

**City of Olivet
Regular Council Minutes
July 14, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.**

Council Call to Order

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

Absent: None.

Visitors' Section:

Eaton County Commissioner Jim Mott stated that the Eaton County Zoning Ordinance Committee/Board will be meeting with the townships next week to decide whether to move forward with a contract for zoning services. He said that some townships are not in favor of the \$15,000 flat fee for zoning services, and others are considering doing their own zoning.

Mott informed the Council that the Eaton County Parks Director has left, and Claudine Williams, Director of Intergovernmental Affairs and Development, will be the contact person until a new Parks Director is hired.

Mott said Eaton County will meet with Delta Township on Wednesday to agree on the language for the proposed contract for the Sheriff Department. He said if Delta Township agrees on the language, Eaton County would meet the following Wednesday at their board meeting to vote on the contract. Mott said if that vote passes, the contract will go to Delta Township's meeting on Monday, where they will vote. If Delta Township approves, the new contract will go into effect on October 1, 2025. He said if other townships or municipalities want to contract with Eaton County for Sheriff Department services, it would be based on this new contract.

Commissioner Don Walker asked Mott for clarification regarding his statement made at the June Council meeting regarding road patrol in the future. Mott stated there will not be a road patrol for out County, but for Delta Township per their contract. Eaton County will only be contracting for police services. Discussion took place regarding Delta Township's contract, road patrol/police services, and the number of Michigan State Police (MSP) to cover Eaton County.

Area resident Dan LaPoint asked the Council's permission to park his ice cream trailer in the City Hall parking lot during the Firefighters Festival on Saturday, July 26. Mayor Laura Barlund-Maas stated that, in the hope of the Council's approval, LaPoint has already paid the fee required. The Council agreed to approve the request.

Approval of Agenda

MOTION by Marsh, supported by Peterson, to approve the agenda. Motion carried 7-0.

Approval of Previous Minutes

MOTION by Walker, supported by Davis, to approve the June 9, 2025, minutes with the correction referencing Mott's statement to read: "Mott said that if the economy gets better, it's possible to have road patrol again in the future." Motion carried 7-0.

OLD BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Wightman Proposal - CDBG – Action Item

Wightman & Associates Engineer Mickey Bittner informed the Council that the City of Olivet was selected to continue with the application process for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for the improvements to Summer, Winter, and Spring Streets. He said the next step in the process is design engineering services and permitting, for which he provided a proposal to the City. Bittner stated that, should the City approve this proposal, the motion should be contingent upon approval of the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC). Commissioner Gary Peterson asked if Olivet received the grant. Bittner stated that the MEDC is clear that this is not a formal notice of approval, but a notice of intent, and it invites the City of Olivet to continue with the application process. Bittner explained that an agreement would not be in place until an environmental review, around November/December, is approved. Once approved, they would send an agreement between the MEDC and the City of Olivet for consideration, and that would be the actual award of the grant. Peterson asked if Eaton County had a cost for the County drain portion of the project. Bittner stated that there is nothing specific at this time, but there will be close coordination with the Eaton County Drain Commissioner when the time comes. Commissioner James Frohm asked if the grant is awarded, when could the City break ground on the project? Bittner explained the projected timelines for the project as listed in the proposal.

MOTION by Peterson, supported by Hoffdahl, to approve the proposal from Wightman & Associates that is contingent upon the approval of the MEDC. Motion carried 7-0.

B. University of Olivet Road Closures – Action Item

The University of Olivet Assistant Dean of Residence Life Dan Hayes requested specific road closures around the College Square for the following events:

Move-In Day is on Wednesday, August 20. Closing College and Cottage Streets from Main Street to Church Street and closing East and Church Streets between College and Cottage Streets. The closure is to start at 6:00 a.m.

Comet Fest is on Wednesday, September 17. Closing College and Cottage Streets from Main Street to Church Street and closing East and Church Streets between College and Cottage Streets. The closure is to start at 2:00 p.m.

Homecoming Block Party is on Saturday, September 27. Closing Cottage Street from Main Street to Church Street and East Street from College to Cottage Street. The closure is to start at 4:00 p.m.

Running Night is on Friday, January 23. Closing College and Cottage Streets from Main Street to Church Street and closing East Street between College and Cottage Streets around the Square. The closure is to start at 4:00 p.m.

