

**City of Olivet**  
**Public Hearing & Regular Council Minutes**  
**May 12, 2025 – 6:30 p.m.**

**Council Call to Order**

Present: Mayor Laura Barlund-Maas and Commissioners Don Walker, Joseph Davis, Gary Peterson, and James Frohm.

Absent: Joe Hoffdahl and Larry Marsh.

Marsh arrived at 6:45 p.m.

**Public Hearing – Ordinance Amendments**

Mayor Laura Barlund-Maas announced two public hearings: the first is regarding the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) offered by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC), and the second is the City of Olivet's 2025/26 Proposed Budget.

Wightman & Associates Engineer Mickey Bittner stated that he discussed a (CDBG) opportunity with DPW Director Jerry Staggs and Clerk/Treasurer Amy Huepenbecker, and it would benefit the City of Olivet. The proposed project includes improvements to Summer, Winter, and Spring Streets. The existing water main will be replaced with a new water main. All hydrants will be replaced, and new hydrants will be added. New water service connections will be installed for each property. The sanitary sewer on the easement between Summer and Spring Streets will be replaced, and a new storm sewer will be installed throughout the project. The roadways will be fully reconstructed. Gaps in sidewalks will be filled in, and damaged sidewalks will be replaced; all sidewalk ramps will be brought into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requirements. All driveway approaches will be replaced with concrete. New signs and pavement markings will be installed, and all disturbed areas from the project will be restored. Bittner said the cost estimate for this project is \$ 2.809 M. He said this grant has a minimum of \$500,000 and a maximum of \$ 2.5 M. Bittner said this is a competitive grant only available to communities that meet the criteria for low/moderate income as determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) using the latest census data. He confirmed that the City does qualify, with 59.8% of the community meeting the low/moderate income criteria. Bittner stated that no match is required for this grant, but the grant is scored using points and said that if the City contributes a match of 11% to 24%, it would qualify for ten points, or if the City puts in a match of 25% or more, it would qualify for fifteen points. After reviewing the scoring criteria process for this grant, he suggested that the City put in an 11% match to help remain competitive. Bittner stated that an 11% match would be \$309,000.00, and the application is due May 30. Bittner stated that several items on the agenda today pertain to the application requirements, such as a Community Development Plan and a Displacement Plan that he has provided. Bittner asked if there were any questions.

Commissioner Gary Peterson asked Bittner if he had met with Eaton County regarding the County drain that is part of this project. Bittner said that a new storm sewer will be installed throughout the project, which is part of a County drain, and work would be coordinated with the Drain Commissioner. Peterson asked about the need for a retention pond with all the new storm sewers being installed. Bittner said there is not enough real estate for a retention pond, but he envisions installing catch basins behind the curb and gutter down the lawn areas with open tops to drain. City resident Joanne Williams asked if the funds for this grant are in jeopardy of being eliminated. Bittner stated that the funds for this CDBG are just under \$25 M, which allows a maximum of nine or

ten fully funded projects statewide. Williams asked if the City does not receive the grant, how are the problems that are listed in the grant application going to be fixed? Mayor Barlund-Maas said the other question to be asked is whether it is mandatory that the repairs be completed now, and if the answer is yes, the cost would fall to the City. Mayor Barlund-Maas asked if there were further questions regarding the CDBG.

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that the next public hearing is regarding the City of Olivet's proposed 2025/26 budget.

