

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES FROM JUNE 9, 2026

Mayor Patricia Randall called the Regular Meeting to order at 06:00 PM in the Council Chambers at Portage City Hall.

ROLL CALL: Councilmembers Chris Burns, Victor Ledbetter, Nicole Miller, Kathleen Olmsted, Jihan Young, Mayor Pro Tem Jim Pearson, and Mayor Patricia Randall were present.

ABSENT: None.

ALSO PRESENT: City Manager Pat McGinnis, Chief Operating Officer Adam Herringa, Chief Development Officer Peter Dame, City Attorney Catherine Kaufman, and City Clerk Erica Eklov.

At the request of Mayor Randall, the audience observed a moment of silence to reflect on the Juneteenth holiday, its history, and its importance to the Black community. Following the moment of silence, the City Council recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

PROCLAMATIONS:

Juneteenth 2026: Councilmember Young read the proclamation.

PETITIONS AND STATEMENTS OF CITIZENS:

1. Richard Nellums (9240 East Shore Drive) urged the Council to examine the proposed Unified Development Ordinance and associated citizen concerns before the public hearing scheduled for June 23, 2026.
2. Jim Beaudoin (8645 Balmoral Street) expressed concerns regarding additional traffic along Balmoral Street resulting from the trail construction along East Shore Drive. He also noted that some motorists have driven on the trail itself and requested additional signage for the area.
3. Alan Hopkins (10510 Sudan Street) began by stating his appreciation for various road construction upgrades and urged patience from motorists. He then expressed concern regarding traffic for Osterhout Avenue, especially at the intersections of Portage Road and South Westledge Avenue.
4. Mark Mowery (7402 Quail Street) complimented the new farmers market and suggested the location be utilized as a Christmas market for the winter season.
5. Beth Hinze (9036 East Shore Drive) asked if the city undertook a geotechnical survey for the new trail along East Shore Drive, citing flooding concerns.

CONSENT AGENDA: Mayor Randall shared where the public can access the meeting agenda and asked if anyone would like an item removed from the Consent Agenda. Councilmember Olmsted removed Item A.5 (Chapter 50 Police Ordinance).

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Pearson, seconded by Councilmember Olmsted, to approve the Consent Agenda as amended. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Pearson, seconded by Councilmember Olmsted, to approve the City Council Meeting Minutes of the Board & Commission Interviews, as well as the Regular Meeting of May 26, 2026. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Accounts Payable Register: Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Pearson, seconded by Councilmember Olmsted, to approve the Accounts Payable Register of June 9, 2026, as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Unpaid Water & Sewer Charges: Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Pearson, seconded by Councilmember Olmsted, to order water and/or sewer charges remaining unpaid as of June 30, 2026, to be transferred to the 2026 city tax roll and assessed against the property on which the services were furnished. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Michigan Department of Transportation’s “Transportation Alternatives Program” Grant Application: Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Pearson, seconded by Councilmember Olmsted, to approve the Resolution of Support authorizing submission of a grant application to the Michigan Department of Transportation’s “Transportation Alternatives Program” for \$3,278,000, committing to providing the required match for the project, and authorizing the City Manager to sign all documents related to the matter. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Appointment of an Acting City Manager: Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Pearson, seconded by Councilmember Olmsted, to approve the appointment of Adam Herringa to the position of Acting City Manager. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Minutes of Boards and Commissions: Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Pearson, seconded by Councilmember Olmsted, to receive the minutes of the Historic District Commission of May 6, 2026. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

Calendar of Meetings: Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Pearson, seconded by Councilmember Olmsted, to receive the Calendar of Meetings as presented. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Kalamazoo Metro Transit Presentation: Metro Transit Executive Director Sean McBride and Curtis Aardema, chair of the Central County Transportation Authority (CCTA) and the Kalamazoo County Transportation Authority (KCTA), presented on the status and efforts of the Metro Transit system. Director McBride also highlighted the upcoming millage renewal included on the August 2026 ballot.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson asked about additional measures to increase service to Portage residents in the southern portion of the city. Director McBride responded by highlighting current options and future plans of the organization. Councilmember Young inquired about incentive programs or partnerships that might encourage Portage residents to support the millage. Director McBride and Chair Aardema responded, highlighting the various existing programs and support structures in Portage and neighboring communities.

Councilmember Burns, who serves on the CCTA/KCTA Board complimented Metro Transit for its efforts to meet citizen needs, especially with the implementation of the Metro Link service. Chair Aardema noted that the city's increased efforts to improve walkability, including sidewalk installations, would bolster the reach of transit service.

Mayor Randall inquired about the costs associated with Metro’s offering of free bus passes to Kalamazoo Public School students and if the program could be implemented in Portage Public Schools. Chair Aardema stated the student bus pass program was funded through Kalamazoo City’s Foundation for Excellence program. She also asked if people utilize the Metro system in tandem with flights at the Kalamazoo/Battle Creek Airport. Director McBride confirmed the airport passenger usage within operating hours.

