



**CITY OF WALLED LAKE  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2025  
7:30 P.M.**

City Clerk Stuart welcomed everyone to the regularly scheduled March 18, 2025, City Council meeting then introduced Council Member Casey R. Ambrose, Council Member Mindy Fernandes, Council Member Bennett Lublin, Council Member John Owsinek, Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Woods, and Mayor Linda Ackley.

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

**PLEDGE TO FLAG & INVOCATION**

Invocation by Mayor Pro Tem Woods.

**ROLL CALL**

Mayor Ackley, Mayor Pro Tem Woods, Council Member Ambrose, Council Member Fernandes, Council Member Lublin, and Council Member Owsinek

**OTHERS PRESENT**

City Manager Whitt, Assistant to the City Manager Jaquays, Finance Director Pesta, HR Director Sears, Public Safety Deputy Director Shakinas, Deputy Police Chief Kolke, City Attorney Vanerian, and City Clerk Stuart

**CM 03-01-25 MOTION TO EXCUSE COUNCIL MEMBER LOCH FROM TONIGHT'S MEETING**

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

**REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES**

Finance Director Pesta requested to add a resolution as item #2 under New Business for Metro Environmental Services agreement for the 2025 portable restroom services for city parks and events.

**PRESENTATION**

**1. Abro Property Management – Ghafari Associates**

Representative from Abro Property Management explained the Planning Commission denied their request for rezoning. They are here this evening to ask City Council to appeal the denial. Their company has been in business for about 20 years, they own over 400 residential units, 200

plus commercial units, 7 Ace Auto wash centers, and 20 plus laundromats. They offer in-house landscaping and snow removal. Some of their tenants include Chase Bank and Jets Pizza. These companies trust Abro Property Management to do work for them and rent to them. They believe they are a good candidate, they have their own maintenance group, 24/7 tenant support, and onsite management and security. They said this development offers modern housing, economic growth, property values will increase, tax revenue will increase and will bring more residents into the city.

Mr. Andy Eckert of Ghafari Associates said he wanted to go through some main points because there was no clear feedback from the Planning Commission with recommendations to deny. Mr. Eckert explained his client is seeking rezoning from I-1 to RM-2, they did receive a strong recommendation from the City's planner McKenna Associates. Mr. Eckert said there were six criteria, and he reviewed items from McKenna's review letter. Mr. Eckert explained the other concerns of the Planning Commission were the gas line, on the southern end of the property there is a 99-foot-wide Consumer's easement, the parking design has been changed and will no longer be over the easement. Mr. Eckert said regardless of what use is above they believe there will be no issue with gas line. Mr. Eckert explained the conceptual plan provided was not intended to be the final product. Mr. Eckert said they want to work with the city and the surrounding neighborhood for the best solution of the site.

#### **AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION**

*None*

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

##### **1. Regular Council Meeting of February 18, 2025**

#### **CM 03-02-25 MOTION TO APPROVE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 18, 2025**

Motion by Lublin, seconded by Woods, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve regular council meeting minutes of February 18, 2025.

#### **Roll Call Vote**

Ayes (6)      Fernandes, Lublin, Owsinek, Woods, Ambrose, Ackley  
Nays (0)  
Absent (1)    Loch  
Abstain (0)

#### **COUNCIL REPORT**

Council Member Fernandes said at the last Parks and Recreation Commission meeting, the annual Spring Egg Hunt was discussed and is scheduled for April 19<sup>th</sup> from 11am to 1pm. There

will be a bounce house, magic show and petting zoo. The Summer Concert series is scheduled to begin in June at Hiram Sims Park and the Walled Lake Market Place begins May 7<sup>th</sup> and runs every Wednesday with new vendors and several return vendors.

Council Member Lublin said the Library Board has completed their budget for the upcoming fiscal year. This includes upgrades like a new sign with the city emblem and new computers to keep up with technology. Council Member Lublin said the library has a strong following; Director Ralston does a fine job. Council Member Lublin said the library received a donation of \$5,000 from patron and board member Ms. Barb Garbutt, she is wonderful and thank you Barb. Council Member Lublin explained that the summer kick off reading program begins June 17, 2025 from 11am to 1pm. The event will include face painting, professional storytellers, and bounce house provided by the Oakland County Parks and Recreation department.

Council Member Owsinek explained that the Planning Commission acted on the Abro rezoning which is on tonight's council agenda.

Mayor Pro Tem Woods explained he attended a Planners Gathering meeting which discussed Oakland County Water Resources Commission, the new soil erosion and stormwater standards manual is supposed to be coming out. Mayor Pro Tem Woods explained one of the updates included an increased void control for underground storm water management.