Peterson asked about Kelly Hanna's title. Huepenbecker said Hanna is a Government Accountant who serves as the accountant for the City of Olivet. He also asked what the administrative fee on the budget is and what that encompasses. Huepenbecker explained that this fee covers the paperwork that is performed by the City Hall employees for the water/sewer department. Peterson stated that the budget shows \$76,000.00 for professional services, and he asked how much of this is going to Hanna at Plante Moran. Huepenbecker stated that professional services include not only Plante Moran but also several companies that provide services to the City, such as I.T. Right and T.H. Eiffert, to name a few. Peterson said he would like Huepenbecker to get him the percentage of funds that are paid to Plante Moran and what services they provide to the City. Huepenbecker explained all the accounting services that Hanna provides to the City and each of its departments, such as department budgets, budgets for grants, and capital improvements, to name a few. Peterson said that he does not agree that water/sewer should have to pay 1/3 of its professional services budget to Plante Moran. Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that the City would look at the redistribution of the funds and asked if anyone had questions regarding the City of Olivet 2025/26 Budget before moving on to the regular Council Meeting. Peterson stated he did not believe we were increasing the rates of water/sewer enough to keep up with rising costs. He said he has talked with engineers, and they said there should be at least a 3% increase in water/sewer annually.

### **Visitors' Section:**

Eaton County Commissioner Jim Mott stated that he would like to give an update regarding the Eaton County millage that was turned down. He said there will no longer be a Sheriff Department road patrol or animal control. Seventy-four deputies will be terminated along with other employees, and hours of operation will be reevaluated. He said the County would be talking to Delta Township regarding terminating the contract that has been in place between them. He explained that the County will look at what departments need to be retained and what cuts will be made to balance the budget. Mott also announced that Olivet received the Eaton County Parks Grant.

Commissioner Don Walker asked Mott if the Michigan State Police (MSP) would step in regarding road patrol. Mott said that MSP did say that they would step up by placing an additional three MSP patrols during the day hours and two additional MSP patrols in the evening.

Police Chief Shawn Garcia asked if the current county road patrol would continue through September. Mott stated that it could end before that date, depending on staffing. Garcia asked for clarity on the contract between Eaton County and Delta Township. Garcia said that on the evening of May 6, Mott had made a comment to the Lansing State Journal stating the Delta Township road patrol would not continue. Mott explained that the contract would end with Delta Township, but out of courtesy, Eaton County will meet with Delta Township and hear their concerns. Garcia asked Mott if there had been conversations with Lansing Township or other police departments that would provide coverage to Delta Township. Mott said there have been conversations, but Lansing Township said they would not be able to provide coverage in that area due to being short-staffed. Mott said that Delta Township will have to have some sort of contract of coverage of their own by State Law, as they are a township. Commissioner Joe Davis asked how many MSP units are normally patrolling Eaton County now, and

how many Eaton County units are patrolling now. Mott said that he would have to get the information for Davis. Davis asked Mott if the road patrol was gone forever or if there was a chance that it would come back in the future. Mott stated that more than likely, road patrol would be gone forever unless the economy improves significantly. Discussion took place regarding upcoming millages for 2026.

Olivet Chamber of Commerce Representative Michael Montague informed the Council that Olivet Chamber of Commerce President Jamie Kita has stepped down. Montague stated that the Chamber had met last week and decided to disband the Olivet Chamber of Commerce due to the lack of support from the community. Montague informed the Council that there will be a Facebook group called the "Olivet Hometown Hub" that has gotten some response, and hopefully, some events like Oli-Ween and some new events could happen with the help of volunteers in the community.

Montague stated that he discovered that his grandfather and uncle's names are on the Memorial at the park and asked for the Council's permission to plant flowers at the base of the Memorial. Staggs stated that the Olivet FFA would be putting mulch around the base of the Memorial on Friday and asked Montague if he could work around the mulch.

