



**CITY OF WALLED LAKE
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 3, 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 Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke.

ROLL CALL

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

OTHERS PRESENT

City Manager Whitt, Finance Director Pesta, City Attorney Vanerian, and City Clerk Stuart

REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES

Council Member Schinzing asked how the agenda is created for council, is there a polling of the council or mayor or anything like that.

City Manager Whitt explained agenda items come through his office and the Clerk's Office. He explained if someone wants to be placed on the agenda, we review that request and determine whether it should go to a City Council meeting or another board or commission. City Manager Whitt explained council members can bring items up at any time, including during this meeting. He explained if the intent is for an item to be formally scheduled or sent out in advance, it needs to be called in ahead of time so it can be properly placed on an agenda.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Mr. Tony Hopeck addressed the council regarding the upcoming Walled Lake Ice Fishing Derby taking place February 8th. He said this marks their 18th anniversary of the derby. He said he coordinates with Police Chief Shakinas as well as fire and wanted to check with City Council if they had any questions or concerns. He explained registrations are running four to five times higher. He said there will be a \$10,000 financial prize and new just this year a four-wheeler giveaway as a registration door prize. He emphasized the event's family-friendly nature and its focus on creating a positive outdoor experience, especially for the youth. He also highlighted the strong cooperation with local churches, businesses, and community partners, as well as coordination regarding parking. Mr. Hopeck explained that cleanup is always handled promptly following the event and that the derby maintains a strong record of stewardship and respect for the area. Proceeds from the event also support community initiatives, including a donation toward the fireworks put on by the Walled Lake Civic Fund.

Mayor Gunther asked whether the city could assist with the event.

Mr. Hopeck requested that the city place notice of the event on the marquee/website, noting it is known as the Walled Lake Ice Fishing Derby and helps promote fishing in February and June.

Mayor Gunther stated the city is happy to support the event, provided it does not create city liability and is not designated as a city-sponsored event.

Council Member Ambrose commented that he has followed the event since its inception and noted it is a positive community event that brings good recognition to Walled Lake.

Mr. Hopeck thanked the city, agreed there is strong sponsorship support, and welcomed ideas or input from the city.

Council Member O'Rourke highlighted strong local business participation and as the Walled Lake representative of the Walled Lake Improvement Board he greatly appreciates all the boat-washing practices during the event to help reduce invasive species.

Kelly Sharp, PureFit Pilates and Yoga said they have been operating in the city for 13 years, practicing out of the Walled Lake Methodist Church building. Ms. Sharp introduced Ms. Emily Kasal, who is also part of the PureFit group. Ms. Emily Kasal explained PureFit Pilates and Yoga offers affordable classes for all ages and partners with the Lakes Area Youth Assistance and Hospitality House providing education and awareness. Ms. Emily Kasal explained they would like to hold classes in city parks such as Sims Park and Riley Park and even at the beach. PureFit Pilates and Yoga wishes to bring more healthy activities to Walled Lake.

Council Member Ambrose inquired about a social media page or website.

Ms. Sharp explained they do have a website no socials, less Facebook, as they wish to honor being a private safe place to practice, they do not post multi photos.

Mr. Akaash Kolluri introduced himself to city council as the regional manager to Elissa Slotkin United States Senator and offered any assistance.

MAYOR'S REPORT

1. Walled Lake Ice Fishing Derby

Discussion was held earlier in the meeting under Audience Participation.

Mayor Gunther explained that the city lacks a formal, written process for assigning, tracking, and placing Council directives on agendas, relying instead on institutional knowledge. He said we need to codify procedures, such as a directive log with timelines, as the city undertakes major projects. He explained the importance of modernizing outdated ordinances, noting that many are

decades old, unenforceable, or no longer relevant. Mayor Gunther stated that a review is underway, with a committee meeting scheduled for tomorrow.

