



City Council Study Session

Monday, January 05, 2026, at 6:00 PM

27400 Southfield Road, Lathrup Village, Michigan 48076

1. **Call to Order** by Mayor Kantor at 6:00 pm

Present: Kantor, Sousanis, Hammond, Garrett (at 6:09 pm)

Absent: Jennings (excused), Attorney Baker (excused)

2. **Discussion Items**

A. CIP Bond Millage Reduction & FY 26-27 PA 33

CA Greene explained: In 2021, the residents approved, and the City issued Capital Improvement Bonds for City infrastructure projects. With this approval came a dedicated millage rate of 3.9307 to pay the debt (principal + interest). Over the past couple of years, the dedicated millage has collected more taxes than is due. This has resulted in a fund balance in the CIP account, projected to be ~\$250,000 by the end of Fiscal Year 2025-2026. Based on this information, staff projects that the City Council could reduce the CIP millage by 0.5 (down to 3.4307) and utilize the dedicated CIP fund balance and still meet the debt obligations until the bond is closed in 2031.

Mayor Kantor, Councilmembers, and City Admin. Greene discussed:

- Paying it off early or keeping it as is
- Whether to do PA 33 or not
 - Provides money for Public Safety, so the General Fund supplemental is less
- Not doing a PA 33 based on the Headlee Vote
- Reduce the Millage rate and have it be a benefit to the residents
- Taking ½ a mill out of the CIP Bond, because we are collecting too much money
- Needing action to be taken to reduce the budget, discussions have taken place at other meetings, and we need to decide on the budget gap
- Items that can/could be cut from the budget
- What is different in the New Budget and priorities that need to be addressed
- Residents could look at a PA 33-related tax increase differently because it is related to Public Safety
- Cutting a Patrol position that is currently not filled
- Public Safety Millages tend to pass in Communities
- 1 mill better than 2 mill, PA 33 is a better look
- Draft budget with options
- Staff salary freeze
- An additional police car is not on the current budget, and Patrol cars have a 5-6 year life cycle, which puts them on the Budget every year

B. Library Millage

Mayor Kantor, Councilmembers, and City Admin Greene discussed:

- Library Millage
 - Could take a few months/meetings
 - Not waiting to hear what Southfield's reply/response is, regardless of what happens
 - If it could be tied to a specific Library, because it could impact the vote
 - August or November Elections for possible Library Millage
- Cancellation deadline with Southfield, and whether they will let us out early or not, and the relationship between the cancellation date and a possible Library millage Election date
- Asked CA Greene to start the process for Ballot language for a Library Millage

C. Library Service Research Update

- This was discussed within Item B. Library Millage

D. Communications & Engagement Committee

Mayor Kantor, Councilmembers, and City Admin Greene discussed:

- How we want to set it up
- Mission Statement – entice them to be on the Committee
- A draft Mission Statement was read with 3 Goals:
 - Improve the clarity, accessibility, timeliness, and reach of City Communications
 - Strengthen public understanding of city activities, decisions, and processes
 - Encourage greater participation in public meetings, civic processes, and community events
- Appropriate metrics to review the goals
- Adding after Communication, in goal 1, “and Engagement.”
- Recommendations for improving it
- Block Captains or Quadrant Captains for all sections of the City
- Population of and wanting representation for all quadrants/sections of the City
- When to put out information for people to join
- Needing to add that Committee on the Application
- How many members, possibly 5, and a City Council Liaison
- That the Council Liaison would not be a voting member
- 5 members, an Advisor, and a Liaison from City Council
- Looking at the size of Parks & Recreation, and opening that up to more people
 - Last posted opening, we only received 1 application
 - Starting that conversation for more members at a Parks & Recreation Committee meeting
 - If not on it, you can still help the Committee
- Headlee Override being defeated, the City is going to need more Volunteerism, like for the Children's Garden
- Listing the skills and what we would want in an applicant, with a prompt that desired candidates should have
- The Letter of Interest is used to express why you should be on the Committee
- Leave it vague, might want a mix of members

- Could you indicate where they are from (the section/quadrant), so that the City Council can consider them when they are received
- If no applications are received from a City section, then what?
- How to reach the different sections, do they have names?
- Conflict between bringing together, and saying separate representative, and that person thinking hyper locally – having the Block Captains that aren't official, and them meeting
- Talk of having the City Council vote in that way
- Ad out tomorrow afternoon for the Committee, with the goal of appointing initial members during the January 26 Regular Meeting.

