



**CITY OF WALLED LAKE
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2025
7:30 P.M.**

City Clerk Stuart welcomed everyone to the regularly scheduled September 16, 2025, City Council meeting then introduced Council Member Casey R. Ambrose, Council Member Mindy Fernandes, Council Member Tamra Loch, Council Member Bennett Lublin, Council Member John Owsinek, Mayor Pro Tem Ryan Woods, and Mayor Ackley.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Mayor Ackley.

PLEDGE TO FLAG & INVOCATION

Invocation by Mayor Pro Tem Woods.

ROLL CALL

Mayor Ackley, Mayor Pro Tem Woods, Council Member Ambrose, Council Member Fernandes, Council Member Loch, Council Member Lublin, and Council Member Owsinek

OTHERS PRESENT

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

REQUESTS FOR AGENDA CHANGES *None*

PRESENTATION

1. Oakland County Water Resources Commission – Ms. Mary Koeger

Ms. Mary Koeger from Oakland County Water Resources Commission explained the Chapter 20 Petition Resolution and Report they are requesting the City of Walled Lake's participation in. Ms. Koeger said the petition is still in draft form, however, the wastewater treatment plant and its current standing is facing a lot of difficulties with its aging infrastructure and dated processes. Ms. Koeger said the Walled Lake Arm and the treatment plant were installed in 1966 as a temporary facility. This meant that all the infrastructure was built around it while other processes were added, like our UV treatment, some storage tanks and retention basin. These additions did not address the current infrastructure that is still around today. There are a lot of infrastructure on site that is from the 1980s and 1990s that has not seen repair during its time and it's reaching its end of useful life. Ms. Koeger said in regard to the petition itself, this is to form a Chapter 20 Drainage District consisting of the wastewater treatment plant and the Walled Lake Arm, not to be confused with the remainder of the collection system known as the SDS. Ms. Koeger said one of the benefits of a Chapter 20 Drainage District is that we will be able to have regularly

scheduled meetings where she will be able to provide updates directly to the City of Walled Lake and walk alongside each other for these projects as they progress. Also, the City of Walled Lake will be able to approve all invoices, all contracts, and all work moving forward as part of that community entity that's known as the Drainage District. Ms. Koeger said the second benefit is that there is a little bit of protection when it comes to a Chapter 20 Drainage District. If there are any obstructions, any shortages in power, anything like that, instead of it coming directly to the city, if it if the city was at fault, it would be spread across the Drainage District. Ms. Koeger said overall, those are some of the benefits of a Chapter 20 Drainage District, and that's all this petition is for to combine with the City of Walled Lake, the City of Novi and Commerce Township for the wastewater treatment plant and the Walled Lake arm. We would meet on a regular basis, and you would be reviewing and approving invoices and contracts, be informed of project progress.

Council Member Owsinek asked how the funding would be addressed between each community.

Ms. Koeger explained each community would be assessed a 1/3.

Council Member Lublin asked what the approximate cost for the total project to the City of Walled Lake.

Ms. Koeger said in the packet the projected cost is \$6 million, and the City of Walled Lake would be responsible for \$2 million.

Mayor Pro Tem Woods explained the city went through this type of weighted partnership before with a trail project. Mayor Pro Tem asked how wide or how expansive would that cover into Novi, his concern is how much of a cost if something were to become blocked on the Novi side, would the residents of Walled Lake have to take care of it. Mayor Pro Tem Woods asked if it is just for this facility specifically or does it go out further.

Ms. Koeger said it would be the Chapter 20 Drainage Districts responsibility; the Drainage District would enforce and hold the responsible party accountable. Ms. Koeger said if blockage were caused by the commercial entity, the cause would be on the commercial property not the City of Walled Lake independently.

Council Member Lublin asked if there was a way to separate the City of Walled Lake's portion from Novi or Commerce.

Ms. Koeger said this plant treats everybody there is no way to separate it.

City Attorney Vanerian asked how the Chapter 20 Drainage District board representatives would be selected and would the board have the final say on projects, costs and any other allocations.

Ms. Koeger said there would be representatives from Walled Lake, Novi, and Commerce Twp.

City Manager Whitt said he cautions the City Council moving forward, this a discussion of creating another level of government. City Manager Whitt said the City of Walled Lake has had negative experiences with an authority before such as not having the city representatives votes counting. City Manager Whitt stressed to City Council to be careful of moving forward, the board will be responsive to the majority vote of an authority, not to the City of Walled Lake. City Manager Whitt said as an example, the City of Walled Lake as a member of the railway council, he and City Council member Owsinek voted on an engineer and when the final decision was made, it was as if the City of Walled Lake's vote did not occur. City Manager Whitt said City Council needs to review the detail of this petition. City Manager Whitt said this may not be the best guaranteed option. City Manager Whitt said if the City of Walled Lake is 30% of the vote, that is nothing. City Manager Whitt recommended City Council schedule a special meeting with the public's involvement to further discuss this. City Manager Whitt said when levels of government are created, there is mission creep, and he advised City Council to be cautious.