City Attorney Vanerian explained he had provided an informative memo at the last council meeting providing suggested items for change. City Attorney Vanerian explained that could be the starting point. City Attorney Vanerian explained the moratorium is on the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process and that should be the first item of discussion. He said the entire code book can be discussed but there is a timeline regarding the moratorium on the PUD ordinance. City Attorney Vanerian explained making zoning ordinance changes to design type standards, modernizing outdated ordinances, are items that go beyond the PUD ordinance that can be reviewed after the PUD ordinance amendment council is asking for.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke explained when campaigning, questions arose around transparency; people were not feeling that they were finding out what is happening in the city and it was not easily accessible. He would like to have a March or April town hall meeting available on YouTube, put out an agenda for the public, where Council is at and what Council is changing in the city.

Council Member Woods reminded Council budget season is coming up, we do know the staff has to prepare to ensure we are on track for the next fiscal year beginning July 1st. He said he did not disagree with a town hall meeting but encouraged mindfulness of multiple meetings as staff need to meet deadlines during those times. Council Member Woods said he visits the neighborhoods on an ongoing basis, conversing with residents to make sure people are up to date.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke said he wished to appear as a group to the public, the town hall meeting is to inform the public on how Council has moved the city forward.

Council Member Woods said there are two meetings a month right now, there is audience participation at every meeting, the website lists email contacts, phone numbers and meeting agendas are out there. He said contact information is there.

CORRESPONDENCE None

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

City Attorney Vanerian explained that the city lost a valued member of the community who was also on the Planning Commission, Mr. Neal Woflson. City Attorney Vanerian said he wanted to make council aware they have the option of reducing the planning commission members from a seven-member board to a five-member board. He is not for or against a change in number of required members, but he wanted to inform Council.

City Manager Whitt explained there may be applications from people who have served and would like to continue to serve at least on a temporary basis. City Manager Whitt explained the importance of a needed majority for the Planning Commission.

Mayor Gunther asked if they need to be residents of the city, if it is required by city ordinance or state statute.

City Attorney Vanerian explained he believed city charter requires city residency, he will verify and report back to council.

City Manager Whitt asked what the goal is, the defined accomplishment of the development committee meeting that is scheduled for tomorrow at 4:30 p.m. We need to have a mission going into this meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

1. First Reading C-375-26 Amend Chapter 51, "Zoning", Article 23.00, "Zoning Board of Appeals", Section 51-23.01(a)

City Attorney explained Planning Commission for public hearing then back to council with any recommendations if any from planning commission for adoption.

CM 02-01-26 **MOTION TO APPROVE FIRST READING C-375-26 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 51, "ZONING", OF TITLE V, "ZONING AND PLANNING", THE CITY OF WALLED LAKE ZONING ORDINANCE, TO AMEND ARTICLE 23.00 "ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS" SECTION 51-23.01(A) "CREATION" AS PROVIDED BY THIS ORDINANCE**

Motion by Woods, seconded by Schinzing, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve first reading C-375-26 an ordinance to amend Chapter 51, "Zoning", of Title V, "Zoning and Planning", the City of Walled Lake Zoning Ordinance, to amend Article 23.00 "Zoning Board of Appeals" Section 51-23.01(a) "Creation" as provided by this ordinance.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Ambrose, Arnold, Loch, O'Rourke, Schinzing, Woods, Gunther
Nays (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

2. First Reading C-376-26 Amend Chapter 38, "Fire Prevention and Protection", Article II "Fire Prevention Code"

City Attorney Vanerian explained this was requested by the Fire Chief to update the code to run concurrently with the Michigan Building Code which is now under the 2021 code year.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke inquired if this amendment would put any burden on existing businesses, to update equipment and such.

City Attorney Vanerian explained it mainly applies to new construction there are some things in the fire code that do apply to existing buildings, but he did not see anything of that nature in this particular version.

