

THE SPECIAL BUDGET WORK SESSION OF THE FORTY-FIRST COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BERKLEY, MICHIGAN WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 5:30 PM ON THURSDAY, MARCH 26, 2026 BY MAYOR DEAN

PRESENT: Councilmember Gary Elrod
Mayor Pro Tem Ross Gavin
Councilmember Dennis Hennen
Councilmember Gregory Patterson
Mayor Bridget Dean

ABSENT: Councilmember Clarence Black
Councilmember Steve Baker

OTHER STAFF PRESENT:

City Manager Crystal VanVleck
City Clerk Victoria Mitchell
Finance Director Carl Johnson
Deputy Finance Director Ryan Shaw
Deputy City Manager of Public Services Shawn Young
Public Safety Director Matt Koehn
Public Safety Lt. Corey Miller
Public Safety Administrative Assistant/Records Amy Leigh
Parks & Recreation Superintendent Dan McMinn
Facilities Manager Alex Brown
Department of Public Works Superintendent Adam Wozniak
Executive Assistant to the City Manager Lydia Brauher

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Councilmember Patterson moved to approve the agenda
Seconded by Mayor Pro Tem Gavin
Ayes: Elrod, Gavin, Hennen, Patterson and Dean
Nays: None
Absent: Baker and Black
Motion Approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

REGULAR AGENDA

BUDGET WORK SESSION: Matter of a discussion of the proposed FY 2026/27 City of Berkley Budget:

1. Facilities
2. Finance/Treasury/Public Improvement
3. Parks & Rec/Senior Activities
4. DPW (Public Works, Garage, Streets, MS, LS, W&S, Infrastructure, Community Field, Sidewalks, Solid Waste)
5. Public Safety (Admin, Dispatch, Operations, Animal Control, Opioid Settlement)

City Manager Crystal VanVleck and Finance Director Carl Johnson provided an overview of the Capital Improvement Project (CIP) by fund for FY 26/27.

Overview of CIP by Capital Outlay Type: FY 26/27

- Vehicles
- Technology

- Machinery & Equipment
- Roads
- Sidewalks & Pathways
- Storm Sewer & Drainage
- Water Distribution
- Parks, Recreation, & Cultural Services
- Buildings & Property

City Manager VanVleck and Finance Director Johnson provided an overview of equipment cost increases:

Vehicles

- 2020 - \$35,212
- 2023 - \$40,479
- 2026 - \$50,891

Weapons and ammunition

- 2020 - \$41,850
- 2023 - \$45,800
- 2026 - \$55,300

Fire helmet

- 2018 - \$280
- 2025 - \$576

Uniforms

- 2020 - \$47,550
- 2023 - \$65,000
- 2026 - \$67,300

Planned fire engine replacement

- 2018 - \$580,000-\$650,000
- 2025 - \$1mill-\$1.2mill

Firefighter turnout gear

- 2018 - \$2,270
- 2025 - \$4,061

Facilities Manager Alex Brown Discussed:

Facilities Budget

- Increased budgets for building maintenance. HVAC repairs are increasing as equipment ages
- Day-to-day operation costs have risen and that is reflected in the budget. Focus on preventative maintenance
- Landscaping/tree trimming for all city buildings
- Painting, carpet, tube heater and other smaller improvements, all included in current operating budgets
- CIP items:
 - Library doors being moved to 2026 due to worsening condition
 - DPW backup generator upgrade
 - Library parking lot
 - Tennis court rehab

City Manager VanVleck discussed the Energy-revolving fund. She said as the City opens its strategic plan process, one of the priorities will be creating a broader sustainability plan.

A discussion took place regarding throwing good money at bad buildings. City Hall was discussed. It is not a functional building. Appreciation was expressed for Mr. Brown's preventative maintenance plan.

A discussion took place regarding asset management software. A presentation at a future City Council meeting was discussed.

Finance Director Carl Johnson Discussed:

Finance/Treasury Budget

Finance

- Salaries and wages increased – department now fully staffed
- New assessing contract with private firm (administered through Finance)
- Overall decrease in department costs

Treasury

- Salaries and wages decreased – consolidation of treasurer/finance director role and elimination of part-time position
- Tax and assessing functions being brought in-house from County

Parks & Recreation Superintendent Dan McMinn Discussed:

Parks & Rec/Senior Activities Budget

- CDBG Snow Removal Supplement
 - Money received from CDBG funding no longer funds an entire year of snow removal based on previous winters
- Sponsorship
 - New sponsorship guide provides an opportunity to showcase all of our events throughout the year. Has already made a difference bringing in new sponsors
- Programming Highlights
 - Youth/Adult
 - Kindermusik, Improved drop-in play, Zumba drop-in classes
- Day Camp
 - Two camps sold out within 15 minutes of registration opening. Added additional spaces from waitlist
- Seniors
 - Additional Day of Senior Exercise, Senior Hangout, Tom Katz Square Dancing Club

Mr. McMinn further discussed:

- New programming and exploration of partnership opportunities with the school district
- Updates to the meeting rooms and kitchen. First up is the large conference room, and next would be the senior activities room

Finance Director Johnson explained:

- Senior Activities Fund. He talked about the fund balance and its relation to upgrades.
- Recreation Revolving Fund
 - It is separate from the General Fund, however receives funding from the General Fund
 - Revenues and appropriations detail

