**THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE FORTIETH COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BERKLEY, MICHIGAN WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 7 PM ON MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2025 BY MAYOR DEAN**

***PRESENT:*** Councilmember Steve Baker

Councilmember Clarence Black (attending remotely from military duty)

Mayor Pro Tem Ross Gavin

Councilmember Dennis Hennen

Councilmember Gregory Patterson

Councilmember Jessica Vilani

Mayor Bridget Dean

***OTHER STAFF PRESENT:***

City Manager Crystal VanVleck

City Attorney Dan Christ

Deputy City Clerk Rachel Patterson

DDA Director Nate Mack

***APPROVAL OF AGENDA***

Councilmember Patterson moved to approve the agenda

Seconded by Councilmember Hennen

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

Nays: None

Councilmember Black was unable to vote due to technical difficulties.

Motion Approved.

***PUBLIC COMMENT***

Jeff Tong, Berkley Historical Museum Curator, spoke regarding the upcoming Cemetery Tour at Roseland Park on October 18th from 1-4pm.Tickets are $15, and are for sale at the Treasurer’s Office, the Berkley Library, the Historical Museum and the Roseland Park office. Learn more at [berkleyhistory.com](http://berkleyhistory.com).

Jim Worthheimer, Berkley, spoke regarding the condition of the tennis courts.

***CONSENT AGENDA***

Councilmember Patterson moved to approve the following Consent Agenda

Seconded by Councilmember Hennen

**APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES:** Matter of approving the minutes of the 40th Regular City Council meeting on Monday, September 8, 2025, and the Special City Council meetings on Monday, September 8, 2025 and Monday, September 15, 2025.

**WARRANT LIST:** Matter of approving Warrant List No. 1414.

**ORDINANCE NO. O-07-25:** Matter of considering the second reading of an ordinance of the City Council of Berkley, Michigan, to amend Section 14-36, Outdoor Uses in Connection with Class C Liquor-Licensed Establishments of the City of Berkley Code of Ordinances to address incorrect Zoning Ordinance references.

**ORDINANCE NO. O-08-25:** Matter of considering the second reading of an ordinance of the City Council of Berkley, Michigan to amend Article 2 Definitions, Article 6 Site Design Based Districts, Article 9 General Provisions, Article 11 Sign Regulations, Article 14 Off-Street Parking Loading, and Access Standards and Article 15 Site Plan Review Procedures and Requirements of Chapter 138 Zoning of the Berkley Code of Ordinances to add definitions for business services and live/work units, to clarify site area governs site layout, to clarify the reviewer for fences, to allow ground-mounted solar energy systems in residential districts, to clarify regulations for residential driveways, to modify the width requirements for attached garages, to clarify regulations for detached accessory buildings and swimming pools, to clarify regulations for window signs and temporary signs, to clarify clear vision zone requirements, to add regulations for areas of residential parking and recreational vehicles, to clarify requirements for where on-street parking may be counted as individual business parking and to clarify requirements and procedures for pre-application and preliminary site plan review.

**PROCLAMATION NO. P-23-25:** Matter of proclaiming September 2025 as Childhood Cancer Awareness Month.

**PROCLAMATION NO. P-24-25:** Matter of proclaiming September 2025 as National Suicide Prevention Month.

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

Nays: None

Councilmember Black was unable to vote due to technical difficulties.

Motion Approved.

***REGULAR AGENDA***

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

Councilmember Patterson read P-23-25 in its entirety.

Councilmember Baker read P-24-25 in its entirety.

**MOTION NO. M-86-25:** Matter of approving a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) event, "Boo!kley Monster Mash Block Party" on Coolidge between 12 Mile and Catalpa on Saturday, October 25, 2025 from 2-5 p.m. and authorizing the road closure of Coolidge on that date. Approval is conditional upon the submission of required items and documents prior to the event date.

Councilmember Baker moved to approve Motion No. M-86-25

Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Vilani

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

Nays: None

Motion Approved.

**MOTION NO. M-87-25:** Matter of authorizing the City Manager to sign the Secondary Manufacturers Opioid Settlement Form.

Mayor Pro Tem Gavin moved to approve Motion No. M-87-25

Seconded by Councilmember Hennen

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

Nays: None

Motion Approved.

**COMMUNICATIONS:**

**MAYOR PRO TEM GAVIN**

* Said that he had the pleasure of being at the Michigan Municipal League conference last week. He attended some great seminars on creative solutions to storm water management issues, community art, revamping corridors for housing and transit. As always, it was a thrill to be able to not only spend time with colleagues, to look at ways to bring back ideas to improve our community, but also be able to spend time with other elected officials and local government officials from around the state.
* The next meeting for the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board will be October 9th at 7 PM at the Community Center.
* The next meeting of the Library Board will be October 15th at 7 PM at the Library.

