

City of Olivet
Regular Council Minutes
November 10, 2025 – 7:00 p.m.

Council Call to Order

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

Absent: None.

Visitors' Section: None.

Approval of Agenda

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

Approval of Previous Minutes

MOTION by Walker, supported by Hoffdahl, to approve the October 14, 2025, minutes as written. Mayor Barlund-Maas abstained. Motion carried 6-0 with the following roll call vote:

Hoffdahl-yes Davis-yes Walker-yes Frohm-yes Peterson-yes Marsh-yes Barlund-Maas-abstain

OLD BUSINESS:

A. Winter – Spring - Summer Streets Project – Trees/Sidewalk - Discussion

Wightman & Associates Engineer Mickey Bittner said the Open House for the Winter, Spring, and Summer Streets project had a great turnout, and good discussions were had with the property owners. Bittner discussed the project timelines, progress in design, environmental reviews, drainage, permits, and construction.

B. Firefighters Festival

Fire Commissioner Don Walker said that the Firefighters Association met last month. He said the Association was in better spirits, knowing that the City is offering to help with the festival, and the Association has agreed to host the 30th Firefighter Festival next year. Discussions took place at the Association meeting regarding the possibility of changing the time and length of the festival, discontinuing fireworks, changing the time of the parade, and fundraising ideas. Fire Chief John Collins said that Scott Piepkow stepped up to serve as the Association President.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Holiday Light Parade – Food Truck – Action Item

Senior Send Off Committee Representatives Samantha Jones and Mel DeLeeuw asked the Council's permission for road closures to host the Senior Send Off Holiday Light Parade on Saturday, December 6, if approved. Jones said the parade route would be the same as the Olivet High School "Homecoming Parade." She said the parade lineup would start at 5:30 p.m. at the old football field, with the parade starting at 6:00 p.m., followed by the tree lighting and photos with Santa & Mrs. Claus. Jones stated that there is no fee to enter the parade, but donations are welcome. DeLeeuw said her family is donating the tree for the event, but she is not sure where it will be placed, who will place it, or who will water it. DPW Director Jerry Staggs said that the DPW would place the tree as they have in the past, but the decoration and upkeep of the tree is done by the organization hosting the event. He also said that the barricades for the road closures would be furnished by the DPW. Jones asked about placing signs in yards announcing this event and asked if permits were needed for food truck vendors. Jones was reminded that signs can be placed in yards, but not in the right-of-way (ROW). Jones said the yard signs will be placed on Marshall Road outside of the City limits, and flyers will be placed in the windows of the businesses within the City limits. Huepenbecker said the light parade was a Chamber event, so the City does not have vendor information from prior years, including permitting. Mayor Laura Barlund-Maas said the vendor should have a health department permit, and suggested asking the vendor if they would require electricity, as it's not available everywhere. Jones asked about the rules and regulations for home-baked goods being sold. Mayor Barlund-Maas said that would be a bake sale, and that is okay. She also reiterated that throwing candy during the parade is not allowed and asked Jones for a copy of the flyer. Police Administrative Officer Shawn Garcia asked Jones to supply him with an email address so that he could provide her with information on the staging area and other relevant rules and information. Garcia also advised that vehicles in the parade must have lights, as it will be dark during the parade.

MOTION by Walker, supported by Davis, to approve the closure of First Street, Main Street, and College Street from 5:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. on Saturday, December 6, for the Senior Send Off Holiday Light Parade. Motion carried 7-0.

B. Designated Assessor Agreement Renewal – Action Item

Huepenbecker stated that Eaton County requires the City to have a Designated Assessor Agreement. This agreement means that if a City does not have an assessor, then the County will provide a designated assessor. She said the City has approved this agreement in the past, and it is time to renew it.

MOTION by Walker, supported by Hoffdahl, to approve renewing the Eaton County Designated Assessor Agreement from January 1, 2026, through December 31, 2030. Motion carried 7-0.

C. Mutual Aid Agreement Resolution 25-11 – Action Item

Garcia provided a final draft of the Eaton County Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement that needs to be approved. He stated that the City Attorney has reviewed and approved the agreement. Mayor Barlund-Maas said if the agreement is approved, we would do so with Resolution 25-11.

MOTION by Davis, supported by Frohm, to approve Resolution 25-11 to adopt the Eaton County Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement. Motion carried 7-0.

D. Fire Department Purchase – Turnout Gear - Action Item

Fire Commissioner Walker asked the Council's permission to purchase turnout gear for \$8,252.82. He stated the funds are available in the personal equipment budget 336-743 to make the purchase.

MOTION by Walker, supported by Peterson, to approve the purchase of turnout gear at a cost not to exceed \$8,252.82. Motion carried 7-0.