### **Approval of Agenda**

**MOTION** by Peterson, supported by Marsh, to approve the agenda. Motion carried 6-0.

### **Approval of Previous Minutes**

**MOTION** by Walker, supported by Frohm, to approve the April 14, 2025, minutes as written. Motion carried 6-0.

**OLD BUSINESS:** None.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

#### **A. Seasonal Inspiration Gift Shop Sidewalk Use – Action Item**

Seasonal Inspiration Gift Shop Owner Jamie Kita asked for the Council's permission to use the City sidewalks to host a Summer Market on Main every Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., June through September. She provided the Council with a map showing the proposed areas where the market would take place. Kita said the market would aim to bring new energy and engagement to Main Street during the slower summer season while providing a platform for local vendors, artisans, and small businesses to gain exposure. She said all vendors will be responsible for their own space and cleanup, and appropriate licenses, liability insurance, and waivers will be secured. Walker asked about the fee to have a booth. Kita said it is \$10.00 per booth per week or \$150.00 per booth for the season. Commissioner Larry Marsh asked if the market would take place during the Firefighters Festival. Kita said that the vendors were set up at Memorial Park last year during the festival, but would like to use the sidewalk. Davis asked if there were booths set up on the sidewalks during Oli-Ween. Kita said that some college groups and other organizations had tables set up on the sidewalk during Oli-Ween. Davis said that using the sidewalk during Oli-Ween worked out well. Davis asked about the sidewalk clearance requirements. Kita stated that the booths will be kept within the clearance requirement per the Olivet Ordinance. Davis asked what the average attendance of vendors was last year for the Farmers Market, and if she expected them to participate in the Summer Market on Main. Kita said the average was five vendors per week, depending on harvest times and the competition with Marshall as they also hold a Farmers Market on Saturday throughout the

Summer. Peterson suggested that the Council would need to approve this request every year. He thanked Kita for all she does for the City and community. Davis suggested that booth spaces near the Nelson building be used first. Kita said that was her plan.

**MOTION** by Frohm, supported by Peterson, to approve the request from Seasonal Inspirations to use City sidewalks for the Summer Market on Main every Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. from June to September. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **B. Community Development Plan – Action Item**

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that the Community Development Plan works to support the Community Development Block Grant application. Walker asked Staggs how many of the city's hydrants have a rating of 1500 gallons per minute (GPM). Staggs said there are some on Main Street and around The University of Olivet.

**MOTION** by Walker, supported by Peterson, to approve the Community Development Plan as written. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **C. Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan – Action Item**

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that the Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan works to support the Community Development Block Grant application.

**MOTION** by Marsh, supported by Peterson, to approve the Residential Anti-Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan as written. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **D. Resolution 25-05 CBDG Application – Action Item**

**MOTION** by Frohm, supported by Davis, to approve Resolution 25-05. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **E. Resolution 25-03 2025-2026 Proposed Budget – Action Item**

**MOTION** by Walker, supported by Frohm, to approve Resolution 25-03 to adopt the proposed FY 25-26 budget. Council approved the motion with the understanding that answers will be given to their questions at the next Council Meeting. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **F. Resolution 25-04 Millage – Action Item**

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that Resolution 25-04 is a standard procedure to establish the levy and authorize the collection of taxes, penalties, and fees for fiscal year 25/26. Walker asked why the millage rates have continued to decrease from 14.2955 in 2024 to 13.8308 in 2025, and when the millage will go back to 15.000 mills. City Assessor Jason Kohagen said when a parcel sells, it uncaps the assessable taxable value the following year. Total sales in Olivet last year had a \$785,525 increase in taxable value based on sales. The city's taxable value increased 11%, and the inflation rate set by the State is 3.1% this year, causing the rollback of the millage. Walker said that the rate could be raised in 2028 to 15.000 mills by a vote of the people.

**MOTION** by Marsh, supported by Peterson, to approve Resolution 25-04. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **G. F-550 Repair – Action Item**

Staggs stated that the F-550 needs front-end work, and he provided a quote from King's Auto for \$1,040.09.

**MOTION** by Frohm, supported by Peterson, to hire King's Automotive to make the front-end repairs on the F-550 at a cost not to exceed \$1040.09. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **H. John Deere Purchase FY 25/26 – Action Item**

Staggs stated at last month's Council Meeting that the John Deere that includes a street sweeper needed to be replaced as it has outlived its life. He provided a quote from John Deere for a new John Deere with a sweeper for \$56,212.99. Peterson asked if the plow would fit on this new John Deere. Staggs said he would try to make the old plow fit. Staggs said that there is no comparison between the Hako street sweeper that he presented to the Council last month versus the John Deere. He said he liked the size and the capabilities of the Hako, but he understands that the extra \$50,000.00 for the Hako is not feasible. Staggs said the new proposed John Deere is the same as the old 2006 John Deere that has lasted for thirty years. He said the John Deere is not a vacuum sweeper like the Hako, but it will sweep, and the DPW will have to pick up the debris.

