



**CITY OF WALLED LAKE  
PUBLIC HEARING  
AND  
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
TUESDAY, MAY 19, 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, HR Director Sears, Deputy Director Public Safety Shakinas, Deputy Police Chief Kolke, Fire Chief Gonzalez, DPW Superintendent Ladd, Library Director Ralston, and City Clerk Stuart

**REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGE**

Mayor Gunther added to unfinished business code of ethics.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**1. Regular Council Meeting Minutes of April 21, 2026**

**CM 05-01-26 MOTION TO APPROVE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES OF APRIL 21, 2026**

Motion by O'Rourke, seconded by Ambrose: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve the regular council meeting minutes of April 21, 2026.

**2. Regular Council Meeting Minutes of May 5, 2026**

**CM 05-02-26 MOTION TO APPROVE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES OF MAY 5, 2026**

Motion by Ambrose, seconded by Schinzing

Discussion

Council Member Schinzing asked DPW Superintendent Ladd to provide an update and page 8 of the minutes should be updated to reflect Mr. Ladd's update on the baffles.

DPW Superintendent Ladd explained two weeks ago the retention basin and baffles were inspected it was found that the two baffles at the east end were not properly functioning. Code Enforcement was notified and East Bay was contacted to rectify immediately.

City Manager Whitt said East Bay should be inspecting this regularly.

Police Chief Shakinis said he will communicate with Code Enforcement to request East Bay inspect at a minimum, twice a year.

**CM 05-03-26 MOTION TO APPROVE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES OF MAY 5, 2026 AS AMENDED WITH UPDATE**

Motion by Ambrose, seconded by Schinzing: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve regular council meeting minutes of May 5, 2026 as amended with update.

**Main Motion**

**CM 05-04-26 MOTION TO APPROVE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES OF MAY 5, 2026**

Motion by Ambrose, seconded by O'Rourke: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve regular council meeting minutes of May 5, 2026.

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION** None

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**1. Fiscal Years 2027 and 2028 Budget Adoption**

City Manager Whitt explained that the Finance Director Pesta has prepared the proposed budget for public hearing. He said copies have been provided to council and the budget is available for public viewing on the city website and city hall. He said he would make himself available any day of the week, even on weekends, to accommodate any questions council may have. He asked if a joint meeting is requested, it be between Monday through Thursday for staffing purposes. City Manager Whitt explained the proposal has not changed much since the three public workshop meetings.

City Manager Whitt stated it is important to understand; there has never been a city council voted millage increase in his tenure with the city. He said it is important for council to understand this as they are answering questions of their constituents. He said if there is a millage increase it is one that is voted on by the people. He said the city millage rate is down, however taxes do increase but it is not due to actions of city council it is from school millages, county millages,

etc. He explained a budget appropriation resolution will be presented to council at the June meeting as approved at the last meeting.

Council Member Schinzing asked where are the three locations that the public notices placed.

Finance Director Pesta explained they are available on the city website, social media that is linked to city website, newspaper and front door of city hall.

Mayor Gunther asked when the budget must be approved.

Finance Director Pesta explained the third Tuesday in June per city charter. She explained all the documents provided in the proposed budget were discussed at all three of the City Manager's budget work sessions.

*Open Public Hearing 7:38 p.m.*

No public comment.

*Close Public Hearing 7:43 p.m.*

**MAYOR'S REPORT**        None

**CITY MANAGER'S REPORT**

**1. Consent Agenda Written Departmental / Divisional Statistical Reports**

- a.    **Police**
- b.    **Fire**
- c.    **Finance**  
      **-Warrant**
- d.    **Code Enforcement**

**CM    05-05-26        MOTION TO RECEIVE AND FILE CONSENT AGENDA  
WRITTEN DEPARTMENTAL / DIVISIONAL STATISTICAL  
REPORTS**

Motion by Woods, seconded by Loch, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To receive and file consent agenda written departmental / divisional statistical reports.

