

## **City Council Regular Meeting Madison Heights, Michigan August 25, 2025**

A City Council Regular Meeting was held on Monday, August 25, 2025, at 7:30 PM.

### **PRESENT**

Mayor Roslyn Grafstein  
Mayor Pro Tem Mark Bliss  
Councilman Sean Fleming  
Councilman William Mier  
Councilor Emily Rohrbach  
Councilman David Soltis  
Councilor Quinn Wright

### **OTHERS PRESENT**

City Manager Melissa Marsh  
City Attorney Larry Sherman  
Deputy City Manager/City Clerk Cheryl Rottmann

Councilman Mier gave the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance followed.

### **PRESENTATIONS:**

#### **• *Library Card Sign-up Month Design Contest Winners***

Madison Heights Public Library Director Vanessa Verdun-Morris announced that September is Library Card Sign-up Month. Two new library card designs, created by local teens Liliana Lowers (present) and Khloe Brown (absent), and are debuting as part of the "Color Our World" library card design contest. Residents can obtain these new cards at the library during September.

#### **• *HREC Presentation for Juneteenth Scholarship***

HREC Representative X presented the Juneteenth Scholarship Award to Ah'Janae' Newsome for her academic achievement and deep understanding of Juneteenth's meaning (freedom, resilience, pursuit of justice). This was the first year for the scholarship.

### **MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:**

Jim Capiso, resident: Inquired about the new garbage containers, confirming that while they can be used now, they will be the only ones available for use starting October 6.

Martha Covert, resident: Raised concerns regarding Councilman Wright, alleging policy violations. She cited issues such as a barbecue permit, wearing political attire at a city 5K event (requiring photo editing by staff), using that image on social media, and breaking the City Charter by accepting an endorsement from the Police FOP (alleging employees cannot be involved in city campaigns). Ms. Covert requested the council and city attorney consider these matters and provide a resolution within 14 days.

Mary Hart, resident: Expressed concern over a pattern of behavior from Councilman Wright, specifically his repeated accusations of racism or bigotry when faced with differing opinions or negative interactions. She stated his attempts to connect with residents appeared disingenuous and that his partisan approach made him unfit to represent the city.

Ann Garrison, resident: Questioned Councilman Wright's use of Facebook for his mayoral campaign after he reportedly called Facebook groups racist. The resident also referenced past council meetings where Councilman Wright allegedly made disparaging remarks about residents and called for a focus on health, safety, and wellness issues over what they termed "social justice issues." The resident concluded with a quote from Nelson Mandela.

Unnamed resident: Asked for clarification on how elderly or disabled residents would manage the large new garbage containers. It was confirmed that a form is available through the City Manager's office or DPS for assistance, where Priority Waste will take the cart to the curb for them. The resident also inquired about previous legal issues with the former trash company (GFL), to which City Manager Marsh clarified that GFL sold to Priority Waste, and there were no legal issues causing the change in service.

**CM-25-128. Consent Agenda.**

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda, as amended.

Mayor Grafstein announced an amendment to the Mayor appointments, stating only one appointment (Ryan Fox to the Planning Commission) would be made, as DDA appointments were postponed allowing candidates to meet the DDA first.

Motion made by Councilor Rohrbach, Seconded by Councilman Mier.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Mayor Pro Tem Bliss, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Mier, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright.

Motion carried.

**CM-25-129. Board and Commission Appointments – Council Appointments.**

Motion to approve the following Council Appointments to Board and Commissions:

<b><u>Board/Commission</u></b>	<b><u>Term Type</u></b>	<b><u>Term Expiration</u></b>	<b><u>First Name</u></b>	<b><u>Last Name</u></b>
<b>ACTIVE ADULT CENTER ADVISORY BOARD</b>	Regular	8/31/2028	ANNIE	BRAND
<b>ARTS BOARD</b>	Regular	8/31/2028	JENNIFER	NAGLE
	Regular	8/31/2028	KEATON	SOTO-OLSON
	Regular	8/31/2028	THOMAS	WRONA

<u>Board/Commission</u>	<u>Term Type</u>	<u>Term Expiration</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>
ACTIVE ADULT CENTER ADVISORY BOARD CONTINUED	Alternate	8/31/2027	KIMBERLY	OPRIN
CONSTRUCTION BOARD OF APPEALS	Regular	8/31/2027	DEL	LORANGER
ELECTED OFFICIALS COMPENSATION COMMISSION	Regular	8/31/2032	KEVIN	WRIGHT
ENVIRONMENTAL CITIZENS COMMITTEE	Alternate	2/28/2026	MATTHEW	OLSON
HISTORICAL COMMISSION	Regular	2/28/2028	JOEL	SEEWALD
HUMAN RELATIONS & EQUITY COMMISSION	Regular	8/31/2027	AARON	BROWN
	Regular	8/31/2027	KATE	KAPAS
	Regular	8/31/2027	TANNER	LANGDON
	Regular	8/31/2027	ALEC	YU
	Regular	8/31/2027	ANDREW	ATTARD
	Regular	8/31/2026	TERESA	SCOTT
LIBRARY ADVISORY BOARD	Regular	8/31/2027	REBECCA	HILL
	Regular	8/31/2027	AMANDA	MAY
	Regular	8/31/2027	JENNIFER	NAGLE
	Regular	8/31/2027	JEFFREY	SCOTT
	Regular	8/31/2026	JENNIFER	ERTANO
	Alternate	8/31/2027	ANDREA	MAREK
PARKS & RECREATION ADVISORY BOARD	Alternate	2/28/2027	ERIC	PRAEDEL
TAX BOARD OF REVIEW	Regular	2/28/2027	MARLYNN	HOCK

Motion made by Councilor Rohrbach, Seconded by Councilman Mier.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Mayor Pro Tem Bliss, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Mier, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright.

