

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COMMISSION
CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS

Regular Meeting Held April 21, 2025

Mayor Favale called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the City Commission Chambers at the East Grand Rapids Community Center and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: Commissioners Burdick, Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz, Skaggs, Wessely and Mayor Favale.

Absent: None.

Also Present: City Manager Charles; Deputy City Manager LaFave; City Attorney Huff; Public Safety Director Buikema; Finance Director Seath; Parks and Recreation Director Melville; City Clerk Parmenter.

2025-57. The agenda was approved.

2025-58. Public comment:

John Fuger, 2738 Elmwood, studied Stephen Ross and spoke about his findings.

Jerry Anderson, 435 Edgemere, thinks that studies are needed before development approval.

David Decker, 925 Bellclaire, stated that we have to be able to flex with development and a parking study needs to be done.

Susan McCarty, 1138 Kenesaw, thinks the development should be put on hold.

Judith Baxter, Hall St, said that there are parking problems in the community and wants the developer to do a feasibility study for the retail space, a 30-day notice before any vote, public hearing and notices mailed out.

Nyal Deems, 701 Laurel Circle, talked about the development.

2025-59. Mayor and City Commission comments, including committee liaison reports.

Commissioner Schwartz gave an update on the Planning Commission meeting where they were working on the Master Plan.

Commissioner Groff-Blaszak congratulated the Boston Marathan runners and requested the Commission to take up the mobility group's ordinance revision request.

Commissioner Hunter commended Doug and staff for the storm clean up.

Commissioner Skaggs commended the GVBA on the sidewalk social and noted that there would be another one in May.

Commissioner Wessely reminded everyone that there was a tool on the website to sign up for alerts, agendas, etc. He also asked for grace regarding the process with the proposed development and reminded all that they are residents also.

Mayor Favale hoped everyone had a safe and healthy Easter and spring break. She noted that Wednesdays on Wealthy was a wonderful event and was packed. The next one is May 21. There is a Home Energy Show and Tell event this Saturday from 12:00 to 2:00 at the Community Center.

City Manager Charles reminded all about Drug Takeback Day on Saturday. He gave a kudos to public works and public safety with the clean up after the storms. Gaslight Investors submitted a new plan, and it will be on the May 5th agenda.

- 2025-60. Public Hearing for delinquent water and sewer bills to be placed on the Summer 2025 taxes.

Finance Director Seath reviewed the information.

Public Hearing opened at 6:39 p.m.

No comments were made.

Public Hearing closed at 6:39 p.m.

- 2025-060-A. Burdick-Schwartz. To certify the list of delinquent accounts receivable and authorize placement of these accounts on the July 1, 2025 tax roll.

Yeas: Burdick, Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz, Skaggs, Wessely and Favale – 7
Nays: None.

- 2025-61. Public Safety quarterly report.

Director of Public Safety Buikema reviewed the report.

Commissioner Skaggs asked if all of the OWI offenses were alcohol related. Public Safety Chief Buikema stated that they were.

Commissioner Burdic questioned if he was reading the report correctly that traffic stops were down. Public Safety Chief Buikema said that they were down from last quarter.

Mayor Favale noted that residents have told her how pleased they are with Director of Public Safety Buikema and the department.

- 2025-62. Consider the authorization to purchase a new Diamondback Rescue Airboat for \$101,433 with an option to purchase a heavy-duty single axle trailer for an additional \$9,475.

Director of Public Safety Buikema reviewed the request.

Commissioner Wessely asked about the value of the current boat. Public Safety Director Buikema stated that it was \$40,000 or more.

Commissioner Schwartz asked if there were any electric options yet. City Manager Charles noted that the technology was not there yet.

- 2025-062-A. Skaggs-Burdick. To approve the purchase of a new Diamondback Rescue Airboat for \$101,433 with an option to purchase a heavy-duty single axle trailer for an additional \$9,475.

Yeas: Burdick, Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz, Skaggs, Wessely and Favale – 7
Nays: None.

- 2025-63. Consider adopting a resolution to authorize an authorized agent and contract signatories for the 2025 Plymouth Road project administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation.

Deputy City Manager La Fave highlighted the request.

- 2025-063-A. Hunter-Schwartz. To adopt a resolution to authorize an authorized agent and contract signatories for the 2025 Plymouth Road project administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation.

Yeas: Burdick, Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz, Skaggs, Wessely and Favale – 7
Nays: None.

- 2025-64. 2025-26 Draft Budget overview with presentation.

City Manager Charles reviewed the information.

Commissioner Groff-Blaszak asked if there was any talk about raising rental fees to make Parks and Recreation cost neutral. Director of Parks and Recreation Director Melville stated that they did a review last year of the fees and did raise the rates and are now competitive with surrounding areas. He also noted the higher participation in programming.

Commissioner Groff-Blaszak asked about the list of vehicles that we will be looking to replace and if we can get ahead of this and look at electric to be on target to meet our Climate Action Plan. Deputy City Manager La Fave said that they will have a list of ones that will be electric, hybrid and when components will be available.

2025-65. Schwartz-Wessely. To approve the consent agenda as follows:

2025-065-A. Minutes of the regular meeting held March 31, 2025.

2025-065-B. Disbursement of funds: payroll disbursements of \$281,269.98 and \$287,810.97; county and school disbursements of \$28.99, and total remaining disbursements of \$423,154.93.

2025-065-C. Communications.

Yeas: Burdick, Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Schwartz, Skaggs, Wessely and Favale – 7
Nays: None.

2025-66. Consider entering into an executive session for attorney client communication in accordance with Section 8(h) of the Open Meetings Act.

City Manager Charles reviewed the request.

2025-066-A. Skaggs-Burdick. To enter into executive session at 7:33 p.m.

Yeas: Burdick, Groff-Blaszak, Hunter, Skaggs, Schwartz, Wessely and Favale – 7
Nays: None.
Roll call vote was taken.

The meeting adjourned at 7:33 p.m., subject to the call of the Mayor until May 5, 2025.

Lori A Parmenter, City Clerk