E. Tree Boxes for Main Street – Action Item

Staggs stated that mulch placed around the City trees on Main Street washes away when it rains. He is suggesting building boxes around the base of the trees to hold the mulch in place. Staggs provided the Council with a picture showing a box that the DPW built around a tree for the Council's consideration. He said fifteen trees would require a box, and the cost to build the box is approximately \$200.00 each. Commissioner Gary Peterson expressed concern that the box may be a hazard for tripping, and he asked about American Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance regarding unobstructed sidewalks. Discussion took place regarding the ADA-required unobstructed width of a sidewalk, how to make the box more visible, other materials and styles to consider for containment around the trees, and possible electrical issues. Huepenbecker suggested looking at ADA requirements. Mayor Barlund-Maas said this discussion will be postponed until we have further information on the minimum ADA requirements.

PROJECT UPDATES:

1. Ordinance Book Amendments

Mayor Barlund-Maas stated that she continues to work on the amendments.

2. City Policies (Handbook) – Lexipol

Huepenbecker stated that there were no changes to report.

3. Police Department Policies – Lexipol

Administrative Officer Garcia stated that there were no changes to report.

4. Compensation Committee

Mayor Barlund-Maas said she has all five people needed for the committee. She said the committee has not met since 1997, so there will be a start-up meeting that she will attend to give the committee its charge. She said their charge is to review the compensation of elected officials. She explained how the five committee members will rotate their service and will meet once a year.

5. Fire Station Committee

Fire Chief Collins said that he attended the Marshall Township fire station open house. He said their fire station is a very practical building that complies with all the standards, and feels it would be a good fit to build for Olivet. Collins said he continues to look for grants and stays in communication with politicians. Mayor Barlund-Maas said to keep her informed of any grants that the Fire Department would like to apply for so the City can participate.

6. Event Form

Davis stated that there were no changes to report.

Approval of the Bills

MOTION by Peterson, supported by Hoffdahl, to pay the bills with the one additional late bill.
Motion carried 7-0.

Department Head Reports

Fire Chief John Collins – Collins discussed the breakdown of the monthly fire report and stated it was a less active month. He said the department has two new personnel. Collins said the Fire Association Halloween Open House went well, with over 600 people attending. He stated that he continues with public education. Collins said that the tanker shuttle has been postponed, and the delivery of the new fire truck has been pushed back to March.

Police Administrative Officer Shawn Garcia – Garcia stated that the training with Police Chief Johnny Lopez has been going great, and they both have been learning a lot. Garcia stated that he will resume working on Lexipol policies and will utilize Lopez's experience with Lexipol. Garcia said that October was a busy month for the department, and he gave a breakdown of events. He said the grant for the School Resource Officer (SRO) position ends this year. He said there have been some talks with the Olivet Community School Director of Finance Amy Michael regarding some changes to the SRO position. Lopez and Michael discussed a wage hike, a seasonal position, and benefits. Garcia said he will update the Council next month.

DPW Director Jerry Staggs – Staggs stated that the DPW has been busy prepping the trucks for winter and installing the benches from the Eaton County Park Grant along the Indian Creek walking trail. He said the DPW will plan to put up the holiday lights the first week of December. Staggs informed the Council that the new carpet for the DPW building will be installed on December 2. Staggs said he will be listing the old John Deere on the auction site. Commissioner James Frohm noted that the salt bay overhead door would need maintenance due to corrosion from the salt.

Clerk/Treasurer Amy Huepenbecker – Huepenbecker stated that the Account Fund Balance and the Revenue/Expense reports are missing from Council packets due to onboarding issues with the new IT company. She said everything is going well with Adna, other than a couple of minor details to work out, which is to be expected. Huepenbecker said the election went well, and it was busier than expected with approximately 80 people coming to the precinct to vote on Election Day. She said the open house for the Winter, Spring, and Summer Streets project was well-received. She stated the Accident Fund audit will be completed next week. Huepenbecker thanked the Council and employees for all they had done after her mother's recent passing.

Commissioner Comments

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

Joseph Davis – Davis thanked those involved with getting and placing the new benches on the walking trail. He said the new Police Department shift with Garcia and Lopez has been great. The Charlotte Community Library has a new Director, who he believes will excel in this role. Davis stated that City Accountant Kelly Hanna furnishes quarterly financial reports to the Council, where she notes higher funding and revenue, which is due to the missing police position; thus, it will be less now with the hiring of Chief Lopez. Davis said the City is up and running fully with Adna Technologies, and it is going great. He informed the Council that if anyone has any IT-related issues, they should reach out to Adna.

Don Walker – Walker stated he had nothing to add.

Larry Marsh – Marsh stated he had nothing to add.

Gary Peterson – Peterson stated that Delta Township turned down the millage for public transportation. He said he will update the Council when he has more information.

James Frohm – Frohm said he appreciates the visitors.

Laura Barlund-Maas – Barlund-Maas stated that tomorrow is Veterans Day, and she said it's important for everyone to acknowledge it and thank our veterans for their service to our lives. She recognized the student visitors from The University of Olivet Community & Media Journalism class in attendance, who are interested in speaking with Council members after the meeting adjourns. She thanked the guests and the people who participated in the meeting.

Council meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Laura Barlund-Maas, Mayor

Amy Huepenbecker, Clerk/Treasurer