

CITY COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS

St. Louis, Michigan
June 2, 2026

The regular meeting of the Saint Louis City Council was called to order by Mayor Ralph R. Echtenaw on Tuesday, June 2, 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: Valerie Kerr-resident, Josh Leppien- Economic Development Director, Keith Risdon-Utilities Director, Bart Stoneman-Greater Gratiot, Lance & Beth Templeton-residents, Todd & Amanda Brown-residents, Bill Coty-Fire Chief.

Mayor Echtenaw led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Leonard, to approve the agenda for June 2, 2026. All ayes carried the motion.

Public Hearing-Public Safety Special Assessment Renewal.

Mayor Ralph R. Echtenaw opened the Public Hearing at 6:01 p.m. and asked for public comments.

** A letter mailed to Clerk Long from M. Khan at 713 Wilson Blvd. was read aloud right before Resolution 2026-11 was adopted.

Mayor Ralph R. Echtenaw closed the Public Hearing at 6:02 p.m.

City Council Minutes.

Moved by Palmer, supported by Azzam to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on May 19, 2026. All ayes carried the motion.

Claims & Accounts.

City Council discussed the Claims & Accounts.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Hart, to approve the Claims & Accounts in the amount of \$556,619.80. All ayes carried the motion.

Monthly Board Minutes.

City Council discussed the May 2026 Monthly Board Minutes.

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

Audience Recognition.

Bart Stoneman of Greater Gratiot gave a brief presentation and handout on the Gratiot County Millage Renewals for the Commission on Aging and Agricultural and Economic Development Services that will be on the ballot in August.

Consent Agenda.

Mayor Echinaw requested approval/receipt of Consent Agenda items “a” through “f” as shown below:

- a. Change Order #5-Malley Construction for the DWSRF Grant Construction Project.
- b. Payment Alpine Power Systems for purchase and installation of a new battery bank and charging system.
- c. Payment to BioTech Agronomics for Biosolids Disposal.
- d. Payment to Cummins Sales and Service for Union Street Pump Station Generator Purchase.
- e. Payment to HACH for ORP Instrumentation for the Anerobic Selector.
- f. Payment to RS Technical Services, Inc. for Flow Sensor & Transmitter for WWTP.

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

Contract Adjustment for Construction Oversight Services.

Manager Giles requested members to increase the budget for Construction Oversight Services performed by ROWE on the DWSRF 2024 Grant Project by \$40,000.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Palmer, supported by Hart, to increase the budget for Construction Oversight Services performed by ROWE on the DWSRF 2024 Grant Project by \$40,000. All ayes carried the motion.

St. Louis Cemetery Expansion Proposal.

Manager Giles Requested members to approve the proposal from Spicer for the survey phase of the expansion of the Oak Grove Cemetery in the amount of \$6,900 and the preliminary design phase at not to exceed an amount of \$12,000.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Leonard, to approve the proposal from Spicer for the survey phase of the expansion of the Oak Grove Cemetery in the amount of \$6,900 and the preliminary design phase at an amount not to exceed \$12,000. All ayes carried the motion.

Decorative Streetlight LED Fixtures.

Manager Giles requested members to approve the quote for 6 Streetlight LED fixtures from Border States, in the amount of \$8,421.48.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Hart, supported by Palmer, to approve the quote for 6 Streetlight LED fixtures from Border States, in the amount of \$8,421.48.

Resolution 2026-10-Charitable Gaming License.

At a Regular meeting of the City of St. Louis Council called to order by Mayor Ralph Echtenaw on June 2, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. the following resolution was offered:

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

Gratiot Animals in Need 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.

Upon roll call vote, the following voted:

AYE: Leonard, Hart, Azzam, Palmer, Echtenaw

NAY: None

ABSENT: None

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

Public Comments:

A letter mailed to Clerk Long from M. Khan at 713 Wilson Blvd., opposing the Special Assessment increase, was read aloud by Clerk Long.

Todd Brown, a resident at 412 South Lincoln, spoke in opposition to the Special Assessment increase.

Resolution 2026-11-Public Safety Assessment.

Minutes of a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of St. Louis, County of Gratiot, State of Michigan, held in the City on June 2, 2026, at 6:00 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time.