Motion by Councilmember Burns, seconded by Councilmember Olmsted, to receive the presentation from the Kalamazoo Metro Transit representatives. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

REGULAR BUSINESS AGENDA:

Ordinance Amendment - Police Lines, Clear Zones, and Nuisance Parties: Councilmember Olmsted noted several typographical errors and informational issues in sections 1 through 4 of the proposed ordinance amendment. She also requested the penalty in Section 1 (50-117) to mirror that of Section 2 (50-118). At the invitation of the Mayor, Public Safety Director Matt Wolfe offered to answer any questions the Council may have.

Councilmember Burns asked Public Safety Director Matt Wolfe about the rationale for the ordinance proposals. Public Safety Director Matt Wolfe responded. Councilmember Burns then inquired about the practicality of enacting a police line or zone. Director Wolfe noted an existing policy that addresses civil unrest would be updated following the ordinance amendment.

Councilmember Young asked about the difference between Block Parties and the “nuisance parties” the proposed ordinance sought to address. Mayor Randall asked if the ordinance could be applied to a private business, such as the parking lot at Crossroads Mall. Director Wolfe clarified which block parties were permitted and Public Safety’s relationship with them. He also noted the Portage Department of Public Safety’s efforts to assist the City of Kalamazoo (KDPS) in consistent enforcement in a local and national trend, and that attempts would be made to reach a property owner if possible.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson noted the news about X-trains in neighboring communities and questioned the timing of the ordinance, noting he could only point to a single instance of a similar event in Portage. . Director Wolfe responded that while X-trains had yet to occur in Portage, parking lot takeovers were becoming an issue that can happen at any time and quickly.

Councilmember Ledbetter inquired about towing and impounding vehicles known to be at such events. Director Wolfe responded, noting KDPS’s practices, and expressed that constrictions in manpower prevented Portage Public Safety from using towing and impounding as enforcement methods. Councilmember Ledbetter noted this remained an option for the private property owner.

Motion by Councilmember Olmsted, seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Pearson, to consider Councilmember Olmsted's request for updates to the proposed ordinance amending Chapter 50 of the Portage City Code to establish authority for emergency police lines and clear zones and to regulate nuisance parties within the City of Portage. Upon a roll call vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

COUNCIL COMMITTEE REPORTS: Councilmember Burns gave an update on the Central County Transportation Authority (CCTA) board. Councilmember Miller provided an update regarding Discover Kalamazoo and its Tourism Master Plan Visioning Workshop.

Motion by Mayor Pro Tem Pearson, seconded by Councilmember Young, received the Council Committee Reports as presented. Upon a voice vote, motion carried 7 to 0.

STATEMENTS OF CITY COUNCIL AND CITY MANAGER: Councilmember Olmsted highlighted the Dough Chicks, a local business with a booth at the Farmers Market. She then noted attending the local Women's Veterans Conference, with June 12th being Women's Veterans Appreciation Day. She then provided an update regarding a local veteran and closed by celebrating Flag Day and its origins.

Councilmember Ledbetter relayed positive experiences with the Farmers Market. He spoke about the Juneteenth holiday, its history, and the history of the United States, and recent setbacks to Black civil rights.

Councilmember Miller began with mentions of her recent involvement with several local sports organizations. She then extended her condolences to the Daane family, of Daane’s Party Store and catering service, for Joyce’s recent passing. She then noted her upcoming absence June. She closed by congratulating Senior Center Director Kim Phillips for her national "Trailblazing in Aging" award and CM McGinnis on his upcoming retirement.

Councilmember Young first expressed appreciation for the new Farmers Market location and

its successful opening. She congratulated the Public Safety Department for its contributions to the Hensley Foundation. She then thanked State Senator McCann and Governor Whitmer for inviting her and Councilmember Miller to a roundtable discussion on affordability. She ended by reminding citizens about several upcoming meetings and events, including contacting the Council's next meeting on June 23, the Portage District Library summer reading program, an Environmental Health Advisory Committee meeting, and the Board of Review meeting in July.

Councilmember Burns noted the Unified Development Ordinance update slated for a public hearing at the next Council meeting. His ongoing examination of the ordinance showed park land will remain designated as such. He then clarified the definition and purpose of "affordable housing" as opposed to "low-income housing". He noted the city's effort to use zoning to balance housing types between the city market and landscape.

City Manager McGinnis echoed the Metro Transit presentation, highlighting the ongoing construction of a new sidewalk along the south side of West Centre Avenue. He thanked Council for their trust in staff with the passage of the Transportation Alternatives Program application to continue safety efforts under Item A.4.

Mayor Pro Tem Pearson echoed Councilmember Miller's condolences to the Daane family. He highlighted the approval of the temporary appointment of Adam Herringa to Acting City Manager while the City Council is searching for a permanent replacement for the outgoing manager.

Mayor Randall highlighted the beginning of the Summer Concert Series, noting the numerous City Centre area promotions and activities that will be going on throughout the summer.

ADJOURNMENT: Mayor Randall adjourned the meeting at 07:31 PM.

Erica L. Eklov, City Clerk