



**CITY OF WALLED LAKE
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 2, 2026
7:30 P.M.**

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Gunther.

PLEDGE TO FLAG & INVOCATION

Invocation by Council Member Ambrose.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Gunther, *Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke, Council Member Ambrose, Council Member Arnold, Council Member Schinzing, and Council Member Woods

OTHERS PRESENT

City Manager Whitt, Finance Director Pesta, HR Director Sears, Police Chief Shakinas, Deputy Police Chief Kolke, Fire Chief Gonzalez, DPW Superintendent Ladd, and City Clerk Stuart

**Attended via electronically*

**CM 06-01-26 MOTION TO EXCUSE COUNCIL MEMBER LOCH FROM
TONIGHT'S MEETING**

Motion by Woods, seconded by Ambrose, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To excuse Council Member Loch from tonight's meeting.

City Manager Whitt said City Attorney Vanerian will not be in attendance this evening.

Council Member Schinzing requested discussions on schedule of meetings for the remainder of year, refuse collection, and ethics policy.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke explained the need to create a list of priorities, as a council, what council wants to address first, second, third, etc. He asked for an update on discussions of the downtown improvements, what the budget allocation is, who and how the determinations are made for what the downtown improvements should look like.

REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGE None

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION None

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Report on Memorial Day Parade & Ceremony

City Manager Whitt thanked staff for their efforts with the parade, public works did a great job on the set up for the event, it looked better this year with the stage out front of city hall and the stage in front of Casey's of Walled Lake. City Manager Whitt said the Police Chief and Fire Chief had their crews well organized, some of those folks were also part of the Honor Guard ceremony. He said Mrs. Sears worked on the parade this year with assistance from Parks and Recreation Commission members. City Manager Whitt said Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke stepped right up and performed as the Master of Ceremonies and Grand Marshal, which worked out very well. He thanked Mayor Gunther for his speech. City Manager Whitt said Mr. Tim Moore, a veteran who served in Vietnam 1970 to 1976, who was a longtime volunteer on the Parks and Recreation Commission, was a recipient of the retired flag during the ceremony.

Council Member Woods suggested sending out a survey to the parade participants asking for their feedback to help plan next year's parade.

City Manager Whitt said a survey is being sent to the participants. City Manager Whitt said the parade route was stacked with people, our downtown after the parade was a busy environment, and the beach was overwhelmed with people.

Mayor Gunther expressed his appreciation of the ceremony and the retirement of the flags.

City Manager Whitt explained that there were people that had once complained about the condition of the flags not truly understanding the flag retirement ceremony and were upset that used flags were being provided to the recipients.

Council Member Woods said it was nice to witness Mr. Moore's granddaughter trying to assist Mr. Moore during the ceremony.

City Manager Whitt thanked Council Member Woods for the photo presentation, he heard many comments of appreciation.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke expressed gratitude to Council Member Woods for having his father there who is a veteran and thanked him for his service.

2. Update on Walled Lake Civic Fund Fireworks

City Manager Whitt said he has had meetings with Mr. Johnston about the event, the DDA is in support and is providing funding, and council members are on board to volunteer during the event. Preparations are moving forward.

Council Member Ambrose explained Casey's of Walled Lake is donating a mobile unit to provide beer and wine, Suburban Party Rental is providing major assistance as well and the bounce houses, Oakland County Parks is scheduled to provide a stage for local and national band performers. He said several food trucks will be available alongside our local and outside businesses providing food. DPW is working with DTE for power drop. This is going to be an extraordinary event, and he is looking forward to it.

City Manager Whitt said public safety will be meeting this week to discuss event details. He said the city and DDA have committed to making the Walled Lake Civic Fund event a success. This will be a family day and firework show for all.

Council Member Woods inquired about the sidewalk locations for the SMART bus route.

City Manager Whitt said those locations are designed by SMART and Oakland County. He said the city has made strides for sidewalk improvements during his time here and it remains a priority.

DPW Superintendent Ladd explained meetings with Oakland County about sidewalks have been taking place and another meeting is scheduled for tomorrow.

City Manager Whitt said years ago he met with city representatives from Novi regarding sidewalks in hopes of connecting the two communities. He said at the time, there was no agreement for the need, now today, there is a sidewalk. Priorities change.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke asked what is the DDA's position with what is going on with downtown area and what is the status of the design improvements.

City Manager Whitt explained it has slowed down a bit, there are new members of the DDA, and the vision is different now. He explained the last two meetings'; discussions were held to fix just the noncompliant ADA issues, which halts the bigger picture in prior discussions. City Manager Whitt said the city engineer has attended DDA meetings and the DDA board instructed the city engineer to design specs for RFP bids.

Mayor Gunther said we need to have a good plan. He said there are no specifications in city ordinances for design. He explained there are other entities involved such as AT&T, WRC, GLWA and the wastewater treatment plant that should all be a part of this. He said he would like to address the ADA items first.

City Manager Whitt said nobody said we are not going to do it; there was a desire to redesign the entire downtown. Now with recent DDA discussions, it has shifted to do the minimum addressing only the ADA issues. He said we have not received instructions to obtain construction plans to do downtown. City Manager Whitt explained the only directive provided from the DDA board was to have the city engineer provide specs for RFP bids.