PRESENT: Mayor Ralph Echtenaw, Ferris Azzam, William Leonard, Kevin Palmer, Robin Hart

ABSENT: None

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Member Azzam and supported by Member Leonard :

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of St. Louis, County of Gratiot, State of Michigan, has established the St. Louis Fire and Police Special Assessment District pursuant to Act 33, Public Acts of Michigan, 1951, as amended, for the purpose of financing eligible costs and expenses of fire and police protection, including motor vehicles, apparatus, equipment, housing and operations; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has reviewed the estimated costs and expenses of providing fire and police protection for the 2026 fiscal year and has caused a special assessment roll to be prepared for the distribution of such costs within the District; and

WHEREAS, after providing notice as required by law, the City Council conducted a public hearing on June 2, 2026, to hear comments and objections concerning the estimated costs and the distribution of the proposed special assessment levy; and

WHEREAS, the City Council deems said special assessment roll and special assessment levy to be fair and equitable.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The special assessment roll attached hereto as Exhibit A shall be designated “2026 St. Louis Fire and Police Special Assessment Roll” (the “Roll”) is hereby confirmed and approved.
2. The total amount to be assessed and levied against property within the District is \$161,320.90, representing a levy of 2.25 mills.
3. The City Treasurer is hereby directed to place the assessment upon the tax roll and collect the assessment in the same manner and at the same time as City property taxes are collected.
4. All revenues derived from the special assessment shall be deposited into the City’s

Public Safety Special Revenue Fund and used solely for the purposes authorized under Act 33

5. All resolutions and parts of resolutions in conflict with this Resolution are hereby repealed to the extent of such conflict.

AYES: Azzam, Leonard, Hart, Palmer, Echtenaw

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

Set Public Hearing for 2026/2027 Budget Adoption.

Manager Giles requested members to set the public hearing for Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers to take public comment on the proposed 2026/2027 budget.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Leonard, supported by Palmer, to set the public hearing for Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers to take public comment on the proposed 2026/2027 budget. All ayes carried the motion.

Set Public Hearing for Amending Budget for Year 2025/2026.

Manager Giles requested members to set the public hearing for Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers to take public comment on the proposed amendments for budget year 2025/2026.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Palmer, supported by Leonard, to set the public hearing for Tuesday, June 16, 2026, at 6:00 p.m. in the City Council Chambers to take public comment on the proposed amendments for budget year 2025/2026. All ayes carried the motion.

Replacement of Emission Monitoring Equipment for Engine 8.

Manager Giles requested members to approve the replacement of the emissions monitoring equipment for Generating Unit 8 from Farabee Mechanical Equipment in the amount of \$11,874.08.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Palmer, supported by Leonard, to approve the replacement of the emissions monitoring equipment for Generating Unit 8 from Farabee Mechanical Equipment in the amount of \$11,874.08.

City Manager Report.

Manager Giles reported that Chief Richard Ramereiz was recently honored as the Child Advocate of the Year.

Manager Giles reported that crews did a great job getting everything ready throughout the city, going into Memorial Weekend, especially with all the extra work that had to be done after the storm.

Manager Giles reported that the pool is getting back to working order and the opening is expected to be next week.

Manager Giles reported that Flag Day will be June 15th at 7p.m on the back deck of City Hall.

City Clerk Report.

Clerk Long reported that a resident did file a declaration of intent to run in November as a write-in.

Police Chief Report.

Nothing to report.

Council Comments.

Member Hart thanked both the City of Alma and St. Louis for their collaboration on the Hazardous Waste program. Hart stated that this service is very useful to her and other residents in both of these cities.

Member Palmer asked for updates on the MSDHA Community Development Block Grant. Josh Leppien gave an update, stating Tony Miller, the Gratiot County Building Inspector, has already done 10 inspections so far and. Over 90 applications were received from St. Louis residents in total, with 40 homes being approved. The process is moving along, and the grant does not expire until December of 2027.

Public Comments.

Several school aged children asked if the city was going to close the pool. Member Palmer explained the city is just doing repairs to get it up and running.

Valerie Kerr, a resident of 202 Devon Drive, commented on the overpopulation of deer within the city and asked if anything could be done. Chief Ramereiz informed Kerr that he had done some research in the past and found that the management of the deer population is controlled by the State of Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Ramereiz reported that deer eating vegetation around the city is not enough to get the DNR involved, and the number of deer-car accidents is not even close to the level required for the DNR to warrant any action at this time.

Adjournment.

Moved by Leonard, supported by Azzam to adjourn at 6:54 p.m. All ayes carried the motion.

Jamie Long, City Clerk