**COUNCILMEMBER BAKER**

* The Historical Committee met on September 9th.
  + Judge Derek Meinecke visited to share ideas around a memorial display in honor of the honorable Jamie Wittenberg.
  + Tickets are on sale for the upcoming Berkley Historical Museum Roseland Park Cemetery tour on October 18th and in case of rain delay the rain day is Sunday October 19th.
  + Please remember that new holiday ornaments and mugs are available for purchase in the Museum, at the Library, and at City Hall.
  + For more information visit berkleyhistory.com.
* The Downtown Development Authority Board met at 8:15 AM on September 10th.
  + Nate Mack, the new DDA director, discussed his 90-day plan. They talked about winter barrels, planters, banners throughout our downtown and Boo!kley. Planning is underway with plans for the Dorothea pocket park to be reactivated during the month as well.
  + He said that he also attended last week's MML convention. He said that he picked up some ideas particular to the downtown attracting businesses and some other safety ideas around making the downtown more walkable.
  + For more information on that and more, please visit downtownberkley.com.
* James Madison, who would later become the fourth US president, wrote the following declaration: “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof or abridging the freedom of speech or of the press or the right of the people peacefully to assemble and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.”
* Especially as we continue to slide into authoritarianism, please be sure to hug somebody you love.

**COUNCILMEMBER HENNEN**

* The Zoning Board of Appeals had no cases in September, but they will have four cases to hear on Monday, October 13th.
* The Tree Board met the same night, September 22nd. On their agenda was a status update from over the summer and planning for the coming year.
* He said that, like his colleagues, he also attended the Michigan Municipal League conference. Two big takeaways were some strategies on attainable housing, how to bring housing that the average person in Berkley could afford, and also ideas with artificial intelligence. He said he was meeting with one of the speakers next month to brainstorm ideas on how to use artificial intelligence to help boost productivity in local government both in Berkley and statewide.

**COUNCILMEMBER BLACK**

* No update.

**COUNCILMEMBER PATTERSON**

* The Planning Commission meets tomorrow, September 23rd.
* The Beautification Advisory Committee meets Wednesday, September 24th. They did a cleanup yesterday, cleaning up the Community Center, and the area in front of the Senior Center. He said if you drive by or stop by, take a look.
* He added that they had a little over 200 results already for the Parks and Recreation five-year master plan survey; he asked people to please take it if they hadn’t.

**COUNCILMEMBER VILANI**

* Thanked everyone in the Environmental Advisory Committee who sponsored the Native Plant Sale on Sunday and everyone who came out and purchased plants for their yards.
* The next meeting of the Environmental Advisory Committee will be on October 16th at 6:30 PM on the second floor of the Public Safety building.
* Reminded people that Thursday, September 25th there will be a Pub Crawl from 5 to 11 PM. Tickets are $30 in advance and $40 at the door; includes a T-shirt and recovery bag. There will be a shuttle taking people around to all the locations so people don’t have to pub crawl and drive. The theme is the 70s or Halloween, so people should bring out their best gear and get ready for a good time.
* One last reminder that on Wednesday, September 24th, at 6:30 PM in Council Chambers, the League of Women Voters will be hosting their annual candidate forum. She said Councilmember Baker and Councilmember Hennen are seeking re-election; there are three newcomers with one open seat. People should remember that their vote is their voice and this will be a good chance to hear from the candidates and make informed decisions.

**CITY MANAGER VANVLECK**

* Said that the Dorothea Pocket Park will be a highlight of the Boo!kley Monster Mash. The city identified it as a great opportunity for another pilot temporary closure of the space. She said survey results from the previous pilot came back wonderfully, showing a lot of what was expected, but also providing feedback on what people liked and what issues they ran into. She said based on that, the city wanted to plan another temporary closure, this time in partnership with the DDA and the month-long Boo!kley celebration.
* Explained the closure of the road was done via a temporary traffic control order, typically issued by Public Safety, so it did not necessarily require a vote of Council. She said there was a desire to continue temporary closures as long as times were identified when it made sense. She said this partnership with the DDA was the perfect time. The street would be closed the weekend of September 26th and reopened November 3rd, a little longer than a month. Amenities such as seating, lighting, and games would return, with activations mostly hosted by the DDA.
* Said the space would not be activated as heavily as during the initial pilot, since survey results showed many people used the space passively, which aligned with the desired use for a public space. Activations were still important to foster downtown vibrancy, but the main goal was to encourage people to use the space in new ways. She added that the short-term goal was to continue identifying good times to close the street temporarily. She said updates would be available on the Berkley city website, downtownberkley.com, and through the city and DDA’s social media.

**CITY ATTORNEY DAN CHRIST**

* No legal report.

**MAYOR DEAN**

* Stated that as her colleagues mentioned, she spent a few days in Grand Rapids last week at the MML convention. She noted that while they all attended different sessions, housing was a recurring topic in multiple sessions, as well as thriving communities. She said Berkley is thriving and will continue to do so.
* Attended the Michigan Association of Mayors breakfast, which was a good opportunity to connect with counterparts across the state, and the Michigan Women in Municipal Government luncheon. She said the luncheon always includes a program, and this year it focused on identifying leadership styles. She said there were group discussions about leadership, community challenges, and problem-solving. She added that attending conferences always provides great ideas, whether or not they can apply directly to Berkley, and inspires creative thinking.
* Said she had to mention receiving two letters from Rogers Elementary students, Isaac and Emily. She said they must be doing a unit on social studies, and the letters warmed her heart. They were written in adorable handwriting, with one taped up so no one could see it, and they came through the mail slot at her front door. She said it was the best mail she had received in a long time.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Councilmember Patterson moved to adjourn the Regular Meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Seconded by Councilmember Vilani

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

Nays: None

Motion Approved.

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Bridget Dean, Mayor

***ATTEST:***

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Victoria Mitchell, City Clerk