Council Member Lublin said he agrees but infrastructure does need to be repaired.

Mayor Ackley explained there is a lot more to this petition to create a Chapter 20 Drainage District, what is the real cost to the City of Walled Lake. Mayor Ackley said she strongly supported scheduling a special meeting to have further discussions.

Council Member Owsinek said he agrees, and obtaining public input is necessary.

**CM 09-01-25 TO SCHEDULE A SPECIAL MEETING TO OBTAIN PUBLIC
INPUT ON THE PETITION TO CREATE A CHAPTER 20
DRAINAGE DISTRICT**

Motion by Owsinek, seconded by Ambrose: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To schedule a special meeting to obtain public input on the petition to create a Chapter 20 Drainage District.

Discussion

City Manager Whitt said the City Council can have a work shop meeting, we do need to deal with the infrastructure.

Ms. Koeger said she believes the City of Walled Lake would be given a vote and the vote will be equal between the communities. Ms. Koeger said she can arrange a meeting with Walled Lake's legal and Oakland County's legal before a public hearing.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Ambrose, Fernandes, Loch, Lublin, Owsinek, Woods, Ackley
Nayes (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

AUDIENCE PARTICIPATION

Mr. Cevora, 1145 N Eddie – said he is having issues with a light in the area, pictures have been provided to the city. Mr. Cevora explained he spoke with a DTE representative and Council Member Ambrose, it is getting darker quicker with the season, this light is a big deal, horns are honking at night making the turn because they cannot see. Mr. Cevora explained when he spoke with DTE it was suggested the city can take over the light, the city told DTE no. Mr. Cevora said this light would be just like a city light, he has done a lot of homework on this. The kids are playing outside at 9-10 p.m. in the evening. Mr. Cevora said if the city replaces the light, the head replacement will be \$70, and it is quick and easy to do. Mr. Cevora provided City Council pictures. Mr. Cevora said he is disappointed with the responses from the city staff and asked City Council to review.

City Manager Whitt explained he will start at the beginning, what is the city's connection if any to this light. The city would have been paying for this light and to his understanding the city has never paid for this light, it was paid for privately. City Manager Whitt said it was reported to him, the neighbor owned it. City Manager Whitt said he believes Mr. Cevora was told that he could add it to his DTE bill and Mr. Cevora said no. City Manager Whitt said he will report further information back to council.

Richard Gunther, 486 E. Walled Lake Drive – said he was here today with a different conversation until he discovered a new sign that's gone up. Mr. Gunther said he recently argued that there's a sign that has an election message, which is a political campaign sign that is not supposed to go up until October 5th. Mr. Gunther said he just saw a very large 80 square foot banner reading "Reelect Mayor Ackley, Fernandes, Lublin, and Owsinek campaign sign that's hanging off the side of the Greenhouse building. He said it is clearly bigger than the allowable ordinance and again, it's 30 days too early. Mr. Gunther said he is asking City Council tonight if it's okay to place election material now and requested City Council vote on it tonight. Mr. Gunther said to stop the selective enforcement.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

1. Regular Council Meeting Minutes of August 19, 2025

**CM 09-02-25 MOTION TO APPROVE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES OF AUGUST 19, 2025**

Motion by Loch , seconded by Woods, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve regular council meeting minutes of August 19, 2025.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Fernandes, Loch, Lublin, Owsinek, Woods, Ambrose, Ackley
Nayes (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

COUNCIL REPORT

Council Member Fernandes said the Parks and Recreation Commission met and discussed the weekly artisan market options with the DIA's Inside Out Program to have them showcase artwork in the city. Council Member Fernandes said the city did participate in this before and we are going to make sure if we are selected, we showcase the artwork throughout the city. Council Member Fernandes said we are meeting with DIA representatives next month.

Council Member Lublin said the library board meets this Friday, and the Friends of the Library will be celebrating their 40th anniversary on October 23rd. Council Member Lublin said the participation in the library programs have been strong.

Council Member Owsinek said the Planning Commission met and approved a site plan with conditions that followed the ordinance.

MAYOR'S REPORT

Mayor Ackley said this was already presented to Mr. Dudzinski, however, for the public to hear and those that could not attend the retirement presentation she asked Mayor Pro Tem Woods to read into the record.