Police Chief Shawn Garcia asked Hayes to provide a diagram/map of the road closures, dates, and times for each event to DPW Director Jerry Staggs and himself.

MOTION by Davis, supported by Hoffdahl, to approve The University of Olivet road closures as requested above, with diagram/map provided for each event to Chief Garcia and DPW Director Staggs. Motion carried 7-0.

C. Attorney Contract – Harkness Law Firm– Action Item

Mayor Laura Barlund-Maas stated that she and a few others had a meeting with an attorney representative from the Harkness Law Firm, PLLC. She said Harkness Law Firm, PLLC, has drawn up an attorney retainer agreement, which is provided in your Council packets for your consideration.

MOTION by Walker, supported by Peterson, to approve the attorney retainer agreement with the Harkness Law Firm, PLLC. Motion carried 7-0.

D. Main Street Bridge Weight Restriction Sign - Action Item

DPW Director Staggs stated that OHM Bridge Inspector Al Halbeisen had completed the bridge inspections for the Main Street bridge over Indian Creek and the College Street bridge over Indian Creek. Staggs said the College Street Bridge is good, but the inspection revealed stress areas on the underside of the Main Street Bridge. Inspector Halbeisen recommends that weight restriction signs be posted and that plans for replacement of the bridge superstructure be made in the future. Staggs suggested purchasing six weight restriction signs. He explained where the signs should be placed to give advanced warning of the restrictions allowing overweight vehicles to detour. Staggs informed the Council that Halbeisen said funding to replace the bridge is available. OHM can prepare a proposal for the City to assist with the preparation and submittal of the application for funding, which is due by the first of April. Mayor Barlund-Maas asked Staggs what he is hoping the Council approves tonight. Staggs said he needs approval to purchase and place the signs, as the signs are enforced through the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT).

MOTION by Hoffdahl, supported by Davis, to approve the purchase of weight limit signs for the bridge. Staggs will contact the Mayor with the estimate of the signs and the hardware. Motion carried 7-0.

E. Fowl Ordinance – Action Item

Mayor Barlund-Maas provided a copy of the amended Fowl Ordinance to the Council. She discussed the highlighted amendments made to © regarding the number of fowl, lot lines, and permits to comply with this ordinance. She discussed #2 and #6 under (a) regarding the verbiage “adjoining” and “adjacent” and asked the Council’s opinion. The Council agreed that the verbiage is good and to leave it as written. Commissioner Joe Davis suggested adding verbiage to the last line in (c) regarding lot lines and other requirements to be given one year to comply. Discussion took place regarding defining “grandfathered,” who would be responsible for permitting, the fee for permits, property inspections, and Davis’s suggestion to change the verbiage in (c). Mayor Barlund-Maas

stated that if the Council approves of the language in the Fowl Ordinance and there are no further changes, a Public Hearing would be scheduled for the August Council Meeting.

MOTION by Marsh, supported by Hoffdahl, to approve moving forward with the amended Fowl Ordinance as written and the Public Hearing. Motion carried 7-0.

After the motion was made, Davis stated that he still has concerns regarding the verbiage in (c). He said that he would speak to and encourage that one individual who would be affected to attend the Public Hearing. Davis said if the one individual is fine with (c), he would be fine as well.

PROJECT UPDATES:

1. Ordinance Book Amendments

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that the ordinance book is slow, but moving forward.

2. City Policies (Handbook) – Lexipol

Huepenbecker stated that there were no changes to report.

3. Police Department Policies – Lexipol

Chief Garcia stated that there were no changes to report.

4. Compensation Committee

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that she needs one more person for this committee.

5. Fire Station Committee

Fire Chief John Collins stated that Chairman Mike Judd is still looking into available property.

6. Parks Master Plan

Davis stated that the Parks Master Plan is completed and will be available for review at the August Council Meeting.

7. Event Form

Davis stated that there were no changes to report.

8. City of Olivet Signs

Staggs stated that The University of Olivet's Facility Director Chad Green will be looking into the sign situation.

9. Traffic Study

Staggs stated that Wightman & Associates Engineer Mickey Bittner has not had the opportunity to provide a quote for the traffic study. He asked the Council if they were still interested in pursuing the study. Discussion took place regarding the need for the study at this time or to continue the lines on the corners to include crosswalks and adjust parking spaces. Police Chief Garcia suggested that Staggs look at the downtown to evaluate parking spaces and crosswalks. Mayor Barlund-Maas asked that Garcia and Staggs evaluate the downtown area.

