



**CITY OF WALLED LAKE
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, MAY 5, 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 Schinzing, and Council Member Woods

ABSENT

Arnold, Loch

OTHERS PRESENT

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

**CM 05-01-26 MOTION TO EXCUSE COUNCIL MEMBER ARNOLD AND
COUNCIL MEMBER LOCH**

Motion by Arnold, seconded by Loch, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To excuse council member Arnold and Council Member Loch.

REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGE

Mayor Gunther requested to add items under unfinished business and possibly new business.

Council Member Woods asked for clarification on requested items.

Mayor Gunther said he would like to have updates provided on consent agendas, report on the Toth residence, update on the 3rd party review of employee agreement, status of the ordinance amendment regarding planned unit development and discussion on upcoming Memorial Day parade.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Denise Hewitt, 1149 N. Eddie said she is here regarding garage sales. We used to have garage sales whenever we wanted. She said she has grown up in Walled Lake her whole life. She said she lived next door to a troublemaker, and to him having a garage sale was not good, he didn't

care for it. She said the city agreed to 30 days apart. She said she went through a lot when the city changed the rules. She said her neighbor tried to get garage sales banned. She said the city allowed three sales a year, for four days, 30 days apart. She said Jeff Rondeau came to her home one day while her signs were out, people were in her garage shopping, notice was posted in the paper, and he told her she is early on her next garage sale and to shut down. She said she told him no, it is 30 days apart, and he disputed saying it was 45 days apart. She said she called everybody. She said Jeff Rondeau threatened her with a ticket. She said she was issued a ticket, she went to court, fought it, and lost. She said she had to pay \$135. She said this was nitpicky. She said she received a call from City Manager Dennis Whitt. She said he stated she was treated badly and he apologized and said any constituent of his would not be treated the way Jeff has treated you. She said City Manager Whitt told her there were a lot of problems with Jeff Rondeau and she said a lot of people had problems with him and she can see why he was fired. She said she is glad he is no longer here. She said she could not believe that Dennis called her, and she asked her husband, Tommy, to witness the phone call. She said her husband has since passed. She said Dennis said the city was going back to no rules for garage sales. She said Linda Ackley was the mayor at the time and didn't care for her, which she heard from Eddie at Barrells of Wine. She said she was selling her flea market items out of Eddie's Barrells of Wine. She said she went to the zoning board and needed one more vote from the zoning board and she didn't get it. She said Linda Ackley said three garage sales are enough. She said her husband has passed away and she needs to sell his items. She said she does not want to have to count days; she wants unlimited garage sales. She said Dennis said the city was going back to the old way. She told Dennis to admit to having this conversation.

Mayor Gunther asked City Manager Whitt if he wished to respond.

City Manager Whitt said yes, he will respond. He said he never called her. City Manager Whitt said he never called her; she contacted the city and requested to speak with him. He said he did talk with her and apologized for Jeff Rondeau's behavior. City Manager Whitt said he does not have any authority to waive ordinances. He said she may remember the conversation this way but that is not how it occurred.

Denise Hewitt said she wants to go back to the old ways.

Mayor Gunther said we have an ordinance, what people don't like is a commercial activity out of a residential neighborhood, blocked driveways, wrong homes are approached, driveways are used as a turn around. He suggested the city's marketplace venue as an option for her sales.

Ms. Hewitt said no, she would have to rent a U-Haul truck. She said she wants to go back to the way it was before with unlimited garage sales and not counting days in between. Ms. Hewitt said she doesn't want to have a number of assigned days to have a sale.

Mayor Gunther said he looked at other ordinances and there is not a city around that offers unlimited garage sales.

Ms. Hewitt said she has a list of communities who allow unlimited garage sales. She said all her neighbors are fine with it.

Mayor Gunther explained the city received three responses from people on Eddie Street that they do not want garage sales in their neighborhood. He said he would like to table the concern, do homework, however, he does not see council changing this.

Ms. Hewitt said she spoke with Eddie from Barrells of Wine and he told her to plan on having as many garage sales as she wants because the new council is for the people. She said Mayor Gunther was there that day and he agreed he would be on her side on having garage sales and now she is here and she is wasting her time. She said there was never a problem. She said her neighbor Randy called and he stirs up trouble. She asked how it is that everyone else has a business on her street and no one has a problem with it.