Discussion was held on the surveys provided to the DDA.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke expressed concerns about addressing the ADA, placing sidewalks then tearing it out when the entire downtown is done. He said a list of priorities is necessary, because he understands there are several items and priorities differ.

Council Member Woods said collectively, we need a full plan; there are a lot of ideas. He said

we all want to do something, but we need a plan for the entire area. He explained we had a defined plan for the public safety campus, and it came to fruition. He said we must start looking at what we can afford and collectively create a plan.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke stated that is what he is talking about, nothing is being done. He said talks are continued with no action, who takes the lead on this.

Mayor Gunther said the DDA has significant amount of funds in their budget. He said we need to make plans for the recently purchased downtown property that generates revenue. He said we bought land with no plans.

Council Member Woods said he disagrees. He explained, we did not buy without a plan, we bought avoid an unruly development such as a three-story building downtown, the purchase took care of that.

Mayor Gunther said he, Mr. Dan Martin, and DDA Chairman Steve Blair, have spoken about potential revenue sources of the purchased lots.

Council Member Woods explained he has spoken about items, he has provided feedback over time, he offered to put together what he has access to and provide to council.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke said he appreciates this.

City Manager Whitt said there was nothing lost with the purchase of these parcels. There are already ideas floating out there that people do not like. He said city council decides what they can do downtown, the DDA can make a proposal, but the council has the final say. City Manager Whitt said there must be an engineering plan first and foremost to have the possibility of obtaining grants. It starts with engineering. He explained decisions need to be made if the improvements are in phases or all at once. He said everybody wants to do something downtown. He said there have been misstatements and reiterated the product Boss Engineering provided was the necessary survey documents to begin rehabilitation discussions, it is not an engineered plan.

Council Member Woods explained in initial conversations, everybody wanted sidewalks done, the first two blocks were surveyed and underground information was obtained. It's already June, we are getting to the point we are going to miss the winter mark. He said at the same time, we are now at two meetings a month, the overall priority list has to fit in with those requirements as well.

City Manager Whitt recommended inviting the engineer back to the next council meeting, decisions have to be made.

Council Member Woods said he agrees and suggested to the new council members maybe a downtown walk through with Boss Engineering to help speed up the understanding needed to aid in creating a prioritized plan.

Council Member Schinzing said he thought the DDA was working on a plan, we saw plans.

Council Member Woods explained Boss Engineering provided surveys, we now have to provide them feedback and direction.

City Manager Whitt said there was never a plan, we received a survey for three downtown sections. It was a survey not an engineering plan. City Manager Whitt said we were also shifting to now include potential construction of the purchased lots. He said the DDA now owns them that changes the scope of work. He said the process still starts with engineering; the issue is where do we go to move ahead.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke asked approximately how long it takes to apply and get grant approval.

City Manager Whitt explained that if the plans are ready and the match funds are ready, we apply. He explained the city has obtained grants, a million-dollar grant was obtained for Decker Road rehabilitation, we were ready with construction plans.

Council Member Ambrose said he would be in favor of inviting the city engineer to the next council meeting to help aid in creating a priority list.

CM 06-02-26 MOTION TO HAVE BOSS ENGINEERING AT THE NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

Motion by Ambrose, seconded by O'Rourke, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To have Boss Engineering at the next council meeting.

Discussion

Mayor Gunther said we have already asked Boss Engineering to prepare an RFP, why have them back, they will just tell us the same information.

Council Member Woods explained feedback is necessary, he offered again to email council what he has collected, to then prepare questions to put something together to ask Boss.

Council Member Ambrose said doing nothing is a bad move, doing something is productive. We can finally start these discussions and do something.

Council Member Schinzing said three of the last four trash pickups have been late. He said he reached out to City Manager Whitt for prior trash service agreements and more than what he asked for was provided, thank you.

City Manager Whitt explained the city is part of the Resource Recovery and Recycling Authority of Southwest Oakland County (RRRASOC). He explained that RRRASOC was created in 1989, they are the ones that source our waste and recycling benefits. He said RRRASOC has no tax levy authority, but they can bond for facilities that dispose of waste and such. City Manager Whitt said he and Finance Director Pesta are the city representatives and Mrs. Pesta is also the

treasurer for RRRASOC. He said RRRASOC collects and charges fees, the city point of contact is Mr. Mike Csapo who has been with RRRASOC for several years. He explained a brief history of service providers starting with Duncan Disposal who was engaged in 2006 then Duncan was purchased by Rizzo who was then purchased by Green for Life (GFL). He said then in June 2024, Priority purchased GFL and their fleet of trucks. However, it may not have been known to Priority the poor condition of the GFL fleet, and they had to source extra trucks through a rental company Premier to assist with trash collections. He did not disagree with GFL missing several times, there was an instance where he and the DPW literally collected resident waste because the service was not present. City Manager Whitt said the city does not have garbage in the street, Priority is late with collections, but the trash is being picked up.