## **MAYOR'S REPORT**

Mayor Ackley said having attended the most recent DDA meeting, she wanted to make council aware of the discussion on the Banks Dolbeer Foster Farmhouse. She asked that everybody give it a lot of thought, this is something the city must come to a decision about and conclude what will be the result of the Banks Dolbeer Foster Farmhouse.

## **CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

- 1. Consent Agenda of Written Departmental / Divisional Statistical Reports**
  - a. Police**
  - b. Fire**
  - c. Finance**
    - Warrant**
  - d. Code Enforcement**

**CM 03-03-25 APPROVAL OF CITY MANAGER'S CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

Motion by Owsinek, seconded by Fernandes, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve City Manager's Consent Agenda items.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (6) Lublin, Owsinek, Woods, Ambrose, Fernandes, Ackley  
Nays (0)  
Absent (1) Loch  
Abstain (0)

City Manager Whitt explained there is known ongoing financial issues for The Beach Tiki Bar and Boil being behind with payment of property taxes and water bills. City Manager Whitt said he is requesting council authorize management and city attorney to discuss water shut-off procedures with Oakland County Water Resources Commission as The Beach Tiki Bar and Boil is on their watch list due to severe delinquencies. City Manager Whitt explained the Michigan Liquor Control also has issues with this business for alleged bounced checks. City Manager Whitt said the city needs to take action to recover what is owed. City Manager Whitt explained when he is working the weekends in the city, he sees that The Beach Tiki Bar and Boil has a full parking lot, they are obviously making money so why are they not staying current with their bills. City Manager Whitt explained what he does not want to see happen is a change of ownership and playing games to keep the property, they are clearly not capable of operating or maintaining. City Manager Whitt said the city has been in prior lawsuits with this business over delinquencies. It is obvious the business cannot keep up.

Mayor Ackley asked if The Beach Tiki Bar and Boil ever paid what was due from prior lawsuit.

City Manager Whitt explained that while the business did catch up on payments temporarily after the settlement, they are now once again several months behind.

City Attorney Vanerian explained this is an ongoing problem with this business. City Attorney Vanerian explained three or four years ago; council authorized him to move forward with litigation on several issues with this business. City Attorney Vanerian said a settlement was reached and The Beach Tiki Bar and Boil did make payments in accordance with the settlement agreement. City Attorney Vanerian said, however, they are right back at accruing monthly charges. City Attorney Vanerian said legal action may be taken to collect on what is owed.

Council Member Lublin asked what is owed for water and sewer.

Finance Director Pesta said over \$44,000.

City Manager Whitt said the Michigan Liquor Control Commission is holding a hearing because the Tiki Bar has defaulted, and liens placed on the property do not pay the bills. City Manager Whitt explained he needs direction from Council to proceed with the due process for water shutoff.

**CM 03-04-25 MOTION TO INSTRUCT CITY ATTORNEY AND CITY  
ADMINISTRATION TO INSTITUTE NECESSARY LEGAL  
PROCEEDINGS TO COLLECT OUTSTANDING FEES OWED**

Motion by Lublin, seconded by Ambrose, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To instruct the City Attorney and City Administration to institute necessary legal proceedings to collect outstanding fees due.

#### Roll Call Vote

Ayes (6) Lublin, Owsinek, Woods, Ambrose, Fernandes, Ackley  
Nays (0)  
Absent (1) Loch  
Abstain (0)

City Manager Whitt said there was a soft opening of a new business downtown this weekend, called the Walled Lake Tavern. The exterior of the building looks nice, and he has been told it is nice inside. City Manager Whitt said there were no reported problems with parking, parking was full, it did not appear to be in violation. City Manager Whitt said Council Member Ambrose was part of the St. Patrick's Day weekend event with Casey's of Walled Lake and there no issues reported with this event either. City Manager Whitt said the new Starbucks is moving forward at 14 Mile and Decker Road and the new 7-Eleven Speedway project at 15 Mile and Decker is moving forward.

Mayor Pro Tem Woods pointed out in this month's departmental reports from Fire Chief Gonzalez that the average first unit response time is 3 minutes 45 seconds, that is amazing. Mayor Pro Tem Woods thanked the Fire Chief, his staff and department for their great work.

Fire Chief Gonzalez explained that the Walled Lake Fire Department has achieved a current ISO Property Protection Classification of 3. This rating is within the top 6% of all fire departments, career as well as paid on call/volunteer, in the United States. Fire Chief Gonzalez explained this rating is an independent evaluation and provides residents as well as business owners a financial savings in property insurance. Fire Chief Gonzalez said this number is very impressive, as there are fewer than 55 communities in all of Michigan with a rating of 4 or better.