Mayor Gunther said his opinion is that running several garage sales every week is not workable. He asked if a special use permit is a possibility. He said council will review, he said he did not see the quantity of required days in between sale events. He asked Ms. Hewitt to provide her documentation to City Clerk Stuart.

Chris Tamer, 435 Decker – said last meeting there was discussion of East Bay getting boats slips, at what point do we hear how this ends up. He asked who had looked into overcrowding of the lake and what was found.

City Attorney Vanerian said it is not up for a vote. He explained that in order for East Bay to obtain relief, there is a formal process to go through. He explained East Bay would need to submit an application to amend their Planned Unit Development (PUD) agreement. He said until the city receives their application with the required formal paperwork, seeking the amendment of their PUD, there is nothing more the city can do to take formal action on their request.

Mr. Tamer asked if the boat stickers are still required.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke said he is on the Walled Lake Improvement Board as the Walled Lake representative and works with Ms. Miller, we take boat registration seriously. He explained the stickers need to be applied for and issued. He explained that Walled Lake originally held pontoons with 90 HP now there are high powered watercraft. He explained there was a tragic accident involving two people who crashed head on while riding on high-speed wave runners. He said addressing those who use the lake is a priority.

Mayor Gunther said anyone can use the lake but to moor overnight is not granted to everyone who uses the lake.

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

1. City Council Meeting Rules of Decorum and Conduct

City Attorney Vanerian explained he provided council a memo on rules of decorum and conduct. He explained the city does have authority to adopt rules but there are limitations. He explained City Council is a limited public forum, and government legal restrictions on speech do exist so long as those restrictions do not discriminate. He explained that viewpoint-based discrimination

rules are not permitted. He explained public comment is to provide space and room for the opposing voice to be heard. He said council cannot allow only one viewpoint to be heard, opposing viewpoints are required to be heard as well.

Mayor Gunther explained Robert Rules of Order calls for the public to address the presiding officer, if comments made are to a specific person not to the body in general, the presiding officer will grant permission to staff to respond, this helps to stop the tit for tat.

City Attorney Vanerian agreed and said this is one of the rules he suggested in his memo. He said the public cannot engage one individual; this is a rule that will aid in any accusatory in nature comments.

Council Member Woods explained Chapter 1, Section 4, full participation and Chapter 9, Section 29 as a chair you, Mayor Gunther is responsible for controlling the meeting. He said going off on a city official, or city manager, etc. is controlled by the chair. He said we need to keep decorum, and the chair is to control the meeting. He said direct attacks need to be controlled.

Council Member Schinzing said people need to be allotted 3 minutes of uninterrupted time. He said no disparaging comments to a resident or business, that is where we run afoul. Council Member Schinzing asking the chair if they can respond is a great example of decorum. He said he agrees everything should be directed to the chair.

Mayor Gunther explained that the presiding officer can allow additional time not just through the vote of the council. He said anyone can say anything about an individual, they get three minutes or maybe a little more. The presiding officer grants permission for response. Mayor Gunther asked to have a code of ethics to adopt.

City Attorney Vanerian explained that no one can say whatever they want about public officials, that is false. He explained there is leeway to shut down baseless nonsense comments. It is clear what they are saying is false.

Mayor Gunther asked about the third-party council request for review of employee agreement, he is requesting to talk with them.

City Manager Whitt said by next meeting a report will be provided. He said the firm will be invited before the entire council in a closed session. He strongly disagrees with individual communication with the firm; the council should communicate with the firm as a whole.

Council Member Schinzing asked who the third council is.

Council Member Ambrose said this council voted for it.

Mayor Gunther asked for an update on the amendment to the PUD ordinance.

City Attorney Vanerian explained required evaluations for amendments have been given to the planning commission. He explained the planning commission did not have a quorum to meet to begin reviews, the quorum was just established to host an April meeting.

Mayor Gunther asked about the Toth residence.

