CITYCOUNCILPROCEEDINGS

St. Louis, Michigan
October 6, 2026

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

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

Council Members Absent: None

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

Others in Attendance: Josh Leppien- Economic Development Director, Keith Risdon-Utilities Director, Lou Fleury-OHM, Brady Harrington-Spicer Group and Kasey Zehner-Great Gratiot.

Mayor Echtinaw led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Agenda.

Moved by Palmer, supported by Leonard, to approve the agenda for October 6, 2026. All ayes carried the motion.

Public Hearing-Establishing an O.P.R.A District.

Mayor Ralph R. Echtinaw opened the public hearing at 6:01 p.m. and asked for public comments.

Kasey Zehner of Greater Gratiot gave a brief presentation on the property located at 137 North Mill.

Mayor Ralph R. Echtinaw closed the public hearing at 6:03 p.m.

City Council Minutes.

Moved by Palmer, supported by Hart, to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting held on September 15, 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 $1,921,630.876 All ayes carried the motion.

Monthly Board Minutes.

City Council discussed the September 2026 Monthly Board Minutes.

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

Audience Recognition.

There were no comments.

Consent Agenda.

Mayor Echtinaw requested approval/receipt of Consent Agenda items "a" through "e" as shown below:

a. Payment to Crawford Contracting for Construction Improvements-DWSRF Loan Project.
b. Payment to Malley Construction for the DWSRF Grant Construction Project.
c. Payment to OHM for Consultant Construction Engineering Services for the DWSRF Grant Project I, Phase II.
d. Payment to Rite-Way Asphalt-2026 Summer Paving.
e. Payment to Verdantas for Fiber Optic Communication System Expansion.

Moved by Hart, supported by Leonard, to approve Consent Agenda items "a" through "e". All ayes carried the motion.

Proposal for Cemetery Expansion Revision.

Manager Giles requested members to approve the revision of the cost proposal from Spicer Group for the cemetery expansion, amending phase 2 preliminary design cost from the approved $12,000 cost to $18,000 and approve the phase 3 design cost of $8,000.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Palmer, supported by Hart, to approve the revision of the cost proposal from Spicer Group for the cemetery expansion, amending phase 2 preliminary design cost from the approved $12,000 cost to $18,000 and approve the phase 3 design cost of $8,000. All ayes carried the motion.

Quote for Reconditioning Exciter Motors for Hydro Generators.

Manager Giles requested members to approve the repairs of #5 and #6 hydro generators from York Repairs, in the amount of $13,582.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Hart, supported by Leonard, to approve the repairs of #5 and #6 hydro generators from York Repairs, in the amount of $13,582. All ayes carried the motion.

Street Closure-Homecoming Parade.

Chief Ramereiz requested members to approve the street closure on Friday, October 9, 2026 for the annual Homecoming Parade.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Hart, to approve the street closure on Friday, October 9, 2026 for the annual Homecoming Parade. All ayes carried the motion.

Resolution 2026-20-Obsolete Property Rehabilitation for 137 North Mill Street.

PRESENT: Azzam, Hart, Leonard, Palmer, Echtinaw
ABSENT: None

The following preamble and resolution were offered by Palmer and supported by Azzam.

WHEREAS, pursuant to PA 146 of 2000, the City of St. Louis is a Qualified Local Governmental Unit eligible to establish one or more Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Districts; and
WHEREAS, the City of St. Louis legally established the Obsolete Property Rehabilitation District 137 North Mill Street on August 18, 2026 after a public hearing held on August 18, 2026 and

WHEREAS, the taxable value of the property proposed to be exempt plus the aggregate taxable value of property already exempt under Public Act 146 of 2000 and under Public Act 198 of 1974 (IFT's) does not exceed 5% of the total taxable value of the City of St. Louis; and
WHEREAS, the applicant, 137 N Mills Street has provided answers to all required questions under the application instructions to the City of St. Louis; and

WHEREAS, the City of St. Louis requires that rehabilitation of the facility shall be completed by December 30, 2027; and

WHEREAS, the commencement of the rehabilitation of the facility did not occur before the establishment of the Obsolete Property Rehabilitation District; and

WHEREAS, the application relates to a rehabilitation program that when completed constitutes a rehabilitated facility within the meaning of Public Act 146 of 2000 and that is situated within an Obsolete Property Rehabilitation District established in the City of St. Louis eligible under Public Act 146 of 2000 to establish such a district; and

WHEREAS, completion of the rehabilitated facility is calculated to, and will at the time of issuance of the certificate, have the reasonable likelihood to increase commercial activity, create employment, retain employment, and increase the number of residents in the community in which the facility is situated; and

WHEREAS, the rehabilitation includes improvements aggregating 10% or more of the true cash value of the property at commencement of the rehabilitation as provided by section 2(l) of Public Act 146 of 2000.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of St. Louis
Be and hereby is granted an Obsolete Property Rehabilitation Exemption for the real property, excluding land, located in Obsolete Property Rehabilitation District at 137 N Mill St. for a period of 12 years, beginning December 31, 2026, and ending December 30, 2038, pursuant to the provisions of PA 146 of 2000, as amended.

AYES: Palmer, Azzam, Hart, Leonard, Echtinaw
NAYS: None

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

Quote for Transmission for Truck #20.