**CM 02-02-26 MOTION TO APPROVE FIRST READING C-375-26 AN
ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 38, "FIRE PREVENTION
AND PROTECTION", OF THE CITY OF WALLED LAKE CODE
OF ORDINANCES, TO AMEND ARTICLE II "FIRE
PREVENTION CODE", TO ADOPT THE 2021 INTERNATIONAL
FIRE CODE WITH INSERTIONS AND AMENDMENTS AS
PROVIDED BY THIS ORDINANCE**

Motion by O'Rourke, seconded by Woods, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve first reading C-375-26 an ordinance to amend Chapter 38, "Fire Prevention and Protection", of the City of Walled Lake Code of Ordinances, to amend Article II "Fire Prevention Code", to adopt the 2021 International Fire Code with insertions and amendments as provided by this ordinance.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Arnold, Loch, O'Rourke, Schinzing, Woods, Ambrose, Gunther
Nays (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

Mayor Gunther explained there are items that council members wished to add as new business that were not accomplished at the prior meetings.

Council Member Woods called a point of order explaining adding items to new business should have been done at the beginning of the meeting under Requests for Agenda Changes.

Council Member Schinzing said he is really irritated, he wants to initiate items, to get things to happen, things need to go faster. He said there is a 90-day moratorium, and nothing has happened, this is ridiculous, this is not what the people asked for, things need to go faster. He said we have things that our constituents have asked us to make sure we are doing and this has been his fourth meeting now and we are not even getting to it.

City Manager Whitt explained this body travels on Robert's Rules of Order, the very basis of Robert's Rule of Order is you never let rules get in the way of the will of the body or society. City Manager Whitt explained council may make a motion to add items. City Manager Whitt said council speaks by way of motion, ordinance, or resolution. City Manager Whitt cautioned, adding items to the agenda the night of a meeting, the attack of transparency is generated, claims of not knowing that item was going to be discussed.

Council Member Woods explained for transparency, council can get items ahead of time to the clerk or City Manager. He explained City Council can request items to be placed on the agenda

that is posted that way residents have a chance to see it, it is provided ahead of time, giving the residents a chance to attend the meeting or communicate in other ways on topics. Council Member Woods said he has learned that going through government processes for transparency can be a slower process, such as the requirement of first reading, public hearing, etc.

Mayor Gunther said he does not want to mix city business with his personal business. If a council member wants a laptop, how can they obtain one.

City Manager Whitt said laptops can be provided if council members wish to have one. It is timely to make the motion to do so. We will make budget amendments to accommodate.

Council Member Arnold explained he would like to have an analysis of the risk of laptops and cell phones versus a virtual platform. If a virtual platform is better than a laptop, a webmail versus a laptop, he is hesitant to allocate funds for capital purchases of laptops before an analysis is provided.

City Attorney Vanerian explained any personal device for council business, the FOIA potential is there, the data that may be on any device may be subject to FOIA. Emails are accessible through any device; it is not specific to that device. City Attorney Vanerian explained each elected member has their own Walled Lake email, council communication utilizes that city email, if elected members save items on the device, then in that situation it is subject to FOIA. City Attorney Vanerian said to use caution, use common sense, any council business whether personal or city related that device may be looked at by someone else at some point.

Discussion held on a communications best practice policy.

**CM 02-03-26 INSTRUCT CITY ATTORNEY TO REVIEW BEST PRACTICES
AND ADVISE COURSE OF ACTION FOR UTILIZATION OF
ELECTRONIC PLATFORMS AND POTENTIAL PURCHASE OF
LAPTOPS AND CELL PHONES FOR ELECTED OFFICIALS**

Motion by Schinzing, seconded by O'Rourke, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To instruct the City Attorney to review best practices and advise course of action for utilization of electronic platforms and potential purchase of laptops and cell phones for elected officials.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Loch, O'Rourke, Schinzing, Woods, Ambrose, Arnold, Gunther
Nays (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke asked if the moratorium on the PUD and CPD could be extended by 60 days. He explained council is looking at possible rewriting codes and ordinances and more time is needed.

City Attorney Vanerian said we have a committee meeting tomorrow, we are discussing the moratorium, and it is specific to the PUD process. He explained arriving at a final decision for the changes or amendments to it will take time. City Attorney Vanerian said the council needs to have an actual draft that embodies what council wants to change. He said the memo he presented to council last meeting included suggestions. City Attorney Vanerian said to keep in mind the amendment will need to go before the planning commission for a public hearing as part of the process and then back to council for second reading.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke asked City Attorney Vanerian how long council should anticipate this process.