Council Member Schinzing explained he and others, including Mr. Ladd, did a walk around the property and system. He said Mr. Ladd was well versed providing information and explanation on the entire system. Council Member Schinzing explained there is question if a valve was placed in the pump system. However, weather has not permitted inspection of the pump system to be verified. He said in his opinion if the valve is placed and operational the issue is resolved and there is no more the city needs to review. He said the natural pond was there before the home was ever built, everything was done correctly and maybe the shed relocation is the ultimate resolution.

Mr. Ladd explained the baffles that let water out of the pond are not working correctly. He explained the baffles were installed by Jet Pump and there is documentation. He explained that East Bay's own private engineers inspected it.

Mayor Gunther said suggestions then need to be communicated to the Toth's such as relocating their shed, raising the shed, grade yard better, or the city place a concrete basin which the city would then special assess them for the next ten years. Mayor Gunther said this is a wet area, he owns a rental home on Arvida, he knew the area was a wet area before purchasing.

Mayor Gunther asked about the PILOT agreement with the Villas and the number of emergency calls from fire and police. He said he would like to review the original agreement.

City Manager Whitt said the emergency service calls are getting reimbursement. He explained that most facilities, even if a nurse is on duty, are required to call 911. He explained the PILOT agreement relates to tax collections.

Mayor Gunther explained he has seen in other communities with this type of consent agreement, the emergency calls are limited to 50 calls. He explained an audit was done for those communities and changes were made to their PILOT.

Mayor Gunther said he wants to change the parade route for this parade and future ones because he has received a lot of complaints and the Veterans would like to be able to sit up front along the parade route.

City Manager Whitt explained this is something to discuss for next year's route, to change now creates a safety issue. City Manager Whitt said this parade is not easy to change on the spot. He said he has not received any complaints about the route in the past or current.

Mayor Gunther stated, "are you going to make use vote". Mayor Gunther said he understands the staging is a lot safer at the school but there is a really easy route, such as going down Ladd Road towards Liberty and turning left up to Pontiac Trail. He said it is not very different.

Police Chief Shakinas said planning a new route this late in the game is tough, we work to ensure a safe parade for participants and viewers. He said there is an ongoing project along 14 Mile with traffic rerouted and there are 30,000 plus cars that travel along Pontiac Trail, these access points would be closed for several hours if a reroute is to occur this year. He explained staging safety and traffic control are critical; to change this late in the game, he is unsure how to move this request forward. He explained to review this for next year as we are only 13 to 14 working days out to this year's event. He explained major roads and parking lots that are busy would require an officer at each location. He explained the new proposed route, leaving from Langan Bowling on Ladd Road adds an additional 35 driveways, totaling 68 additional driveways. He said the department does not have 68 officers to deploy, nor the required amount of safety equipment. He said this transition would be very difficult.

City Manager Whitt said the city has not had a parade downtown for seven years. He said to review a new route for next year, fine. He said changing now would ensure a complete failure, we are within 14 days of the event.

Mayor Tem O'Rourke said he is very supportive of the city businesses and discussions of a parade reroute to downtown however not this year, it is not in the best interest of the city. He explained the change proposal of merging the two parade groups from Langan bowling on Ladd Road with the Orchard Grove location on Ladd Road, there is no staff to manage this. He said there is him and his wife and three front office city hall staff, lack of personnel is an issue. He said the multiple safety concerns were already addressed by Chief Shakinas and the West Walled Lake Drive residents would not be in support of road closures.

Chief Shakinas explained road closures begin at about 10:30 am and could last 3 to 4 hours, it depends on the quantity of participants.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke explained the proposed route that includes Liberty with a left at Pontiac Trail, is a monumental change and longer route that we don't have people to support this year. He said to look at taking it back downtown next year.

Council Member Woods explained when the vote came up, he took to heart the safety concerns, walking the route, and Chief Shakinas went through the parade set up. He explained we did hear about people unfortunately doing bad things during parades. He explained last year there was a very long gap between the end of the parade and the ceremony because staff who were addressing the road closures were also part of the ceremonial Honor Guard performance. They had to get back to the station and change into the Honor Guard gear. He said parade applications have already gone out. He said the parade reroute should be discussed earlier for next year with the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Chief Shakinas explained Wolverine Lake police department would be sending two officers to assist with the parade as additional assistance.