Deputy City Manager of Public Services Shawn Young and Department of Public Works Superintendent Adam Wozniak Discussed:

DPW (Public Works, Garage, Streets, MS, LS, W&S, Infrastructure, Community Field, Sidewalks, Solid Waste) Budget

City Manager VanVleck and Finance Director Johnson began with an overview:

- Summary of Street Funds – Major Streets and Local Streets
- Reviewed estimated revenues, appropriations, other financing sources, resulting in net revenue, appropriations and other financing sources

- Detail on how these funds operate and how they interrelate
- Shifting gears once the lead line replacement mandates were issued. Lead line replacement is an EPA mandate
- Funding shift from road repairs to lead line replacement
- Two years ago the City had negative \$1 mill in the sewer fund. That increased to positive \$100k and now we are at \$1.9 mill.

Public Works Major, Local & Infrastructure Fund

- Bacon Avenue water main and road replacement: targeted start date spring of 2026
- Harvard Road (tentative) water main and road replacement: targeted start date of 2027
- Wakefield Road (tentative) water main and road replacement: targeted start date of 2028

Public Works Water & Sewer Fund

- Lead Service Line Replacement Program - \$1 million/year
- Sewer Lining Program - \$600k/year
- Roughly 1,000 replacement water meters annually

Additional discussion took place regarding:

- Aging Water Main Infrastructure
 - A map was shown indicating all of the water main breaks in the city for the past 25 years.

Public Works Water & Sewer Fund

Utility Rates

- We will see an estimated 7.5% increase (storm/water/sewage) – SOCWA, GLWA, and WRC
- Infrastructure needs far exceed our resources
- Proposed 2026 Increase (8% variable)
- Chart showing 15 Units (average residential)
- Discussed how to understand your water bill

Public Works Solid Waste

- Continuation of curbside leaf collection program
- Continuation of bi-weekly curbside brush pickup program
- Increase in quality and cost for “free compost” provided to our residents

Public Works Sidewalk Fund

This fund is used to account for any special assessment sidewalk projects within the City. Special assessment revenue will be collected to offset the actual construction and engineering expenditures of sidewalk projects.

- Sidewalk replacements across the city were completed a few years ago
- An undetermined variation of the original program would begin in FY 26/27

There was a discussion on Community Field 1. Rental fees will be utilized to maintain and improve the field.

Public Works General Fund

- Continued operations as a combined public service model
- CIP items: equipment replacement based on lifecycles and operational efficiencies

The DPW capital equipment replacement plan (CERP) was reviewed and discussed.

Public Safety Director Matt Koehn Discussed:

Public Safety Budget

- Continue to leverage shared services, mutual aid, automatic aid, and relationships with our local, county, state, and federal law enforcement and fire partners as a force multiplier to assist in keeping our residents, businesses, and visitors safe.

- Continue to prioritize succession planning to prepare for upcoming retirements and strengthen supervision of newly hired PSOs, many of whom have limited prior experience. Key initiatives include:
 - Filling the long-vacant Deputy Director position to enhance leadership capacity
 - Temporarily adding a Sergeant position within the Detective Bureau, allowing the current SRO Sergeant to remain assigned to Berkley Schools (with the additional cost offset by the school district)
 - Filling the long-vacant FOIA Technician position and expanding the use of civilian staff, allowing sworn personnel to focus on core public safety functions

Director Koehn said these priorities ensure continuity of leadership while improving supervision and operational efficiency across the department.

- DPS continues to expand the use of technology to enhance efficiency and effectiveness, improve documentation, reduce liability, and strengthen training
- As DPS continues to fill open positions and move toward full staffing, the K-9 program will be reimplemented using previously donated funds, with no cost to the City
- CIP Items:
 - Ford Police Interceptor Utility including Police Grappler Bumper (replacement)
 - A police grapppler is a device that attaches the front bumper of the police car to the rear wheel of another vehicle, by way of heavy-duty nylon straps and is used during a police pursuit to slow and stop a fleeing vehicle (video demonstration)
 - Ford Police Interceptor Utility (replacement)
 - Enclosed trailer for UTV vehicle/equipment transport

Opioid Settlement

- Funding for a ride-along mental health professional
- Director Koehn is looking for a good partner – split costs
- Prioritization was discussed

Mayor Dean thanked the Public Safety Department and lauded the cooperation and mutual respect that is evident.

City Manager VanVleck and Finance Director Johnson Discussed:

Public Improvement Budget

- Adding an additional \$220k into the fund this year – total of \$470k into the fund in FY25/26
- Budgeted no contribution in FY 26/27 – surplus over targeted FB here
- Movement of capital items here

Finance Director Johnson discussed with council members how they would like this fund accounted for – either public improvement fund or general fund.

Mayor Dean expressed gratitude to all of the directors and to City Manager VanVleck and Finance Director Johnson.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilmember Patterson moved to adjourn the Special Meeting at 9:19 PM

Seconded by Councilmember Hennen

Ayes: Gavin, Hennen, Patterson, Elrod and Dean

Nays: None

Absent: Baker and Black

Motion Approved.

Bridget Dean, Mayor

ATTEST:

Victoria Mitchell, City Clerk