Mayor Pro Tem Woods said that is the top 5%, he just happens to be in the process of refinancing and his rate has gone down due to the amazing ISO rating of 3.

#### CORRESPONDENCE

##### **1. Memorandum Robert Wittenberg Oakland County Treasurer Foreclosure Prevention**

Finance Director Pesta read into record the foreclosure prevention memo from Oakland County Treasurer Robert Whittenberg.

*The Oakland County Treasurer's Office is in the final stretch of our foreclosure prevention efforts. The tax foreclosure deadline for the 2022 and/or prior year taxes*

is on March 31, 2025. That means if these taxes aren't paid off by March 31st or any interested party hasn't entered into a repayment schedule with the Treasurer's office by then, the property will be foreclosed.

Since December of 2024, the Treasurer's office has conducted over a thousand Taxpayer Assistance Meetings to assist taxpayers with keeping their properties by working with them to get on a repayment schedule and/or by identifying resources that may be beneficial to them and their situation. We are here to help and strongly encourage taxpayers to contact us before the tax foreclosure deadline if they have delinquent taxes for 2022 and/or prior tax years. Taxpayers interested in scheduling a Taxpayer Assistance Meeting may call us at 248-858-0611 or they may visit [www.oakgov.com/treasurer](http://www.oakgov.com/treasurer)

**ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

- 1. Memorandum Smoking Lounge Licensing Ordinance Amendment**
  - **First Reading C-374-25 Amendment to Chapter 18 "Businesses" to adopt Article XIII "Smoking Lounges"**

City Attorney Vanerian explained smoking lounges are typically indoor smoking sites such as a hookah bar, cigar bar, basically any retail site that allows smoking inside the business. City Attorney Vanerian explained this ordinance permits the city to request application submittals for a City Business License and annual renewal applications with onsite inspections from police, fire and building, similar to the annual marijuana facility sites.

**CM 03-05-25 MOTION TO APPROVE FIRST READING C-374-25 AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND CHAPTER 18 "BUSINESSES" OF THE CITY OF WALLED LAKE CODE OF ORDINANCES TO ADOPT A NEW ARTICLE XIII "SMOKING LOUNGES" TO REGULATE AND REQUIRE LOCAL LICENSING OF SMOKING LOUNGE BUSINESSES AND ESTABLISHMENTS**

Motion by Owsinek, seconded by Lublin, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve first reading of C-374-25 an ordinance to amend Chapter 18 "Businesses" of the City of Walled Lake Code of Ordinances to adopt a new Article XIII "Smoking Lounges" to regulate and require local licensing of smoking lounge businesses and establishments.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (6)	Owsinek, Woods, Ambrose, Fernandes, Lublin, Ackley
Nays (0)	
Absent (1)	Loch
Abstain (0)	

**2. Memorandum Abro Property Management request for rezoning**  
• **PC Case 316 Decker Road**

City Attorney Vanerian explained that the applicant provided a presentation to council, requesting approval to rezone from I-1 to RM-2. City Attorney Vanerian explained rezoning requests begin before the Planning Commission holding a required public hearing, the Planning Commission then does a review and study of proposal. The final step is providing a recommendation of their findings to the City Council. City Attorney Vanerian said the required public hearing for this case was held in January 2025 and at last week's Planning Commission meeting, the Commission made their recommendation to deny the request for rezoning. City Attorney Vanerian explained the next step is to bring before City Council, they have the final ruling. This is where we are at procedurally.

City Attorney Vanerian explained that the Planning Commission has safety related concerns about the high-pressure gas line so close to an apartment. Decker Road is only a two-lane road; the proposed lot is configured with an egress and ingress placed close to existing residential sites neighboring it which will increase congestion on Decker Road. City Attorney Vanerian explained the city's consultant planning staff outlined in their review letter the rezoning is not consistent with the current master plan and not consistent with the future land use map. City Attorney Vanerian explained another issue is that of the wetlands, the city's planner explaining it would be difficult to build a large industrial development versus with the current zoning verses smaller multiple residential buildings if rezoned. City Attorney Vanerian said the applicant's engineer explained those wetland areas according to the state are not regulated.

Council Member Owsinek explained according to the memorandum from City Attorney Vanerian there were 27 residents who objected, in writing this proposal.

City Attorney Vanerian explained if those 27 objections are from property owners who collectively own 20% or more of the land area surrounding the parcel, the City Council would have to have 6 affirmative votes approving the rezoning. If the City Council chooses to deny, a majority of council present is required.

Council Member Lublin said the development creates traffic issues; the more important issue is the high-pressure gas line next to the residential development to be built. Council Member Lublin said he believes light industrial would be something that would be a better buffer, and he is not in favor of rezoning.

