

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

St. Louis, Michigan
March 3, 2026

The regular meeting of the Saint Louis City Council was called to order by Mayor Ralph R. Echtenaw on Tuesday March 3, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers.

Council Members Present: Mayor Ralph R. Echtenaw, Fares E. Azzam, Robin W. Hart, Mayor Pro Tem William R. Leonard, Kevin D. Palmer.

Council Members Absent: None

City Manager: Kurt Giles
City Clerk: Jamie Long
Police Chief: Richard Ramereiz

Others in Attendance: Josh Leppien- Economic Development Director, Keith Risdon- Utilities Director, Lou Fleury-OHM, Bob Blank-Utility Financial Solutions, Dan Kasbohm-Utility Financial Solutions.

Mayor Echtenaw led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Leonard, to approve the agenda for March 3, 2026. All ayes carried the motion.

Presentation-Utility Financial Solutions-Electric Rate Study.

Bob Blank gave a brief presentation on the findings of the City's Electric Utility Rate Study. Blank touched on the minimum cash reserve, projection targets and the optimal operating income. Blank discussed the projection summary with a recommended 4% adjustment. All comments and questions were addressed.

City Council Minutes.

Moved by Palmer, supported by Hart, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on February 17, 2026. All ayes carried the motion.

Claims & Accounts.

City Council discussed the Claims & Accounts.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Leonard, to approve the Claims & Accounts in the amount of \$311,284.11. All ayes carried the motion.

Monthly Board Minutes.

City Council discussed the February 2026 Monthly Board Minutes.

Moved by Palmer, supported by Azzam, to receive the February 2026 Monthly Board Minutes and place on file. All ayes carried the motion.

Audience Recognition.

Lou Fleury from OHM gave updates on several ongoing projects in the city including the SRF Phase I, the Water Main Project, which is set to begin again in late March and the North Main Street Reconstruction from Washington to Center Street. The Water Main Project will have a bid opening on Friday.

Consent Agenda.

Mayor Echtenaw requested approval/receipt of Consent Agenda item “a” through “c” as shown below:

- a. Payment to Clever Surveying & Engineering for As Need GIS & Training Services.
- b. Cancellation of NTH Consultants Ltd. Award of NESHAP Testing and Transfer Award to Farabee Mechanical Inc.
- c. Union Street Pump Station Bypass.

Moved by Palmer, supported by Leonard, to approve Consent Agenda items “a” through “c”. All ayes carried the motion.

Quotes Buck-A-Bout from Gametime.

Manager Giles requested members to approve the quote from Gametime for a Buck-A-Bout to replace the current piece of equipment at Penny Park that is damaged in the amount of \$6,640.26, which includes equipment rental and labor from the DPW Department.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Hart, to approve the quote from the quote from Gametime for a Buck-A-Bout in the amount of \$6,640.26. All ayes carried the motion.

Contract from Elite Pipeline for Closed Circuit TV Taping.

Manager Giles requested members to approve the contract from Elite Pipeline for Closed Circuit TV, in the amount of \$61,525.32. A portion of this will be reimbursed by both Bethany and Pine River Township.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Palmer, supported by Leonard to approve the contract from Elite Pipeline for Closed Circuit TV, in the amount of \$61,525.32, with a portion of this being reimbursed by

both Bethany and Pine River Township. All ayes carried the motion.

Resolution 2026-07

A RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT MAIN STREET FROM WASHINGTON AVENUE/M46 TO CENTER STREET RECONSTRUCTION CONTRACT BETWEEN MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND THE CITY OF ST. LOUIS AND AUTHORIZE SIGNATURES

Minutes of a regular meeting of the City of St. Louis, City Council, held on March 3, 2026 at the City Hall, in the City of St. Louis, County of Gratiot at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Mayor Ralph Echtenaw, Fares E. Azzam, Robin W. Hart, William R. Leonard, Kevin D. Palmer

ABSENT: None

The following preamble and resolution were offered by member Azzam, and supported by member Palmer:

BE IT RESOLVED THAT, MDOT Contract No. 26-5026, Control Section STUL 29000, Job Number 224351 CON by and between the Michigan Department of Transportation and the City of St. Louis is hereby accepted and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the following Officials are authorized to sign the said contract:

Jamie Long, City Clerk
Ralph Echtenaw, Mayor

Yeas: Azzam, Palmer, Hart, Leonard, Echtenaw

Nays: None

Resolution Declared Adopted this 3rd day of March, 2026.

RESOLUTION 2026-08

**RESOLUTION TO RESCIND PREVIOUS
RESOLUTIONS 2023-26 AND 2025-03 AND
CANCELLING PARTICIPATION IN ST. LOUIS
MI AFFORDABLE SOLAR, LLC DISTRIBUTED
ENERGY RESOURCE PROJECT**

City of St. Louis
County of Gratiot, State of Michigan

Minutes of a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of St. Louis, County of Gratiot, State of Michigan, held on March 3, 2026, at the City Hall, City of St. Louis, County of Gratiot at 6:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Azzam, Hart, Leonard, Palmer, Echtenaw

ABSENT: None

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Member Hart, and supported by Member Palmer:

WHEREAS, the City of St. Louis, County of Gratiot, State of Michigan (the “City”) has a continual interest in projects and power supply opportunities that will improve its ability to provide safe, reliable, and cost-effective electric service to its customers; and