Mayor Gunther said we do not have a good communication path to inform the residents of late pickups. He explained staff posts on the website, but nobody goes to the website. Mayor Gunther asked how long the current contract is for.

City Manager said until June 2027.

Council Member Schinzing asked about charge backs for missed collections.

Council Member Woods said Waterford had a huge issue with trash collections services and he suggested seeing what notification system they have, how they get the information out to their residents.

Finance Director Pesta explained there is an RFP prepared to be released in September. She added that there would be options to bid but to keep in mind, one of the options may include a three-year extension with the current provider.

Discussion was held on an automated cart service collection.

Finance Director Pesta said that it is an additional cost, currently the city contract offers the automated cart option as an opt-in service with a user fee to residents. She said there are municipalities in our RRRASOC group that have the cart system, but their fees are much higher. She said it may come to be forced to switch to this option, which is a bigger cost to our residents.

City Manager Whitt said it would be useful for council to review the proposed RFP and he will provide it for the council. City Manager Whitt said we will continue to improve communications.

Council Member Schinzing said he would like to continue with two meetings a month.

**CM 06-03-26 MOTION TO CONTINUE WITH TWO CITY COUNCIL
MEETINGS A MONTH FOR REMAINDER OF CALENDAR
YEAR EXCLUDING AUGUST AND NOVEMBER
DUE TO ELECTIONS**

Motion by Schinzing, seconded by Gunther,

Discussion

Council Member Arnold asked for review of two meetings a month to be done on a quarterly basis.

Council Member Woods commented that staff members need time in between meetings to accomplish the requested items.

Council Member Schinzing amended his motion.

CM 06-04-26 MOTION TO AMEND AND HOST TWO MEETINGS A MONTH FOR JULY AND SEPTEMBER WITH REVIEW EACH QUARTER

Motion by Schinzing, seconded by Gunther, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To amend motion and host two meetings a month for July and September with review each quarter.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (6)	Arnold, O'Rourke, Schinzing, Woods, Ambrose, Gunther
Nays (0)	
Absent (1)	Loch
Abstain (0)	

Council Member Schinzing requested to have the ethic policy for the June 16th council meeting.

City Manager Whitt said the city attorney will have the requested ethics policy at the next meeting.

Mayor Gunther asked about deadlines for charter amendments. There are several charter amendments to be made.

NEW BUSINESS None

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Ambrose said he would like to shout out to a few of the businesses in the town providing class A attitudes such as the Walled Lake Commons where Salvation Army is and the parking lot rehabilitation, Rancho El Patio, the Gaming Company is moving to a larger location in the city, the Walled Lake Bruch House, Vera is a great advocate for our town. He said Green Lantern passed out pizza on Memorial Day which was great. He said the Market Days season has started.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke said the Detroit Institute of Arts 2026 Inside|Out program has started. He said the Parks and Recreation Commission will be doing a park walk through Monday June 8th starting at the Foster Farmhouse at Riley Park, the walk through will also include Hiram Sims and Mercer Beach. He said the summer concert series begins on June 24th with the Neon Crows

and is hosted for the first time at the Casey J. Ambrose Public Safety Campus. The remaining concerts will be at Hiram Sims, and the last concert will be back at the public safety campus.

Council Member Arnold shared his gratitude of the parade and ceremony, he said it was nice to be a part of it from the inside out.

Council Member Woods said the new council members did a great job, city staff was amazing, everybody across the board did a great job. He said the flags at the cemetery were great and the VFW commented much appreciation. He said he assisted with the MI Special Olympics again this year, it is very rewarding.

Council Member Schinzing echoes what Council Member Arnold said and added his appreciation to be a part of this community and its professionalism with the parade and ceremony. He thoroughly enjoyed being a part of it.

MAYOR'S COMMENT'S

Mayor Gunther said he cannot seem to get through a speech without emotion when looking at the veterans and service men, it is a very emotional thing. He said the Walled Lake Honor Guard flag retirement ceremony was amazing. He said he has attended the parade for 20 years but never saw from the inside as he did this year. Thank you.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

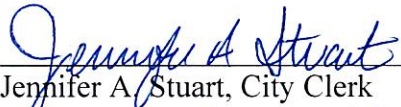
Parks and Recreation Chairman Johnson explained he has been walking the city parks and beach and he has concerns about the beach and the marijuana smoking. He commented on the number of people who outright smoke marijuana at the beach. He said he loves all types of music but not the loud vulgar music people play at the beach with no regard to the other people on the beach. He referred to people who spoke at past meetings stating they wish to move the city forward, speak of their proposals and then fade away when they don't get their way, you never see them again. He said these people don't listen to the citizens, as soon as the talking is done, these developers leave and you never hear from them again.

Council Member Schinzing said he had friends from out of town visiting who spent time at Mercer Beach and they commented to him on the amount of people smoking marijuana at the beach.

ADJOURNMENT

CM 06-05-26 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Schinzing, seconded by Ambrose, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To adjourn the meeting at 9:02 P.M.



Jennifer A. Stuart, City Clerk
approved 6/15/26

Richard Gunther, Mayor