City Attorney Vanerian explained three or four months is realistic.

**CM 02-04-26 MOTION TO EXTEND THE MORATORIUM FOR
60 ADDITIONAL DAYS FROM THE ORIGINAL 90 DAYS**

Motion by O'Rourke, seconded by Schinzing, MOTION CARRIED: To extend the moratorium for 60 additional days from the original 90 days.

Discussion

Council Member Woods explained while concerns have been raised regarding traffic, setbacks, and building height, the City Attorney and City Manager have explained that the city already has tools in place under the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process to address those issues. Council Member Woods said he is concerned about signaling that the city is "closed for business" when existing mechanisms are available.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (4) O'Rourke, Schinzing, Arnold, Gunther
Nays (3) Woods, Ambrose, Loch
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

Council Member Schinzing introduced, read and motioned for approval Resolution 2026-03.

CITY OF WALLED LAKE RESOLUTION NO. 2026-03 A
RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE CITY ATTORNEY TO
PROVIDE TO CITY COUNCIL ALL PAST CLOSED
LITIGATION FILINGS AND A SUMMARY PAGE FOR THE
CALENDAR YEARS 2020 TO CURRENT, ALL FILINGS AND
A SUMMARY PAGE OF CURRENT LITIGATION, AND AN
ANALYSIS OF ANY POTENTIAL LITIGATION RISK OR
THREATS IN THE FUTURE

WHEREAS, the Walled Lake City Council requires formal technical analysis regarding the current and future "DISCLOSURE OF LITIGATION "; and

WHEREAS, the Council seeks to ensure administrative accountability and clear communication regarding the feasibility of staff deadlines.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF WALLED LAKE:

1. Directive: The City Attorney is hereby directed to complete "DISCLOSURE OF LITIGATION" and provide a formal report to the Council and City Manager said report.
2. Initial Deadline: The deadline for the completion of this assignment is 2/17/2026.
3. Five-Day Response Rule: The City Attorney shall, within five (5) working days of the passage of this resolution, provide a written response to the Council. This response shall either (a) confirm the deadline is achievable, or (b) indicate the specific administrative difficulties or unavailable resources or costs in meeting the deadline and propose an alternative completion date.
4. Special Meeting Provision: Should the City Attorney determine the need to propose an alternative date that is not acceptable to the Council, a Special Meeting is hereby pre-authorized and called for 14 days from the approved Vote to discuss and finalize the project timeline.

Log Entry: The City Clerk is directed to enter this assignment into the official Council Directive Log immediately.

CM 02-05-26 MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2026-03 A RESOLUTION OF DISCLOSURE OF LITIGATION

Motion by Schinzing, seconded by Loch, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve resolution 2026-03 a resolution of Disclosure of Litigation

Discussion

Council Member Woods explained that information is already public, in terms of what is out there. He said the City Attorney has already reported on those items in the past.

City Attorney Vanerian explained at times items are presented during the open portion of a meeting while others require confidential attorney client communications. City Attorney Vanerian explained what he anticipates providing in response to the resolution would be to assemble those litigation reports going back to 2020. He said there are a couple of cases still pending that may need to be updated. City Attorney Vanerian explained anything received labeled as privileged confidential attorney client communication, even though cases may be resolved, they remain privileged confidential attorney client communications and cannot be made public.

Council Member Schinzing asked what is confidential and public.

City Attorney Vanerian explained at the very top of the document in bold italic text it will state Privileged Confidential Attorney Client Communications and it cannot be handed out or made public.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Schinzing, Woods, Ambrose, Arnold, Loch, O'Rourke, Gunther
Nays (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

Council Member Arnold introduced, read and motioned for approval resolution 2026-04.