**MOTION** by Peterson, supported by Frohm, to purchase the John Deere with sweeper at a cost not to exceed \$56,212.99. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **I. Fire Station Repair – Action Item**

Staggs stated that the Fire Station needs drywall repairs in the bathrooms and the training room due to a past roof leak. He provided a quote from Kingdom Builders for \$6,550.00. Staggs informed the Council that there is only enough money in the budget to repair the bathrooms or the training room. Discussion took place regarding getting another quote, the timing of the project, and splitting the repairs between fiscal years. Staggs will talk to Kingdom Builders regarding doing one project in each fiscal year.

**MOTION** by Davis, supported by Marsh, to hire Kingdom Builders to make the repairs on the Fire Station. One repair is to be made in FY 24/25, and the second repair is to be made in FY 25/26 for a combined total not to exceed \$6,550.00. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **J. Fire Department Nozzle Purchase – Action Item**

Fire Commissioner Walker stated that nozzles need to be purchased for the new pumper truck, and he provided the Council with a quote from Conway Shield for \$8,039.00. He said the nozzles would be reimbursed by the State as part of the grant for the truck.

**MOTION** by Walker, supported by Marsh, to purchase the nozzles from Conway Shield for an amount not to exceed \$8,039.00 with a budget amendment to the Capital Fund. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **K. Police Department Charger Repair – Action Item**

Police Chief Garcia stated that the Dodge Charger needs a head gasket replaced, and he provided the Council with a quote from King's Auto for \$3,921.72 that includes lifters and yokes, and Eagle Automotive for \$1,910.29 that does not include lifters and yokes.

**MOTION** by Davis, supported by Walker, to hire King's Auto to make the repairs as listed on the Dodge Charger at a cost not to exceed \$3,921.72. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **L. Police Department Dash Cam Purchase – Action Item**

Police Chief Garcia asked the Council's permission to purchase a dash cam for the Ford Explorer. He stated that the Police Department has money set aside to make the purchase, and he provided the Council with two quotes. Garcia informed the Council that both quotes are for the same equipment, but the quote from 10-8 Video includes a monitor. 10-8 Video does not link to the body cam but said the link feature is not a problem. He suggested purchasing the dash cam from 10-8 Video as the price is better.

**MOTION** by Davis, supported by Walker, to purchase a dash cam for the Ford Explorer from 10-8 Video at a cost not to exceed \$2,554.00. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **M. Police Department Dash Cam Installation – Action Item**

Police Chief Garcia provided an installation quote for the new dash cam from Crouch Communications, Inc. He stated that Crouch has always installed their equipment, and they will come to Olivet for the installation.

**MOTION** by Davis, supported by Walker, to hire Crouch Communications, Inc. to install the dash cam on the Ford Explorer at a cost not to exceed \$845.00. Motion carried 6-0.

#### **N. Police Department Docking Station Replacement – Action Item**

Police Chief Garcia stated that new docking stations will be needed in both police vehicles as County Dispatch is paying for the replacement of new laptops, modems, and antennas in each vehicle. The City of Olivet will be responsible for paying for the installation only. He provided the Council with a quote from Crouch Communications, Inc. for \$1,325.00 for both vehicles. Walker asked why the County is spending money to buy new equipment if Eaton County is disbanding its Sheriff's Department. Garcia said County Dispatch is buying the equipment, and they are funded by another department.

**MOTION** by Davis, supported by Marsh, to hire Crouch Communications, Inc. to install new docking stations along with the modem and antennas in both police vehicles at a cost not to exceed \$1,325.00. Motion carried 6-0.