WHEREAS, beginning in the Fall of 2023, through its membership with the Michigan Public Power Agency (MPPA), the City was in collaboration with St. Louis MI Affordable Solar, LLC (SLMAS) in the development of a 1.2 Megawatt (MW) solar generating facility (Project) located in Bethany Township which was proposed to have an interconnection with the City’s electric distribution system; and

WHEREAS, SLMAS secured the rights for use of at least one viable parcel of land for siting the 1.2 MW solar photovoltaic (PV) distributed energy resource (DER) for a period of not less than 25 years; and

WHEREAS, MPPA members, including the City, had impact studies performed by GRP Engineering to determine if the proposed interconnection with the City’s distribution system would result in adverse impacts on the City’s system or its customers and GRP’s study concluded that, with the proposed system upgrades, there would be no adverse impacts; and

WHEREAS, parties including the City, MPPA, GRP Engineering and SLMAS reviewed and negotiated a proposed Interconnection Agreement (IA) with mutually acceptable terms; and

WHEREAS, parties including the City, MPPA and SLMAS and respective legal counsel reviewed and negotiated the terms of a proposed Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) in December of 2023 with mutually acceptable terms; and

WHEREAS, following the St. Louis City Council's adoption of Resolution 2023-26 on December 5, 2023, SLMAS submitted their final application for United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Powering Affordable Clean Energy (PACE) funding program, which included a loan (for the Project) with partial principal forgiveness; and

WHEREAS, USDA reached certain conclusions about the financial model, utilized to calculate the level of funding for the Project, including the requirement for a higher modeled maximum interest rate for the repayment portion of the loan and use of a more conservative projection of the total generated energy from the Project which prompted the adoption of Resolution 2025-03 in January of 2025 by the City; and

WHEREAS, developments since the adoption of Resolution 2025-03 have caused SLMAS to have significant concerns over the certainty of receiving USDA PACE funding as originally anticipated; to the extent they no longer plan to pursue Project funding through the PACE program; and

WHEREAS, the concerns over successfully receiving USDA PACE funding, including partial principal forgiveness, have prompted SLMAS to discontinue pursuit of funding the Project through this program and SLMAS has considered terms and conditions they are willing to offer without the previously anticipated USDA PACE program; and

WHEREAS, the result of changes to the anticipated funding is a revision of the **previously approved first-year cost of \$66.71/MWh** and a 0.75% annual escalator over a 25-year period **to a new first-year cost of \$100.50/MWh** and an annual escalator of 1% over the 25-year period; and

WHEREAS, for a third time, MPPA staff has performed an updated mark-to-market analysis of the financial terms of the most recently proposed PPA along with other potential benefits and finds the proposed cost is **no longer favorable** to the City over the term of the PPA; and

WHEREAS, the City Manager and City Clerk were previously authorized to execute and enter Interconnection and Power Purchase Agreements (IA and PPA) on the City's behalf by Resolutions 2023-26 and 2025-03, however, neither of these agreements have been executed and City staff members now recommend declining the current offer and discontinuing efforts to participate in the Project in its current form as it is no longer in the City's best financial interest; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT: the St. Louis City Council does hereby rescind Resolutions 2023-26 and 2025-03 and discontinues participating in the SLMAS - 1.2 MW Solar DER Project which was proposed in Bethany Township.

AYES: Hart, Palmer, Azzam, Hart, Leonard, Echtenaw

NAYS: None

Resolution Declared Adopted this 3rd day of March 2026

Resolution 2026-09

LOCAL GOVERNING BODY RESOLUTION FOR CHARITABLE GAMING LICENSES

Required by MCL.432.103(a)(i) (ii)

At a Regular meeting of the City of St. Louis Council called to order by Mayor Ralph Echtenaw on March 3, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. the following resolution was offered:

Moved by Azzam, and supported by Leonard, that the request from

St. Louis Recreational Baseball & Softball Inc. of the City of St. Louis County of Gratiot, asking that they be recognized

as a nonprofit organization operating in the community for the purpose of obtaining charitable gaming

licenses, be considered for Approval.

APPROVAL

Yeas: Azzam, Leonard, Hart, Palmer Echtenaw

Nays: None

Absent: None

DISAPPROVAL

Yeas: 0

Nays: 0

City Manager Report.

Manager Giles reported that there have been some discussions on the 2026 Farmers Market season schedule and Chief Ramereiz has been in contact with the schools regarding the bus routes on market days.

Giles reminded the council of the MPPA Stakeholder event on May 14th at Meijer Garden in Grand Rapids. The council is encouraged to attend if able.

Giles reported that the Aquatic Vegetation Management Pilot Program was approved at the county at their meeting this evening.

Giles reported that the annual chamber event is also in May. The Sprit of St. Louis will be awarded at this event.

City Clerk Report.

Nothing to report.

Police Chief Report.

Ramereiz reported that the two students at the police academy are doing well and looking forward to the warmer weather, which will allow them to get out of the classroom and out into the field more.

Council Comments.

Nothing to report.

Public Comments.

Adjournment.

Moved by Leonard supported by Azzam, to adjourn at 7:08p.m. All ayes carried the motion.

Jamie Long, City Clerk