Manager Giles requested that members to approve the removal and replacement of truck #20's transmission from Alma Chrysler and Jasper Engines in an amount not to exceed $8,000.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Hart, to approve the removal and replacement of truck #20's transmission from Alma Chrysler and Jasper Engines in in an amount not to exceed $8,000. All ayes carried the motion.

North Union Street Lift Station Proposal.

Manager Giles requested members to approve the cost proposal Project Supplement No. 25, Phase 1-Planning for the North Union Street Lift Station from OHM, in the amount of $32,570.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Hart, supported by Leonard, to approve the cost proposal Project Supplement No. 25, Phase 1-Planning for the North Union Street Lift Station from OHM, in the amount of $32,570. All ayes carried the motion.

DPW Heat and Insulation Quote.

Manager Giles requested members to approve the quote for the installation of heat and insulation in the DPW back cold storage area from Powells and R-Value Form, in the amount of $36,820.77.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Palmer, to approve the quote for the installation of heat and insulation in the DPW back cold storage area from Powells R-Value Foam, in the amount of $36,820.77. All ayes carried the motion.

Casting Ballot for MML Board of Director Candidates.

Manager Giles recommended casting a ballot to elect George Bosanic and Valerie Kindle to the Michigan Municipal League Board of Directors for three-year terms beginning in January 2027.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Leonard, to cast a ballot to elect George Bosanic and Valerie Kindle to the Michigan Municipal League Board of Directors for three-year terms beginning in January 2027. All ayes carried the motion.

Resolution 2026-21-Medical Benefits Certification.

Present: Azzam, Hart, Leonard, Palmer, Echtinaw
Absent: None

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

WHEREAS, the Publicly Funded Health Insurance Contribution Act, 2011 Public Act 152, as amended, MCL 15.561 et seq. ("Act 152"), establishes limitations on the amount a public employer may contribute toward the annual cost of employee medical benefit plans; and

WHEREAS, Section 4 of Act 152, MCL 15.564, permits a public employer, by a majority vote of its governing body each year prior to the beginning of the medical benefit plan coverage year, to elect an alternative to the limitations established under Section 3 of Act 152; and

WHEREAS, under the Section 4 alternative, a public employer may pay not more than eighty percent (80%) of the total annual costs of the medical benefit plans it offers or contributes to for its employees and elected public officials, with the remaining costs allocated as provided by Act 152; and

WHEREAS, the City Council of the City of St. Louis has determined that it is in the best interest of the City to elect the 80%/20% option under Section 4 of Act 152 for the upcoming medical benefit plan coverage year;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of St. Louis hereby elects to comply with Section 4 of the Publicly Funded Health Insurance Contribution Act, 2011 Public Act 152, as amended, by adopting the 80%/20% employer health care cost option for the medical benefit plan coverage year beginning January 1, 2027 and ending December 31, 2027.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this election shall apply to the City's medical benefit plans and shall be administered in accordance with the requirements of Act 152.

Upon roll call vote, the following voted:
AYE: Hart, Palmer, Leonard, Azzam, Echtinaw
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

Resolution declared adopted this 6th day of October 2026.

Resolution 2026-22-Resoluton to File Petition to Abandon A Portion of a Drain.

PRESENT: Mayor Ralph Echtinaw, Mayor Pro Tem Bill Leonard, Kevin Palmer, Fares Azzam and Robin Hart

ABSENT: None

The following resolution was offered by Leonard and seconded by Azzam.

WHEREAS, the #199 Drain is a legally established county drain pursuant to Public Act 40 of 1956, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the portion of the drain to be abandoned is located and established within the City of St. Louis; and

WHEREAS, an inspection of the area where the drain is established shows that the portion of the drain has ceased to be of public utility and is no longer conducive to the public health, convenience, and welfare.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the St. Louis City Council does authorize the filing of a petition for the abandonment of a portion of the drain.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Manager is authorized to execute the petition for the abandonment of a portion of the drain.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk shall forward to the Gratiot County Drain Commissioner a copy of this Resolution for the petition for the abandonment of a portion of the drain.

Upon roll call vote, the following voted:
AYE: Leonard, Azzam, Hart, Palmer, Echtinaw
NAY: None
ABSENT: None

Resolution declared adopted this 6th day of October 2026.

Award Contract for Demolition of 117 South East Street.

Manager Giles requested that members approve the award of the contract for the demolition of 117 South East Street to Bierlein in the amount of $56,700.

Discussion was held.

Moved by Azzam, supported by Leonard, to approve the award of the contract for the demolition of 117 South East Street to Bierlein in the amount of $56,700. All ayes carried the motion.

City Manager Report.
Manager Giles reported that the city was notified that the franchise with Consumers Energy is coming to expiration. Currently there is very limited electric service from Consumer to residents. Giles is doing research and there will be more information to come.

City Clerk Report.

Clerk Long reported that Ben March has decided not to pursue a City Council seat as a write-in candidate

Police Chief Report.

Nothing to report.

Council Comments.

Member Hart commented on the great job DPW did with her brush pickup.

Public Comments.

There were none.

Adjournment.

Moved by Leonard, supported by Azzam to adjourn at 7:14 p.m. All ayes carried the motion.

Jamie Long, City Clerk