**THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE FORTIETH COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BERKLEY, MICHIGAN WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 7:02 PM ON MONDAY, JULY 7, 2025 BY MAYOR DEAN**

***PRESENT:*** Councilmember Steve Baker CouncilmemberDennis Hennen

Councilmember Gregory Patterson Councilmember Jessica Vilani

Councilmember Clarence Black (attending remotely from Fort Bliss, TX on military duty)

Mayor Bridget Dean

***OTHER STAFF PRESENT:***

City Manager Crystal VanVleck

City Attorney Jake Mertes

City Clerk Victoria Mitchell

Parks & Recreation Director Dan McMinn

***APPROVAL OF AGENDA***

Mayor Pro Tem Gavin moved to approve the Agenda

Seconded by Councilmember Patterson

Ayes: Black, Gavin, Hennen, Patterson, Vilani, Baker and Dean

Nays: None

Motion Approved.

***PUBLIC COMMENT***

Larry Kaufman, Berkley, spoke regarding a dispute with his neighbor.

***CONSENT AGENDA***

Councilmember Hennen moved to approve the following Consent Agenda

Seconded by Councilmember Vilani

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** Matter of approving the minutes of the 40th Regular City Council meeting on Monday, June 16, 2025.

**MOTION NO. M-53-25:** Matter of approving the Statements of Work for Civic Plus integrated meetings software, implementation, and training. This is an approved budgeted item of $18,200 from account 101-215-986-000.

Ayes: Gavin, Hennen, Patterson, Vilani, Baker, Black and Dean

Nays: None

Motion Approved.

Recess from 7:10 to 7:15 PM due to technical difficulties.

***REGULAR AGENDA***

**RECOGNITIONS/PRESENTATIONS:** Matter of receiving any recognitions or presentations from the Consent Agenda.

**MOTION NO. M-54-25:** Matter of authorizing the Mayor to execute a contract between SMART and the City of Berkley for Fiscal Year 2026 for Municipal Credit and Community Credit funds in order to provide public transportation services for the period of July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026.

Mayor Pro Tem Gavin moved to approve Motion No. M-54-25

Seconded by Councilmember Hennen

Ayes: Hennen, Patterson, Vilani, Baker, Black, Gavin and Dean

Nays: None

Motion Approved.

**RESOLUTION NO. R-13-25:** Matter of approving the City Council Rules and Order of Procedure.

Councilmember Patterson moved to approve Resolution No. R-13-25

Seconded by Councilmember Hennen

Ayes: Vilani, Baker, Black, Hennen, Patterson and Dean

Nays: None

Motion Approved.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

**COUNCILMEMBER VILANI**

* From the Berkley Area Chamber:
  + One of the most exciting days of the summer is coming up this Saturday, our Street Art Festival, which will take place on Coolidge Highway from 11 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. on July 12th. Lots of your favorite things such as the artist David Zinn coming back and showcasing some of his work, Yappy Hour, Dog Zone. New this year is a beer garden at Casa Amado. So, you can stop, see some art, enjoy a beverage in that specific space and some tacos. There's face painting, balloon artists, a culinary corridor with artisan food.
  + If you want to get involved, the Chamber is always looking for both individuals and families as volunteers for all of these events. Please reach out to the Chamber if you are interested in volunteering.
* No updates from the Environmental Advisory Committee.

**MAYOR PRO TEM GAVIN**

* Berkley Beats is on July 9th at Oxford Park at 7:00 p.m. with music by Sonic Freeway.
* The next meeting of the Parks and Rec Advisory Board is on July 10th at 7:00 p.m. at the Community Center.
* Lastly, the Library Board will be meeting on July 16th at 7:00 p.m. at the Library.

**COUNCILMEMBER BAKER**

* For the Historical Committee:
  + They meet tomorrow, Tuesday July 8th at 7 p.m.
  + As you approach the Museum, please come take a look at the gazebo out front. There's a new dedication plaque to Berkley's very first female mayor, Maybelle Fraser. The dedication was held earlier today; the opportunity to get together, share stories, and celebrate all that she's done was terrific.
  + There's a new ornament that's available now so that you have plenty of time to stock up. These are available in the museum, in City Hall, and at the Library. The artwork is from our very own Steven Patterson—no relation to Councilmember Patterson—who is a member of the Historical Committee.
  + Please come visit the museum on Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m. and Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. For more information, visit berkleyhistory.com.
* The Downtown Development Authority board meets Wednesday, July 9th at 8:15 a.m.
  + Recently the DDA held a walking tour of West 12 Mile with noted experts from across the state regarding placemaking. Several key insights and opportunities were surfaced and potential ideas and action items came out of that.
  + The search is nearly over for the DDA permanent Executive Director; he thanked Jennifer Finney for stepping up and serving in that capacity very well. While out walking around, check out the Dorothea Pocket Park pilot.
  + For other event information, visit downtownberkley.com.
* It was Pearl S. Buck who once said, "The test of a civilization is in the way it cares for its helpless members." As we see at the national level, the thought of stripping Medicaid coverage from nearly 12 million people fails that test utterly. These aren't just numbers. These are children, seniors, people with disabilities, working families, our neighbors. The push to gut health care in favor of tax cuts for the ultra-rich reveals a moral distortion, profit over people. A civilized society can't view health care as a luxury. It needs to view it as a duty. And as our city motto says, ‘We care’. He said that he is proud to live in and serve this great community which does care.
* So with that, demonstrate care. Please hug somebody you love.