Approval of the Bills

MOTION by Marsh, supported by Hoffdahl, to pay the bills as presented. Motion carried 7-0.

Department Head Reports

Police Chief Shawn Garcia – Garcia stated that he has officially started the background check on the applicant for the Police Chief position. He said it would take approximately one month, and he will keep the Council updated.

DPW Director Jerry Staggs – Staggs stated the DPW has been busy painting parking lot lines, crosswalks, and parking spaces. He said the street sweeper will arrive on Wednesday. He added that the new John Deere tractor will be delivered this week or next.

Fire Chief John Collins – Collins went over the breakdown of the monthly fire reports. He said the Fire Department is busier than normal, and personnel are down to 21. Collins stated that out of the 21 personnel, two are medical only, and two are not yet trained. He said the Fire Department is always looking for new hires. Collins informed the Council that training continues on the new #814 truck. He suggested that Staggs be proactive and reach out to the County regarding gravel haulers and the weight restrictions on the Main Street bridge. Staggs said he would reach out to MDOT. Mayor Barlund-Maas asked who had information regarding the Firefighters Festival. Collins stated that he had hoped that the Fire Association President Justin Southern would be at the meeting to update the Council. Police Chief Garcia said that Southern contacted him and asked that he inform the Council that there were no changes to the parade route or barricades needed for the Firefighters Festival. Garcia stated that he will coordinate the routes and barricades, etc., with Staggs and Southern. Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that the Council normally approves the City to rent port-a-potties for the festival, but no one has asked. Collins asked if the Fire Association could acquire the port-a-potties and ask for reimbursement from the City. Mayor Barlund-Maas said that would be a good idea. Garcia asked if the Council agreed with placing the temporary no-parking signs in the downtown area from 6:00 a.m. until the parade ended, as they have in previous years.

Clerk/Treasurer Amy Huepenbecker – Huepenbecker informed the Council that the office is busy taking water and tax payments. She said she continues with grant paperwork, and hopefully, she can start rolling out Lexipol policies to the department heads next week. She asked if the Fire Association needs road closures for the festival, parade, and car show. Mayor Barlund-Maas said that road closure approval is needed for the following:

- ✓ The festival - East Street from Green Street to Main Street. Green Street to remain open.
- ✓ The parade - First Street to Main Street to Yale Street and end back at the school.
- ✓ The car show - East, College, and Cottage Streets around the College Square.

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that if there is something that has not been approved, the person in charge will have to talk to her.

MOTION by Walker, supported by Frohm, to approve the road closures for the Firefighters Festival as listed above. Motion carried 7-0.

Commissioner Comments

Joe Hoffdahl – Hoffdahl thanked the employees for their hard work.

Joseph Davis – Davis informed the Council that the head gasket repair on the Dodge Charger that was approved in May ended up being an engine replacement. He said the new engine cost was more than the amount approved, so he reached out to the Mayor for consent. The cost was \$7,500.00 for the remanufactured engine, and it has a warranty.

Davis stated that he has been talking with Adna Technologies regarding IT services for the City, and part of the proposal was provided for the Council's consideration. He asked the Council to review the

proposal for discussion at the August Council Meeting and call him if you have any questions. Davis feels that Adna is a good company, and he likes the work they put forward.

Don Walker – Walker stated that the Council minutes are long and wordy. He suggested shorter minutes with just the major points stated. Peterson agreed and suggested asking the new attorney for his opinion on the matter. Visitor Dan Hayes suggested using AI to transcribe the minutes. Mayor Barlund-Maas does not think it's necessary to have every single word transcribed by AI. Mayor Barlund-Maas said the minutes could be shortened if the Council agreed.

Larry Marsh – Marsh stated he had nothing to add.

Gary Peterson – Peterson stated that Delta Township approved putting the Capital Area Transportation Authority (CATA) millage on the November ballot. He said if this millage does not pass, cuts will be made to CATA as well as the Eaton County Transportation Authority (EATRAN).

James Frohm – Frohm asked if it would be helpful to have PowerPoint for the Council meetings. Mayor Barlund-Maas stated no.

Laura Barlund-Maas – Barlund-Maas had nothing to add.

Council meeting adjourned at 8:23 p.m.

Laura Barlund-Maas, Mayor

Amy Huepenbecker, Clerk/Treasurer