**CORRESPONDENCE**        None

**ATTORNEY'S REPORT**

**1. Request for Closed Session pursuant to Open Meetings Act, MCL 15.268, Sec 8(a)**

**CM    05-06-26        MOTION TO APPROVE CLOSED SESSION REQUEST  
PURSUANT TO OPEN MEETINGS ACT, MCL 15.268, SEC 8(a)**

Motion by Loch, seconded by Ambrose, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve closed session request pursuant to Open Meetings Act, MCL 15.268, Sec 8(a).

## **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

Mayor Gunther said he put together a couple ethics items and requested City Attorney Vanerian to review and report back to council. He said he reviewed several different communities and compiled a document for review.

City Attorney Vanerian explained he did receive Mayor Gunther's email sent just before tonight's meeting and asked Mayor Gunther for clarification. City Attorney Vanerian said what is proposed is structured as a resolution to adopt an ordinance amendment.

Mayor Gunther asked what the difference is.

City Attorney Vanerian explained that an ordinance is done by two public readings and then an adoption. He explained recommends this course of action.

Mayor Gunther said he is good with that and there are a few assignments in the documentation he provided as well.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. Special Event Agreement**

City Attorney Vanerian said he was asked to prepare an agreement for the upcoming fireworks event to address the uses of areas owned both by the city and DDA properties. He explained the agreement grants the Civic Fund use of this land for the event. He said the city's liability carrier, MMRMA provided what needed to be in the agreement and recommended certain liability provisions within. He said this agreement was approved by the DDA board at their last meeting and is now before council for their approval.

### **CM 05-07-26 MOTION TO APPROVE SPECIAL EVENTS AGREEMENT – WALLED LAKE CIVIC FUND JUNE 20, 2026 EVENT**

Motion by Woods, seconded by Loch: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve special events agreement – Walled Lake Civic Fund June 20, 2026 event.

#### **Roll Call Vote**

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

### **2. Proposed Resolution 2026-10 DDA Budget Amendment**

**CM 05-08-26 MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2026-10 A RESOLUTION AMENDING AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS FROM THE DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FUND BALANCE TO PROCEED WITH REIMBURSEMENT TO THE CIVIC FUND FOR FIREWORKS EVENT**

Motion by Ambrose, seconded by Loch, carried unanimously: To approve resolution 2026-10 a resolution amending and appropriating funds from the Downtown Development Authority fund balance to proceed with reimbursement to the Civic Fund for fireworks event.

Roll Call Vote

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

**3. Proposed Resolution 2026-11 Millage Request and Tax Levy**

Council Member Schinzing asked what last year's millage was.

Finance Director Pesta said 13.716.

**CM 05-09-26 MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2026-11 A RESOLUTION FOR THE SUMMER 2026 MILLAGE REQUEST REPORT TO COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS FOR THE ANNUAL LEVY AND COLLECTION OF TAXES FOR THE CITY**

Motion by Schinzing , seconded by Woods: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve resolution 2026-11 a resolution for the summer 2026 millage request report to County Board of Commissioners for the annual levy and collection of taxes for the city.

Roll Call Vote

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

**4. Proposed Resolution 2026-12 Delinquent Water and Refuse Receivables to be placed on the Summer 2026 Tax Roll**

Council Member Ambrose asked of those delinquencies are there repeat offenders.

Finance Director Pesta said yes, over a dozen parcels.

**CM 05-10-26 MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2026-12 A RESOLUTION**

**OF THE CITY OF WALLED LAKE AUTHORIZING THE  
TRANSFER OF THE 2025 DELINQUENT WATER, SEWER, AND  
REFUSE RECEIVABLES TO THE 2026 JULY CITY OF WALLED  
LAKE TAX ROLL**

Motion by Loch , seconded by Ambrose: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve resolution 2026-12 a resolution of the City of Walled Lake authorizing the transfer of the 2025 delinquent, water, sewer, and refuse receivables to the 2026 July City of Walled Lake tax roll.