**COUNCILMEMBER HENNEN**

* From the Tree Board:
  + The spring tree planting from our DTE grant is complete. That was 30 more trees at no cost to us. There will be 200 more trees planted in the fall, also available at no cost to homeowners. You can sign up at berkleymi.gov/forestry. If you're interested in a tree, definitely sign up.
  + Save a Tree is working to complete our tree inventory, and once that's done, all city-owned trees will be in our geographic information system. The Tree Board is on summer break, next meeting in September.
* The Zoning Board of Appeals will finally meet with four cases on July 14th.
* He recently attended the Michigan Municipal League Board Retreat. The main emphasis was on affordable housing statewide, something your kids could afford to start with or your parents could downsize into. He said that they are exploring how to bring that to the state and city.
* On July 16th, he’ll be a panelist at an Artificial Intelligence Summit put on by the Michigan Department of Civil Rights to discuss AI policy and use in local government.

**COUNCILMEMBER BLACK**

* Nothing from the Committee on Engagement and Transparency tonight.
* Gave a special shout out to all the parents of our wonderful children. He said that while school is out, lots of kids are doing great things.
* Huge shout out to Berkley Cubs, Berkley Burn, DCFC soccer—kids competing in tournaments both locally and nationally. Best of luck to them, and godspeed to all those parents funding those adventures.

**COUNCILMEMBER PATTERSON**

* The Beautification Committee met and had some leadership changes. Dan Mihaescu stepped down as President. Gary Elrod was voted in as President, and Ethan Fogle took the role of Vice President.
  + On behalf of the entire Council, extended deep gratitude to Dan. He had 12 years of dedicated service. His commitment, creativity, and tireless effort have left a lasting impact on our community—making it more vibrant and welcoming. He gave not only his time, but also his energy and passion. Every space he helped with feels a little more welcoming because of his efforts. We're deeply grateful for all he's done and the example he set. Thanked him for his years of service and for the beauty he’s helped bring to our shared spaces.

**CITY MANAGER VANVLECK**

* Expanded on Councilmember Baker’s comments about the Dorothea Pilot Pocket Park:
  + We're about halfway through and, despite some weather, we've had some great events and more are coming up. You can go to berkleymi.gov/dorothea to see a full list of events.
    - Tomorrow night is a Tigers game, at the Dorothea Pocket Park, it will be broadcast on the radio, with hot dogs, chips, peanuts, and Cracker Jack available. The Recreation Department is also hosting sock tie-dye. Please call Recreation at 248-658-3470 or visit the website to register so we have enough supplies. Game starts at 6:30 p.m. and goes until it's over.
    - Several other events throughout the week are hosted by Parks and Recreation and the Library. Zumba is on July 9th and Family Trivia Night is July 11th, please register for those.
    - We're also doing a couple drop-in Euchre and game nights: July 13th from 4–6 p.m. and July 18th from 7–9 p.m. Beginners and experts are all welcome. There will be other games available too, for kids and families.
    - There are a couple Crafty Tuesdays coming up and a fun nature presentation on July 16th, organized by Oakland County Parks that will be hands-on and fun for kids. Please register.
    - A Physical Media Swap is on July 17th.
    - The event series will be closed out on July 19th with the Dorothea Summer Block Party, hosted by the DDA, from 5–8 p.m. with karaoke, BBQ, performances from the high school Encore Choir, and more.
    - Please visit the website and follow social media for more info.

**CITY ATTORNEY MERTEL**

* No updates.

**MAYOR DEAN**

* As mentioned, a plaque was placed on the gazebo dedicating it to Mayor Maybelle Fraser earlier this evening. As the first female mayor of Berkley, she is to be commended. Stated that she knows what she puts up with today, she can’t imagine what Mayor Fraser went through back then. She was feisty and determined. She wanted the gazebo to happen. She fronted much of the construction money and helped with the construction herself.
* She was a mom, involved in the Junior Women’s Club and Mom’s Club softball. We are fortunate she had the foresight to want this gazebo. It really is an anchor in our community. It’s where we gather. I’ve done numerous weddings there. Memorial Day services happen there. It’s decorated for holidays. The Lights Parade ends there, and kids visit with Santa. Said that she hopes Mayor Fraser knew what an asset the gazebo would become and how much it contributes to our community.
* Gave a shout out to the Berkley postal workers—Michelle and company. National Postal Worker Day was July 1st, so this is the first time we can say: you’re awesome. She said she always enjoys seeing Michelle’s smiling face.
* For the Mayor’s Road Show, my next stop is Mongers’ Provisions on Wednesday, July 16th, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. She stated that she looks forward to meeting with whoever comes, bring your questions and concerns. It’s a great opportunity to have conversation.

***ADJOURNMENT:***

Councilmember Patterson moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 7:34 PM

Seconded by Councilmember Vilani

Ayes: Baker, Black, Gavin, Hennen, Patterson, Vilani and Dean

Nays: None

Motion Approved.

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Bridget Dean, Mayor

***ATTEST:***

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Victoria Mitchell, City Clerk