City of Walled Lake, Michigan
SPECIAL TRIBUTE
RECOGNITION AND APPRECIATION TO
MR. PATRICK DUDZINSKI
WALLED LAKE WESTERN MUSIC DIRECTOR

WHEREAS Mr. Patrick Dudzinski, Walled Lake Western Music Director and Walled Lake resident has recently announced his retirement; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Patrick Dudzinski is currently supporting the combination of bands of Walled Lake Western and Walled Lake Central High Schools until his replacement is ready; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Patrick Dudzinski in his tenure achieved accolades in 2025 from the MSBOA District IV as Band Teacher of the Year and in 2022 Walled Lake Western Teacher of the Year; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Patrick Dudzinski has provided several tremendous performances in our communities to include the infamous high school Pink Out Football Games, Walled Lake and Wixom Tree Lighting Ceremonies, Memorial Day Parades, etc.; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Patrick Dudzinski continues to hold the compassion and dedication to his students helping them to achieve recognition of the MSBOA 2025 Outstanding Jazz Musicians, District IV 2025 Honors Band, and All State 2025 Honor Bands.

NOW, THEREFORE, on behalf of the City Council of Walled Lake, Michigan, I, Linda S. Ackley, Mayor, do hereby provide sincere appreciation and recognition to Mr. Patrick Dudzinski, Walled Lake Western Music Director.

The citizens of Walled Lake are encouraged to join in recognizing and celebrating the contributions of Mr. Patrick Dudzinski to the community.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the great seal of the City to be affixed on this 7th day of August: in the year of our Lord two thousand and twenty-five.

Linda S. Ackley, Mayor

Mayor Pro Tem Woods said a good neighbor makes a good neighborhood, the job they do and what he did, we truly appreciate what he contributed to the city. Mayor Pro Tem Woods said he and Council Member Fernandes attended the retirement ceremony.

CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

1. Consent Agenda of Written Departmental / Divisional Statistical Reports

- a. Police**
- b. Fire**
- c. Finance**
 - Warrant**
- d. Code Enforcement**

CM 09-03-25 APPROVAL OF CITY MANAGER'S CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

Motion by Ambrose, seconded by Lublin, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve City Manager's Consent Agenda items.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Loch, Lublin, Owsinek, Woods, Ambrose, Fernandes, Ackley
Nays (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

City Manager Whitt said based on discussions with the Parks and Recreation Commission, the city is going to work with the DIA project. City Manager Whitt said he and Mayor Ackley visited sites and further information was provided to Mr. Ladd. City Manager Whitt said Mr. Ladd will be meeting with DIA representatives on the city's behalf. City Manager Whitt said he and Mayor Ackley sent a letter to property owner of the downtown vacant lots and they are in the middle of talking with agents to acquire the properties. City Manager Whitt said the DDA, and the City will have a big say about what and how the lots are utilized. City Manager Whitt said Mayor Ackley will be appointing a committee to work on the development of these lots.

Council Member Lublin said the city is doing their due diligence prior to purchase.

City Manager Whitt said there was unanimous vote from the DDA to purchase these properties and there is full support from the City Council to purchase and develop these parcels. This is a gamechanger for the city.

CORRESPONDENCE *None*

ATTORNEY'S REPORT

City Attorney Vanerian explained at last month's Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) meeting the board discussed the keeping of chickens in the city. The ZBA has had a number of these cases in the past couple of years. City Attorney Vanerian explained the current process of filing an application to go before the ZBA not for a traditional variance but to review the housing of coup, setbacks from neighbors, and keeping of chickens do not cause disruptions to surrounding neighbors. City Attorney Vanerian explained that the ZBA would like to see the criteria for keeping chickens via an ordinance amendment, removing the ZBA review requirement and just placing them under a permit review process. City Attorney Vanerian said there are number of ways to look at this or leave it as it stands.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS *None*

NEW BUSINESS

1. **Proposed Resolution 2025-25 DDA Budget Amendment FY 26 for the purchase of the HAAS Alert Safety Cloud Technology System**

CM 09-04-25 MOTION TO APPROVE RESOLUTION 2025-25 A RESOLUTION AMENDING AND APPROPRIATING FUNDS FROM THE

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FUND BALANCE
TO PROCEED WITH THE PURCHASE OF HAAS ALERT
SAFETY CLOUD TECHNOLOGY SYSTEM AND ANNUAL
MAINTENANCE TO ENHANCE SAFETY FOR DRIVERS**

Motion by Lublin, seconded by Loch, CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To approve resolution 2025-25 a resolution amending and appropriating funds from the Downtown Development Authority fund balance to proceed with the purchase of HAAS Alert Safety Cloud technology system and annual maintenance to enhance safety for drivers.

