures. The Commission might also discuss whether it would be pragmatic to put additional funds towards outstanding infrastructure upgrades.
- The City’s present General Fund balance is at the high end of the General Fund Balance Policy range.
- The unassigned General Fund balance is where the Commission has some additional discretion in terms of expenditures. The rest of the General Fund balance is already assigned to specific expenditures.
- The City made additional contributions to the City’s retirement funds for a time, which ended about a year ago.

12-349-25 Final Parking Garage Schematic Design Review – Peabody, Pierce, Park, and N. Old Woodward Parking Garages

PSM Ford introduced the item. Brian Hearn of BCT Design Group and Darko Banfic of Illuminart presented the item. Messrs. Hearn and Banfic and staff answered questions from the Commission.

Commissioners raised the following points during discussion:

- The linear lights would be beneficial.
- The Pierce deck does not accommodate vehicles over 6’3”. Signage at the entrances indicates this height restriction.
- The new lighting at the decks will comply with code requiring that lighting be dimmed after an occupant is not detected for a certain period of time.
- Metal facade panels for the N. Old Woodward deck would be aesthetically pleasing, and would help distinguish the building from an office building. It is also useful that the panels would help reflect the light inward towards the deck, thus reducing light pollution into the surrounding environment.
- The Commission should provide further review of the metal facade panel designs.
- Adding more bicycle racks would be appropriate.
- There would be some interest in seeing these design proposals implemented in at least one deck before moving forward with approving these designs for the other decks. This would allow Commissioners and members of the public to better assess and weigh in on the designs.
- Mr. Banfic has an excellent professional reputation for his lighting design. Following his lighting recommendations for the decks without seeing his recommendations implemented in a deck first would not pose a significant challenge.
- While there were some concerns about approving designs for four of the decks at once, the designs would be implemented first in Peabody and Chester. This would allow Commissioners and members of the public to provide feedback on the implementation in

those two decks, and would allow the Commission to request changes to the plans for the remaining decks if appropriate.

MOTION: Motion by Longe, seconded by Haig:

To approve BCT Design Group's Schematic Designs for the Peabody, Pierce, Park, and N. Old Woodward Parking Garages and authorize City staff and BCT to incorporate the approved concepts into the ongoing comprehensive repair project, including integration into a future bid package.

ROLL CALL VOTE

Ayes: Longe, Baller, Long, Host, Kozlowski, Kolb, Haig

Nays: None

Recused: None

12-350-25 Birmingham Museum 2026-2028 Strategic Plan

MD Pielack presented the item and answered a question from the Commission.

MOTION: Motion by Host, seconded by Kolb:

To approve the Birmingham Museum 2026-2028 Strategic Plan.

VOICE VOTE

Ayes: Longe, Baller, Long, Host, Kozlowski, Kolb, Haig

Nays: None

Recused: None

Commission Items for Future Discussion

12-351-25 Arlington, Shirley, and 'Major Road' Designation

The Mayor noted his recusal due to his residence in the discussed area, and left the room.

MPT Long assumed facilitation of the meeting during the Mayor's recusal.

MOTION: Motion by Host, seconded by Kolb:

To discuss the special assessments on Arlington and Shirley, and the City's designation of 'major roads'.

Commissioners raised the following points during discussion:

- This discussion would be premature, since the topic should be evaluated holistically and not on a street-by-street basis.

VOICE VOTE

Ayes: Host, Kolb, Haig

Nays: Kozlowski, Longe, Long

Recused: Baller

Motion failed.

The Mayor rejoined the meeting and resumed facilitation.

Commission discussion on items from a prior meeting

None.

12-351-25 Request for Closed Session Under MCL § 15.268, Sec.8(1)(e) and MCL § 15.268, Sec. 8(1)(d) of the Open Meetings Act

Commissioner Haig noted his recusal from the item.

MOTION: Motion by Long, seconded by Longe:

To meet in closed session pursuant to MCL § 15.268, Sec.8(1)(e) of the Open Meetings Act to discuss pending litigation entitled The Community House Association, Birmingham, Michigan, Oakland County Circuit/Business Court Case No.: 2025-219218 CB Honorable Michael Warren, and to consider the purchase or lease of real property up to the time an option to purchase or lease that real property is obtained pursuant to the Open Meetings Act, MCL § 15.268 Closed sessions; permissible purposes, Sec. 8(1)(d).

