

MINUTES
Plainwell City Council
March 24, 2025

1. Mayor Keeler called the regular meeting to order at 7:00pm in City Hall Council Chambers.
2. Invocation: Given by Jared Bowen of Lighthouse Baptist Church.
3. Pledge of Allegiance was given by all present.
4. Roll Call: Present: Mayor Keeler, Mayor Pro Tem Steele, Councilmember Keeney and Councilmember Green.
Absent: Councilmember Wisnaski,
A motion by Keeney, seconded by Green, to excuse Councilmember Wisnaski from tonight's proceedings. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
5. Approval of Minutes:
A motion by Steele, seconded by Keeney, to accept and place on file the Council Meeting Minutes of the 03/10/2025 regular meeting. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
6. Public Comment: None.
7. County Commissioners Report: Commissioner Dugan gave an update on happenings throughout Allegan County. He left copies of the 2025 Allegan County Community Update, which are available at City Hall.
8. Agenda approval:
A motion by Steele, seconded by Keeney, to approve the Agenda for the March 24, 2025 meeting as presented. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
9. Mayor's Report: Mayor Keeler shared that Bruce Steele has passed away, and offered his deepest condolences to the Steele family.
10. Recommendations and Reports:
 - A. City Manager Lakamper discussed the City's first right of refusal to purchase buildings 18 and 19 from GHD. There is currently an offer from BizEX Ventures, who plan to renovate the space and create an event center. BizEX Ventures is working closely with the City on a common area deeded access agreement to utilities, HVAC equipment and public entryways.
A motion by Steele, seconded by Green, to postpone this item until a utility access agreement and amendments to the existing common area agreement have been secured with BizEx Ventures. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.
 - B. Clerk Leonard discussed recommendations from the March 17, 2025 Compensation Commission meeting. Recommendations included a salary increase of \$120/year for Council members, and compensation for Special Meetings in excess of 5 per year. The Compensation Commission meets in the spring of odd years and sets pay for elected officials. No motion is necessary to accept the recommendations from the Commission.
 - C. Superintendent Nieuwenhuis discussed the disposal of the City's street sweeping debris. Street sweepings are considered hazardous and must go to a landfill. The City has a contract with Kent County landfill until the end of the March 2025. H and K are able to haul the debris before the landfill contract expires, and have maintained the same pricing as last year.
A motion by Keeney, seconded by Steele, approving a payment of \$6,500 to H and K for hauling out our street sweeping debris, along with an estimated \$10,000 payment to the Kent County Landfill for disposal of the debris. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

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D. City Manager Lakamper discussed the repair and renovation of the City clock. The clock is a featured item in downtown Plainwell, and funding for this project will come from the DDA budget.

A motion by Green, seconded by Keeney, approving the mechanical and cosmetic renovation of the downtown city clock by The Verdin Company for \$10,780. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

E. Clerk Leonard discussed Resolution 2025-07, a Resolution to approve MDOT Contract 25-5115 and authorize City Manager Lakamper to execute the contract on behalf of the City. This contract covers the paving and repair of South Main St. from East Bridge St. to 102nd Ave. including concrete pavement repair, sidewalk and permanent pavement markings and all other necessary work needed for completion.

A motion by Keeney, seconded by Steele, approving Resolution 2025-07 as presented. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

F. Personnel Coordinator/Interim Treasurer Kersten discussed Resolution 2025-08, a Resolution amending the Employee Sick Leave Policy to comply with Michigan's Earned Sick Time Act (ESTA).

A motion by Steele, seconded by Keeney, to approve Resolution 2025-08 as presented. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

11. Communications:

A motion by Steele, seconded by Keeney, to accept and place on file the February 2025 Department of Public Safety and Water Renewal Reports, the 02/11/2025 DDA/BRA/TIFA meeting minutes and the 02/13/2025 Parks & Trees meeting minutes. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

12. Accounts Payable:

A motion by Keeney, seconded by Green, that the bills be allowed and orders drawn in the amount of \$87,881.03 for payment of the same. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

13. Public Comments:

1. Victoria Hill of 321. S. Woodhams - stated that streets and sidewalks in her neighborhood are in bad shape. There are potholes and uneven sidewalks, causing a safety concern for residents.

2. Blair Bates of 721 E. Bridge St. - asked if there was information available on the benefits that the proposed event center would bring to the City.

14. Staff Comments:

Personnel Coordinator/Interim Treasurer Kersten had nothing to report.

Superintendent Nieuwenhuis stated that spring loose leaf pickup is Monday, April 7th and hydrant flushing will take place Thursday April 17th. He thanked Wade Keyser for his many years of service to the City, noting that he will be missed and wishing him well at his new position. He shared that Aaron Bird had been promoted to water operator in charge.

Deputy Superintendent Keyser discussed ongoing maintenance projects at water renewal, and shared that the state required NPDES permit had been submitted.

Director Callahan reported that the Chief's vehicle had been sold for \$1,000 more than was paid.

Clerk Leonard shared her appreciation for the Compensation Commission and the willingness of Plainwell residents to serve the community at large by volunteering their time and serving on City Boards and Commissions.

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City Manager Lakamper shared conceptual material received from Watt's Homes for future housing and condominium development located on papermill property. He shared that this would be a lengthy process, with public meetings and community involvement.

15. Council Comments:

Councilmember Steele thanked BizEx Ventures for their conceptual presentation on the proposed event center in building 17. She shared that she had talked to Wade, and that he will be missed.

Councilmember Green shared that Wade will be missed.

Councilmember Keeney thanked the public for coming to tonight's Council meeting.

16. Adjournment:

A motion by Steele, seconded by Keeney, to adjourn the meeting at 8:00pm. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.

Minutes respectfully
submitted by,
JoAnn Leonard
City Clerk

MINUTES APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL

April 14, 2025


JoAnn Leonard, City Clerk