Mayor Gunther said he would like to have the parade route changed for next year.

Discussion was held to have this topic placed on the Parks and Recreation Commission agenda for further discussion.

City Manager Whitt asked council if any of them have military service experience. He explained his years of military service, and he has lost friends and associates who served. He said Memorial Day is a day of remembrance for those we lost who served and gave their all, their lives. He said not to lose sight of this; this parade is not a political parade. He said it is about remembering those we lost.

Mayor Gunther asked for explanation of what a consent agenda is. He asked what council approves within a consent agenda. He asked if there were items in the consent agenda that are hidden.

City Manager Whitt said no, that is not what a consent agenda is. He explained a consent agenda provides an option to receive and file, not approving. He explained council is not approving the warrant to create expenditures, these are expenditures already spent. We are providing council a register of what was spent. It is the departmental statistical report. Consent agenda items can be discussed; there is nothing secret to them.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS None

NEW BUSINESS

1. Receive and file Zoning Board of Appeals member resignation

Mayor Gunther said Mr. Arnold submitted his resignation as a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Council Member Woods said Memorial Day is a time to give respect for those lost lives, a day to give back and give thanks to those who gave ultimate sacrifice.

Council Member Ambrose said as the weather gets better, code enforcement will be on the uptick, curb appeal is everything to the businesses, downtown, residents, etc. Keeping lawns mowed and trash picked up, this is what makes our community great. We are in this together.

Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke said he did resign from the Planning Commission and he would like to complement Council Member Schinzing also the new Chairman of the Planning Commission. Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke said Mr. Schinzing ran a really good planning commission meeting; the new team is great, and the first meeting went well. Mayor Pro Tem O'Rourke said he also attended the recent Parks and Recreation meeting, the DIA is scheduled to install day after tomorrow the artwork for the DIA Inside|Out program. He said Mrs. Sears is doing a great job on the Parks and Recreation website postings. He thanked Mr. Ladd and Public Works. He explained Mr. Ladd attended the DIA meeting and appreciated his assistance.

Council Member Schinzing, thanked Mr. Ladd for his thorough tour, he said he is very knowledgeable. He said the city has a very solid person in this position. He said he attended the last ZBA meeting, it was very collaborative, he loved the back and forth that came between the city and applicant, end result was a very good understanding. He said he likes to see government and citizens working together. He said council placed an excellent group for planning commission they are eager and there is talent, we have a chance to do great things.

MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Mayor Gunther said he is going to approach the Western Oakland County Cable Communication Authority (WOCCCA) for grant/funding to provide upgrades to the city's meeting environment.

Mr. Ladd provided an update on the GLWA project. He explained the 42-water main is back in service and meter pit valves are opened in our community and neighboring communities.

City Manager Whitt said he would like an opportunity to congratulate his daughter Ms. Loretta Whitt on her achievement of her first business degree.

Chief Shakinis explained 33 tickets have been issued along Leon Road and 15 tickets on E Walled Lake Drive for speeding. There were quite a few that were 10 plus miles over. He explained the issues on Decker Road are being worked through as well.

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

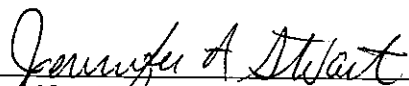
Mr. Giovanni Johnson said thank you to Mr. O'Rourke for nominating him as chair of the Parks and Recreation Commission. He said he agreed with Council Member Woods to bring over the parade route discussions to the Parks and Recreation Commission. He said the commission has very qualified people to help with these decisions. He explained his concerns with the electronic bikes and their disregard. He said they zoom across the roadway, what can be done to stop it.

Mayor Gunther agreed and said this is another problem to address.


ADJOURNMENT

CM 05-02-26 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Schinzing, seconded by O'Rourke, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To adjourn the meeting at 8:55 P.M.



Jennifer A. Stuart, City Clerk
*Approved with amendment
May 19, 2026*



Richard Gunther, Mayor 6/2/26