ROLL CALL VOTE

Ayes: Baller, Host, Kolb, Kozlowski, Longe, Long

Nays: None

Recused: Haig

The Commission entered into closed session at 9:27 p.m., and returned from closed session at 10:30 p.m.

Upon the return from closed session, the Mayor delivered the following statement:

"We've just returned from a closed session in which we discussed attorney-client privileged information and possible acquisition of real estate. Topic, of course, was the Community House. Since our last meeting, there have been several developments which I would like to outline.

But first, I'd like to direct the community's attention to a book that was published by the Community House itself in 1993, entitled "The Heart of Birmingham: The Community House Story" by Betty and Frank Angelo. This rich and impassioned history of the Community House affirms the City's position in no uncertain terms about the intention of the founders.

And I quote from the 1930 Deed of Trust: "To encourage, engage in, and carry on social, philanthropic and civic activities among and for the residents of the village of Birmingham, Michigan, and to provide and maintain a center, therefore, by acquiring, leasing, purchasing, improving and maintaining adequate real and personal property."

I encourage everyone to read it, and it will be made available on the homepage of the City's website soon, or it is already there.

Since our last meeting, efforts to talk to the Community House management and legal team, which I hasten to add, began well before we filed suit, have continued. As a potential acquirer, we have requested a tour of the building and the opportunity to inspect it and learn about its condition and maintenance cost.

On the legal front, our case has been assigned to the business court of the Oakland Circuit Court, which will hear our request for a temporary restraining order at which both parties, the City and the Community House, will be permitted to speak.

And I want to clarify something: the Court did not deny our request for a temporary restraining order. It simply said it wanted to hear from both parties before ruling on it.

In the community, it is fair to say that the threat of a sale has motivated residents far more than the revitalization effort undertaken by management of the Community House.

We have letters tonight from two groups which will be published in our next Commission packet.

Parents at the Early Childhood Center who want to see the ECC continue have come forward and offered to donate their time and skills to managing the Center and continuing operations.

Another group of residents, with strong ties to the arts and philanthropic communities, passionate about saving the Community House, has formed the 'Visionary Arts Council' to help

jumpstart programming and fundraising. This is being led by acclaimed photographer and Birmingham resident Linda Solomon, and you can find her on the internet and join the effort.

Finally, a word to the community: this has always been our house, not the City's house, but the community's house. This is why we filed our lawsuit and it is why we will persist. The administrators and boards of directors who have come and gone over the home's 100-year history have been mere temporary occupants of what is and always will be the community's house.

To the Senior Men's Club, the Rotary Club, and all the other organizations and individuals who once called the House 'home' and contributed to it mightily, we aim to ensure that it remains the community's house, and we hope and expect that someday you will find it in your hearts to return.

And to all others, young and old, I ask that you join us with optimism and hope in rebuilding a house rich in programming that all of us can call home. Thank you."

9. REMOVED FROM CONSENT AGENDA

10. COMMUNICATIONS

It was noted that the Commission received three communications from residents that would be included in the next agenda packet.

11. REPORTS

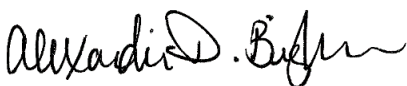
- A. Commissioner Reports
 - i. Notice of Intention to Appoint to the Multi-Modal Transportation Board
 - ii. Notice of Intention to Appoint to the Parks and Recreation Board
- B. Commissioner Comments

The Mayor reported back from a talk given by two Israeli survivors of the October 7 attacks. The talk was hosted by the Jewish Federation of Metro Detroit.

- C. Advisory Boards, Committees, Commissions' Report
- D. Legislation
- E. City Staff

12. ADJOURN

The Commission motioned to adjourn at 10:44 p.m.



Alexandria Bingham, City Clerk



Laura Eichenhorn, City Transcriptionist