Discussion

Fire Chief Gonzalez explained HAAS Alert Safety Cloud is a technology designed to enhance safety for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians around emergency vehicles. It operates by providing real-time alerts to connected vehicles and mobile devices when emergency responders are approaching. The system utilizes a network of smart devices and vehicle-to-everything (V2X) communication to notify users of potential hazards, helping to reduce accidents and improve situational awareness on the roads. This proactive approach aims to ensure safer interactions between emergency personnel and the public. The Walled Lake Fire Dept has had one unit installed on our engine 19 since we purchased it, the unit came with the truck in 2021. Since that time, the unit has alerted over 3,000 drivers. The units cost \$360 a piece with a \$220 annual service fee. The fire department was looking for assistance and support from the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to purchase five additional units for \$1,800 and provide the \$1,320 service fee. Fire Chief Gonzalez explained that in 2025 the cost would be \$3,120 and then moving forward in 2026 and beyond it would be \$1,320 per year service fee for all six Fire Dept Emergency vehicles.

Roll Call Vote

Ayes (7) Lublin, Owsinek, Woods, Ambrose, Fernandes, Loch, Ackley
Nays (0)
Absent (0)
Abstain (0)

COUNCIL COMMENTS

City Council Member Fernandes said it was great to see everybody come out to the recent State of the Lakes. Council Member Fernandes said she has attended events like this for over 20 years, and in the last few years we have been able to see a lot of great things. Council Member Fernandes said she appreciates the camaraderie and sharing with our neighboring communities. Council Member Fernandes said she is very proud of Walled Lake.

Council Member Lublin said he is proud of our City Council. Council Member Lublin said the fire department had a response time of three minutes and fifty-four seconds that is terrific, we are working on downtown Phase 1 rehabilitation, our subdivisions have repaved roads, all our

departments have top notch equipment, and we saved the funds to do all of this. Council Member Lublin said the rehabilitation downtown is over a million dollars and the city saved the monies to complete it. Council Member Lublin said the city saves the money before we spend it so we able to complete these projects without any debt. Council Member Lublin said the city departments and City Council are working as one team. Council Member Lublin said we are working as a team.

Council Member Ambrose said he would like to welcome three new restaurants that have joined Walled Lake calling Walled Lake their home. The Walled Lake Brunch House, Zara Grill Mediterranean restaurant, and Rancho Tapatio a mexican restaurant has reopened. Council Member Ambrose said there are two other developments in the works that are public knowledge and exciting for the community, that being our Starbucks which is moving from a neighboring community and Halo Burger who will be taking over the old Taco Bell property. He said Taco Bell continued with Walled Lake, they've been here for over 30 years they built a brand-new facility, and that vacant property will be taken by Halo Burger, so it will not be vacant. Council Member Ambrose said good things continue to happen in Walled Lake and the businesses acknowledge that. He said continue the good work.

Council Member Loch said she would like to thank the city staff, they went above and beyond, and she appreciates them. Council Member Loch said she had parked at the trailhead and walked up to the farmer's market, it is very nice, very impressive crowd, loads of booths it was great.

Mayor Pro Tem Woods said he would like to add to Council Member Lublin's comments about the fire department response time, it is amazing. He explained he was at a LAHA meeting earlier in the summer and hearing our neighboring community when they're pushing for a bond approval, being at 5 minutes for a response time and the city is under 4 minutes, it really shows a lot of the work that you guys have done. Mayor Pro Tem Woods said adding to Council Member Ambrose comments in terms of the downtown improvements, seeing the new paint on Wingstop, seeing the new façade at Enterprise things are coming together around here. He said and then members from our Walled Lake Police Department participating in the torch run for the Special Olympics, Officers Shallow and Roelant, it was very cool. Mayor Pro Tem Woods said this race is near and dear to his heart, he runs a couple events for the state games, and he knows where the money goes. He said it was a very worthwhile event, and he appreciated the participation.

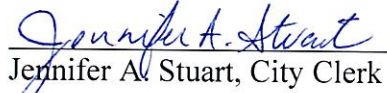
MAYOR'S COMMENTS

Mayor Ackley said she was excited about the upcoming purchase of the downtown lots, she said she had a fear of a three-story building being constructed. Mayor Ackley said she would like to see a passive park where we can provide the citizens of Walled Lake with something where they can enjoy the lake and not be in the middle of a volleyball game at the beach. Mayor Ackley said it is very nice to hear all wonderful things about Walled Lake; the State of the Lakes event showcased all the good things happening in our surrounding communities. Mayor Ackley said Walled Lake has come a long way, it gives her great pleasure to be part of Walled Lake.

ADJOURNMENT

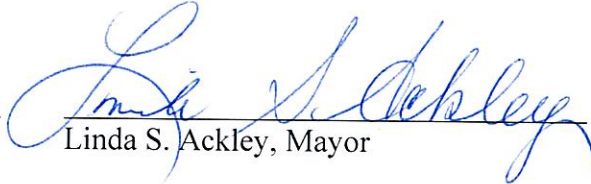
CM 09-05-25 ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Lublin, seconded by Ambrose: CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY: To adjourn the meeting at 8:28 P.M.



Jennifer A. Stuart, City Clerk

Approved 10/21/25



Linda S. Ackley, Mayor