## **O. Cemetery Buyback – Action Item**

Huepenbecker stated that a past resident, Kathy DePuit-Hoeth, currently residing in Illinois, called to inquire if the City would buy back four cemetery spaces that she no longer wants. Huepenbecker said the City does buy back cemetery spaces at the original purchase price, according to our Ordinance. She said the resident's name has changed a couple of times, and DePuit-Hoeth has provided the documentation needed to verify her identity.

**MOTION** by Peterson, supported by Frohm, to buy back four cemetery spaces from former resident DePuit-Hoeth at the original purchase price of \$600.00. Motion carried 6-0.

## **P. Attorney – Informational Item**

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that the personnel committee met regarding the four attorney proposals that the City received for consideration. She provided the Council with a comparison table for each of the attorneys, highlighting their experience, the services they would provide, and the cost. Mayor Barlund-Maas said the least expensive attorney is Harkness, PLLC in Okemos. This firm has the lower rate, is closer to Olivet, and has experience with small community municipalities like Eaton Rapids and Albion. Mayor Barlund-Maas asked the Council how it would like to proceed. Davis stated that he has received great informal references from Eaton Rapids employees regarding Harkness, PLLC. Peterson said that he would talk with the Eaton Rapids City Manager, Yvonne Ridge, for her opinion as well. Peterson stated that Foster Swift is a good law firm that represented the City at one time and has done a good job, but their large firm is expensive. Walker liked Harkness, PLLC, for size, location, and cost. Discussion took place regarding setting up a special meeting to speak with Harkness, PLLC, in person or remotely at their hourly rate.

**MOTION** by Walker, supported by Davis, to hire Harkness, PLLC, for the City Attorney. Motion carried 6-0.

## **Q. Fowl Ordinance Amendment – First Reading**

Mayor Barlund-Maas said this is the first reading of the proposed amended version of the Fowl Ordinance. She provided a copy of the proposed version to the Council and talked about the highlighted changes. She said the ordinance committee met a couple of times and discussed limiting the number of fowl to twelve, as it would be easier to raise the fowl limit rather than lower the limit. She also added that larger lots of a full acre could have 18 fowl. The committee agreed that fowl must be kept at least five feet from property lines and thirty feet from residential structures, and fowl must be kept within the total fenced enclosure. Mayor Barlund-Maas asked if anyone had comments or ideas. Discussion took place regarding adding "adjoining" verbiage to clarify residential or agricultural property where fowl could be kept, the term "grandfathered" put into context for this ordinance, and the number of fowl per parcel/acre.

## **PROJECT UPDATES:**

### **1. Ordinance Book Amendments**

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that she continues reading over the ordinances.

### **2. City Policies (Handbook) – Lexipol**

Huepenbecker informed the Council that she has not had the opportunity to continue to review policies, as the Eaton County Special Millage Election took precedence.

### **3. Police Department Policies – Lexipol**

Chief Garcia stated that he also has not had the opportunity to review department policies, as hiring a Police Chief took precedence.

### **4. Emergency Plan – City**

Huepenbecker stated that the department heads had a meeting today with Eaton County Emergency Manager Ryan Wilkinson. She received a draft of a Support Emergency Plan Operation (SEOP) for the City and reminded the Council to pick up their copy before they leave. She asked the Council to review the draft before the next meeting when Wilkinson will be in attendance. Huepenbecker stated that if there are no issues with the plan at the next meeting, the Council could approve the SEOP by resolution.

### **5. Fire Station Committee**

Fire Chief John Collins stated he and Chairman Mike Judd have a meeting set with The University of Olivet Vice President and Chief of Staff Ryan Shockey on Wednesday.

### **6. Compensation Committee**

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that Olivet Resident Joanne Williams has agreed to be on the compensation committee. Mayor Barlund-Maas asked if anyone has recommendations for another person; please reach out to her, as she would like to have a good representation from the City.

### **7. Event Form**

Davis stated that there have been small changes made to the event form.