Mayor Ackley said Decker Road is a traffic issue; the light industrial would be less of a problem and the existence of the high gas pressure pipe line concerns her.

**CM 03-06-25 MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-07 A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WALLED LAKE DENYING APPLICANT'S REQUEST FOR A REZONING OF PARCEL NO. 92-17-26-376-172 FROM I-1 LIGHT INDUSTRIAL TO RM-2 MULTIPLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL**

Motion by Lublin, seconded by Woods, MOTION CARRIED: To approve resolution 2025-07 a resolution of the City Council of the City of Walled Lake denying applicant's request for rezoning of parcel no. 92-17-26-376-172 from I-1 Light Industrial to RM-2 Multiple Family Residential.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (4) Lublin, Owsinek, Woods, Ackley  
Nays (2) Ambrose, Fernandes  
Absent (1) Loch  
Abstain (0)

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

*None*

**NEW BUSINESS**

**1. Proposed Resolution 2025-08 Defer Special Meeting Requirements for Budget Presentation and Adoption**

**CM 03-07-25 MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-08 A RESOLUTION RESCHEDULING THE FISCAL YEAR BUDGET PRESENTATION SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING OF MONDAY, MAY 19, 2025 TO THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING OF TUESDAY, MAY 20, 2025, AND RESCHEDULE THE SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING FOR BUDGET ADOPTION ON MONDAY, JUNE 16, 2025 TO THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING OF TUESDAY, JUNE 17, 2025 AT 7:30 P.M.**

Motion by Owsinek, seconded by Lublin, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve resolution 2025-08 a resolution rescheduling the fiscal year budget presentation special council meeting of Monday, May 19, 2025 to the regular council meeting of Tuesday, May 20, 2025, and reschedule the special council meeting for budget adoption on Monday, June 16, 2025 to the regular council meeting of Tuesday, June 17, 2025 at 7:30 p.m.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (6) Fernandes, Lublin, Owsinek, Woods, Ambrose, Ackley  
Nays (0)  
Absent (1) Loch  
Abstain (0)



**2. Proposed Resolution 2025-09 Metro Environmental Service agreement for 2025 Portable Restroom services**

Finance Director Pesta explained Metro Environmental has done and continues to do a great job for the city and recommends approval.

**CM 03-08-25 MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-09 A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE 2025 PORTABLE RESTROOM SERVICES PROPOSAL FOR CITY PARKS AND EVENTS WITH METRO ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

Motion by Ambrose, seconded by Woods, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve resolution 2025-09 a resolution to approve the 2025 portable restroom services proposal for city parks and events with Metro Environmental Services.

Discussion

Council Member Lublin asked what if any is the fee increase for 2025.

Finance Director Pesta said the change is minimal.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (6)	Lublin, Owsinek, Woods, Ambrose, Fernandes, Ackley
Nays (0)	
Absent (1)	Loch
Abstain (0)	

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Council Member Owsinek said he hoped everyone had a safe and enjoyable St. Patrick's Day.

Council Member Fernandes said it has been a great month in Walled Lake. Council member Fernandes said the Walled Lake Fire Department does a great job, she explained she had discussed with Fire Chief Gonzalez about how much the department appreciates the support of council.

Council Member Lublin said he continues to appreciate the framework of the city's administration, police, fire, and DPW. He said it is a pleasure to be a part of this community. Council Member Lublin reminded all, the city currently has no debt. Council Member Lublin said he is proud of this City, City Manager Whitt and the staff he built, and the City Council.

Council Member Ambrose congratulated the successful opening of the Walled Lake Tavern and their positive contribution to the downtown. Council Member Ambrose said let's grow on that

success, those businesses that wish to contribute are highlighted and the ones that do not wish to contribute are highlighted on the opposite end of the scale.

Mayor Pro Tem Woods said congratulations to the Walled Lake Fire Department for the impressive response time of 3 minutes 45 seconds and the terrific ISO rating of 3.

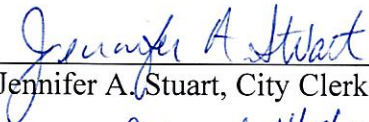
### MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Mayor Ackley said she appreciates the city staff and the remarkable members of the City Council. Mayor Ackley said in her 47 years with the council, this council has really worked together. She said City Manager Whitt is to be commended, he has put together a staff we can count on. Mayor Ackley said we may be a little town, but we are the best little town in Oakland County. We have a lot to be proud of and a lot to come.

### ADJOURNMENT

#### CM 03-09-25 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ambrose, seconded by Owsinek: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To adjourn the meeting at 8:35 P.M.

  
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Jennifer A. Stuart, City Clerk  
*Approved 4/15/25*

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Linda S. Ackley, Mayor