CITY OF WALLED LAKE RESOLUTION 2026-04 A
RESOLUTION DIRECTING THE CITY CLERK TO PROVIDE
TO CITY COUNCIL ALL CONTRACTS OF CITY
EMPLOYEES, CITY CONTRACTOR EMPLOYEES (SUCH AS
PLANNING COMMISSION BOARD MEMBERS AND
BUILDING INSPECTORS), SUPPLIERS, UNION
CONTRACTS AND FRANCHISE AGREEMENTS AND TO
REDACT ANY LEGAL PRIVACY DETAILS AND TO DIRECT
THE CITY CLERK TO POST THE CONTRACTS OF THOSE
THAT REPRESENT "ALL CITY EMPLOYEE, CONTRACT
EMPLOYEE, AND LEGAL ENTITY CONTRACTS" ON THE
CITY WEBSITE IN THE SPIRIT OF TRANSPARENCY

WHEREAS, the Walled Lake City Council requires formal technical analysis regarding "DISCLOSURE OF CONTRACTS"

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF WALLED LAKE:

1. Directive: The City Clerk is hereby directed to complete "DISCLOSURE OF CONTRACTS: and provide a formal report to the Council and For the City Manager to direct his staff to permanently post current and future, executed versions of "ALL CITY EMPLOYEE, CONTRACT EMPLOYEE, AND LEGAL ENTITY CONTRACTS" on a city website page for transparency.
2. Initial Deadline: The deadline for the completion of this assignment is 2/X/2026.
3. Five-Day Response Rule: The City Clerk and City Manager shall, within X (X) working days of the passage of this resolution, provide a written response to the Council. This response shall either (a) confirm the deadline is achievable, or (b) indicate the specific administrative difficulties or unavailable resources or costs in meeting the deadline and propose an alternative completion date.
4. Special Meeting Provision: Should the City Clerk or the City Manager determine the need to propose an alternative date that is not acceptable to the Council, a Special

Council Meeting is hereby pre-authorized and called for 14 days from the approved Vote to discuss and finalize the project timeline.

CM 02-06-26 MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2026-04 A RESOLUTION DIRECTING CITY CLERK TO PROVIDE DISCLOSURE OF CONTRACTS

Motion by O'Rourke, seconded by Loch, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve resolution 2026-04 a resolution directing City Clerk to provide disclosure of contracts.

Discussion

City Manager Whitt explained that the City Clerk serves as the custodian of City contracts, and that all recent and active contracts, including union agreements and employment contracts, have been approved by resolution and are therefore readily available. These contracts can be compiled and made accessible, such as in PDF format.

Council Member Arnold said he is requesting this information to be posted to website.

Council Member Woods explained he has concerns about publishing future contracts; the city reserves the right for negotiations. He explained contracts or agreements are approved via resolution. These items are placed within the council meeting minutes and council packets which are both posted online. Council Member Woods explained he would like to make a modification to the motion to meet back in two weeks, table for now to make sure it is understood what the request is.

CM 02-07-26 MOTION TO TABLE RESOLUTION 2026-04

Motion by Woods, seconded by Schinzing, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To table resolution 2026-04.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Woods, Ambrose, Arnold, O'Rourke, Loch, Schinzing, Gunther
Nays (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke initiated the discussion on reestablishing the Traffic Safety Commission, noting it has existed in the past and was discussed during his campaigning. He said there are ongoing traffic and safety concerns throughout the city, including speeding and increased through-traffic on major roads. Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke further suggested that a board member of the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) be a representative of the Traffic Safety Commission to ensure traffic and safety considerations are represented in downtown planning and development discussions.

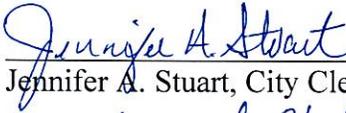
Council Member Woods acknowledged Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke's comments and suggested that, due to current board vacancies, traffic-related responsibilities could be temporarily addressed within the Planning Commission. He explained that the Planning Commission already reviews citywide development and planning issues, which would allow traffic concerns to be addressed comprehensively until sufficient board membership is available to reestablish a standalone Traffic Safety Board.

City Manager Whitt explained the Traffic Safety Board still exists but there are no members, City Council needs to appoint people and appoint people that can come to the meetings.

ADJOURNMENT

CM 02-08-26 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ambrose, seconded by O'Rourke: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To adjourn the meeting at 9:25 P.M.



Jennifer A. Stuart, City Clerk
approved 2/17/26



Richard Gunther, Mayor