### **8. Parks Master Plan**

Davis stated that there has been no change to report at this time. He hopes to present a draft at the June meeting for the Council's review.

### **9. Removal of Parking Spaces**

Staggs said that the DPW and Chief Garcia started on this project today, inserting the bases for the posts into the sidewalks.

### **10. Traffic Study – Engineering Firm**

Staggs said Wightman Engineer Mickey Bittner will be giving the City a quote for the comprehensive traffic study, including traffic calming measures.

## **Approval of the Bills**

**MOTION** by Peterson, supported by Frohm, to pay the bills as presented. Motion carried 6-0.

## **Department Head Reports**

**Police Chief Shawn Garcia** – Garcia stated that he currently has two interviews for the Chief position scheduled for this week on-site and a third interview scheduled remotely, as the candidate currently resides in Texas. Garcia said that he, along with Mayor Barlund-Maas, Davis, and Huepenbecker, will be conducting the interviews. Garcia informed the Council that the bi-monthly Chief's meetings will no longer be held at the Eaton County Sheriff's facilities. Municipalities will have to host these meetings to discuss mutual aid agreements and look for other resources and contacts due to no longer having Eaton County Sheriff patrols. He informed the Council that the Commander of the Lansing Police Department reached out to him to provide him with a couple of contacts for Emergency Response Teams and Accident Reconstruction Teams. The Commander will be addressing how Michigan State Police (MSP) will try to assist Eaton County.

**DPW Director Jerry Staggs** – Staggs stated that the DPW started putting up "No Parking" signs at The University of Olivet and is hoping to have them all installed this week, weather permitting. He said that painting the curbs yellow and striping white edges will be the priority in front of the Student Center, then down Cottage Street. Staggs informed the Council that the FFA students will be volunteering their time next week to mulch and seal playground equipment at Memorial Park, paint the Olivet City Hall sign and bricks at City Hall, and put flags out in the cemetery. Staggs said Northern Pump & Well found several issues when doing annual maintenance, and they have completed the repairs.

**Fire Chief John Collins** – Collins thanked the Council for truck #814. He said the truck is still not fully in service as they still need to install the hose, tools, etc., but should be ready in July. He said the truck fits closer than initially thought in the station, and extreme care needs to be taken when pulling the truck into the bay.

**Clerk/Treasurer Amy Huepenbecker** – Huepenbecker informed the Council that the Eaton County Special Millage Election was last week, and attendance was very slow, with approximately 57 people coming to City Hall to vote in person over 13 hours. She stated that she is working on the Community Development Block Grant, and Deputy Clerk Drema Emerson is preparing red tags as the water shut-off is Tuesday, May 13. Walker asked why the City Charter is not on the website. Huepenbecker said the Charter is from 1958 and outdated. Walker thought it should still be posted to the website with a disclaimer, as it still has relevant parts to it. Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that posting the Charter to the website might be confusing to residents. Walker said he would appreciate a copy of the Charter, and it is not necessary to post it to the website.

## **Commissioner Comments**

**Joe Hoffdahl** – Hoffdahl was absent.

**Joseph Davis** – Davis stated that he has a meeting with the Olivet Community School regarding the School Resource Officer (SRO) contract. He said there is one more year on the State Grant that funds the SRO position. He said the need to find a funding solution to continue to move forward with the SRO position after the year will be necessary.

**Don Walker** – Walker stated that he has nothing to add.

**Larry Marsh** – Marsh stated he had nothing to add.

**Gary Peterson** – Peterson said he is excited about the Community Development Block Grant now that the City falls into the low to moderate-income category and opens more grant opportunities for the City.

**James Frohm** – Frohm stated that the Firefighter’s Festival is fast approaching, and he thanked the residents for attending the meeting.

**Laura Barlund-Maas** – Barlund-Maas also thanked those who attended the meeting.

Council meeting adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

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Laura Barlund-Maas, Mayor

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Amy Huepenbecker, Clerk/Treasurer