Roll Call Vote

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

**COUNCIL COMMENTS**

Council Member Woods said thank YOU to the DPW for the flag placement at the cemetery and reaching out to DTE regarding the poles that still had not been addressed, they are now cleaned up. He said thank you to the police and fire in their preparations for the parade. He discussed Bela Armstrong who died September 1827 in Walled Lake, served in the war of 1812. Sergeant Abel Peck, July 1st 1863 who was a 1st Color Guard and 1st member of the Michigan 24th to be killed at Gettysburg. Also, Staff Sergeant Robert Graham Curl who was a member of the Black Horse Troopers, died in Vietnam December 2, 1969.

Mayor Gunther said he has been asked about the Walled Lake cemetery sign and when it will be placed back at the cemetery. He said it is a historic sign, and the city should investigate getting it refurbished. He directed DPW Superintendent Ladd to get the sign refurbished and paced back up.

**05-11-26 MOTION TO HAVE CEMETERY SIGN REFURBISHED AND PLACED  
BACK AT CEMETERY**

Motion by Woods, seconded by Ambrose: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To have cemetery sign refurbished and placed back at the cemetery.

Mayor Gunther said the Masons will be coming to council next month asking to refurbish the tombstones at the Walled Lake cemetery.

Council Member Ambrose said he is looking forward to the Memorial Day parade, and thousands come to our humble community for this event. He said he did receive feedback on the cemetery flags and how nice they look, nice job DPW. He is looking forward to seeing everybody Monday.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke said thank you to the Parks and Recreation Commission and he appreciates Mrs. Sears for all the work that has been done for this parade.

Council Member Schinzing said he has received positive responses on the enforcement of speeders, and residents are very happy. He said the residents feel the impact, thank you.

Council Member Loch said she echoes her fellow council members, thank you very much everyone, you are doing a great job.

Council Member Arnold said he is looking forward to the parade.

**MAYOR'S COMMENTS** None

**AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION** None

Council recessed 8:03 p.m.

Council reconvened 8:12 p.m.

Council entered into closed session 8:12 p.m.

Council existed close session 8:27 pm

**CM 05-12-26 MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2026-13 A RESOLUTION APPROVING AN AMENDMENT TO EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT WITH VAHAN C. VANERIAN REDUCING THE AMOUNT AND DURATION OF SEVERANCE BENEFITS AND DIRECTING THE MAYOR AND CITY CLERK TO EXECUTE THE AMENDMENT**

Motion by Loch, seconded by O'Rourke: MOTION CARRIED: To approve resolution 2026-13 a resolution approving an amendment to employment agreement with Vahan C. Vanerian reducing the amount and duration of severance benefits and directing the Mayor and City Clerk to execute the amendment.

Roll Call Vote

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

Council Member Schinzing requested the contract amendment be posted to website.

City Manager Whitt explained that once it is signed it will be posted and it will show council acted.

Council Member Schinzing said the firm selected chose not to engage, what about third party-review.

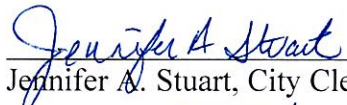
City Manager Whitt explained it is a dead issue now; the motion is void. He explained he did not know engagement from the council with the firm had already occurred before he reached out to them. He said the mayor and he will communicate better. He stated that any member of council going out separately independent of council like this is not appropriate. These discussions and actions need to come before the entire council. He said he and council have learned from this. He said council has resolved the concerns.

City Attorney Vanerian said he would like to make mention, if council members attend other meetings or public hearings such as the planning commission or zoning board of appeals, they should not be speaking out for or against any item, it creates exposure for lawsuit. He said nobody had done that, but he wanted to make sure council was aware.

## ADJOURNMENT

### CM 05-13-26 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Ambrose, seconded by Woods, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To adjourn the meeting at 9:05 P.M.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Richard Gunther, Mayor