Motion carried.

**CM-25-130. Board and Commission Appointments – Mayor’s Appointments.**

Motion to concur with the Mayor’s recommendation and approve the following Mayor’s Appointments to Board and Commissions:

<u>Board/Commission</u>	<u>Term Type</u>	<u>Term Expiration</u>	<u>First Name</u>	<u>Last Name</u>
PLANNING COMMISSION	Regular	8/31/2028	RYAN	FOX

Motion Made Councilor Rohrbach, Seconded by Councilman Mier.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Mayor Pro Tem Bliss, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Mier, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright.

Motion carried.

**CM-25-131. Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of August 11, 2025.**

Motion to approve the Regular City Council Meeting Minutes of August 11, 2025, as printed.

Motion Made Councilor Rohrbach, Seconded by Councilman Mier.

Voting Yea: Mayor Grafstein, Mayor Pro Tem Bliss, Councilman Fleming, Councilman Mier, Councilor Rohrbach, Councilman Soltis, Councilor Wright.

Motion carried.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS:**

Councilman Mier: Reminded residents that school is back in session and to watch out for children, especially with ongoing construction on 11 Mile Road (expected to open for two-way traffic in 2-3 weeks). He mentioned the final Arts Board concert this week and the upcoming Trail Tunes event. He noted the success of the recent Paint in the Park event and the plan for another. Regarding the new trash cans, he acknowledged they will be a challenge for some, including himself, but expects them to speed up trash collection. He reiterated that assistance is available for those who need help with the cans.

Mayor Pro Tem Bliss: Congratulated the library card design contest winners and the Juneteenth scholarship recipient, expressing a desire to see their designs displayed. He requested staff investigate a policy for more frequent board and commission appointments throughout the year to fill vacancies more quickly. He encouraged residents to support Arts Board volunteer events, including the last summer concert (Wednesday) and Trail Tunes (September 6th), as well as Revin' in the Heights. He also mentioned a five-hour Planning Commission meeting and requested detailed notes or a representative for the upcoming September 8th Council meeting, which he will miss.

Councilor Wright: Promoted the "Revin' in the Heights" event on September 13th at the Civic Center Campus, sponsored by Priority Waste, and encouraged participation. He directly addressed public comments, clarifying that a previous clip was edited and that he was defending Juneteenth against individuals known for prejudice, not calling the entire city racist. He denounced racism, bigotry, and prejudice, and encouraged direct communication rather than relying on social media.

City Attorney L. Sherman: Had no comments.

City Manager Marsh: Announced that Consumers Energy will host a Neighborhood Fest on Wednesday from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM before the concert in the park, offering food trucks, entertainment, and information about their extensive infrastructure upgrades in the community.

Deputy City Manager/City Clerk Rottmann: Informed residents that absentee ballot applications have been mailed out to those not on the permanent ballot list, and actual ballots for those on the permanent list or who return applications will be mailed at the end of September, expected them to arrive the first week of October.

Councilor Rohrbach: Thanked Councilman Mier for mentioning compost opportunities, noting that 6,654 tons of food waste have been diverted year-to-date. She acknowledged the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and the importance of community input. She addressed recent negative discussions on Facebook groups, emphasizing the need for civil discourse and inviting residents with questions to reach out directly to council members.

Councilman Fleming: Had no comments.

Councilman Soltis: Had no comments.

Mayor Grafstein: Agreed with Mayor Pro Tem Bliss's suggestion to streamline board and commission appointments into the consent agenda more frequently to improve efficiency. She issued a public reminder that elected officials in Madison Heights cannot block residents on social media due to viewpoint discrimination, which could lead to legal issues. She also stated that city staff should not post pictures from community events that include political signs or attire, suggesting that such photos should not be posted at all rather than blurred, as the city cannot be seen endorsing candidates. She reiterated the availability of assistance for residents needing help with the new trash carts through the City Manager's office or DPS and encouraged neighbors to help each other. She confirmed that the carts should be delivered by the end of the week, with October 6th being the deadline for exclusive use of the new carts. She clarified that residents could

use existing proper-sized carts and could request additional carts from the city, noting that the new carts were funded by a grant, not a direct charge, and no refunds would be issued for previously purchased carts. She emphasized that while council members may disagree, their collective goal is to benefit the community, requiring compromise to get things done. Finally, she reminded everyone to be cautious of children and construction workers with school starting and ongoing roadwork.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Having no further business, Mayor Grafstein adjourned the meeting at 8:16 p.m.