3. Public Comments

Christina Schindler, Bungalow Dr., expressed in part that the millage not passing may have been due to the abstract nature of where the money was going, but with Library and Public Safety millages, the public will understand where the money is going.

Lillian Kyser-Lowery expressed in part: about doing studies to understand how many people are using the Library, Chipping Services, and other budget items, and that there are surveys that can be used on Survey Monkey and Google.

Jonathan Tara, expressed in part: that it might be easier to hear on the recorded meeting, but it is hard to hear the Council in the room, especially Mr. Sousanis, when he was facing towards the Council and away from the audience, and asked if there was another source other than the meeting packets to view Police Activity/Incident reports and mentioned that Al said there was a link between the Police Website and the reports and that he found another way himself.

Diane Anderson expressed in part that she was happy that there were discussions to keep the Library contract and how the Southfield library is the best option, and referenced things that she did not think Lathrup Village should have done in the past.

Timothy Hillman, San Quentin, expressed in part: wanting clarification from a previous meeting on the difference between the Berkley and Southfield Library contract prices (\$100,000 or \$25,000), and wants alternative options considered if there is a cost savings, and asked what the cost to residents would be if there is a millage.

Autumn Sousanis, Rainbow Dr., expressed in part her concern for the cost of using Giffels Webster and multiple line items related to them, and suggested using other options for studies/survey methods, and reviewing the Giffels Webster costs.

4. Mayor and Council Comments

Mayor Kantor commented in part:

- The Library is not in the DDA District
- Concerts on City grounds are not paid for by the City
- Asked for a link from the Police Website page to the Police Activity reports
- The cost of hiring another company other than Giffels Webster will have a lot of expenses too
- Congratulated City Administrator Greene on the compliments he received from Congresswoman Tlaib and her Chief of Staff on his responsiveness
- Checking for compliance with the new sign ordinance

- In response to the 2 million cut to State funding, he sent a letter expressing his displeasure and what it does to a Community like Lathrup Village

Councilmember Hammond commented in part:

- The City could hire a person to do the planning/study work, but it would be more work than 1 person would have expertise in (they would be a generalist, not a subject matter specialist), and we would lose the benefit of Giffels Webster's knowledge
- Thanked Kyser-Lowery for the suggestion of doing surveys
- The increased attendance for the Lathrup Village Music Festival, and most of that funding was from Sponsorships and the City pays nothing

Councilmember Sousanis commented in part:

- Giffels Webster is a big-ticket item; having their contract put into the City Council agenda packet would be a good thing to be able to discuss, a place to save or not
- Apologized for not talking louder
- He believes in the importance of City Government being more than just operational, and doing community-building events
- Shared that he heard the compliment on follow-through that was given to City Administrator Mike Greene because he was next to Congresswoman Tlaib and could tell she really meant it

Mayor Pro Tem Garrett commented in part:

- Lathrup Village Chamber of Commerce is having a Ribbon Cutting of BellVisio Global Aesthetics, 28891 Southfield Rd., who have been here for years, on Wednesday, January 7th from 12-2:00 pm, by the Lathrup Village Chamber of Commerce
- Lathrup Village Chamber of Commerce is hosting a Networking Event at Smallz Handcrafted Foods and Cocktails at 30100 Telegraph Rd., in Bingham Farms on Tuesday, January 6th from 6-9:00 pm
- There were no Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day events or Juneteenth events last year in Lathrup Village
- People are excited for the concerts on City grounds, and our businesses lose out without the attraction of these events
- If the City Budget is not balanced by the end of the fiscal year, we can be fined, and we have never had a penalty, never not had a balanced budget

5. **Adjourn 7:12 pm**