



WHITEHALL

WORK SESSION MINUTES

Council Chambers

May 12, 2026

PRESENT Scott Brown, Tanya Cabala, Debra Hillebrand, Jeff Holmstrom, Bryan Mahan, Roger Squiers, and Tom Ziemer

ABSENT None

ALSO PRESENT Brenda Bourdon, Dan Tavernier, Will Meier

Mayor Ziemer called the meeting to order at 4:30 pm.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

Budget Review

City Manager Tavernier presented highlights of the proposed FY 2026/2027 Budget, noting the budget aligns with the City's Strategic Plan and emphasizes infrastructure, fiscal sustainability, parks and recreation, walkability, and downtown vitality.

Infrastructure and Roads

Tavernier reviewed more than \$12 million in planned infrastructure improvements, including Livingston Street, Muskegon Avenue, and the southern portion of Lake Street. Projects include roadway reconstruction, water and sewer improvements, drainage upgrades, and lift station improvements. Construction is anticipated to begin in Spring 2027.

Tavernier also reported on resurfacing completed on the northern portion of Lake Street and Industrial Park roads, with additional north-end neighborhood roads scheduled for improvement prior to fiscal year closeout.

Parks and Recreation

Discussion occurred regarding increased focus on parks, recreation programming, waterfront, and public gathering spaces. Tavernier reported the Playhouse Managing Director position is proposed to transition into a broader Parks and Recreation Director role.

Council Member Brown expressed opposition to expanding the position's role, while the remaining Council Members were supportive of making the position a focal point for parks and recreation coordination citywide.

Tavernier also reviewed the W. Colby Promenade project and its intended use as a community gathering space for events and recreation. Mayor Pro Tem Holmstrom requested an increase to the TIFA budget to include \$12,960 for Adirondack chairs at the new promenade.

Public Works

The Department of Public Works reviewed expanded operational efforts including alley clearing, junk pickup, and increased sidewalk snow removal. Tavernier also discussed the unbudgeted purchase of a leaf vac truck during FY 2025/26.

Tavernier requested capture of 17 mills to continue street improvements and resident services. Council was in agreement with the increase, noting it has been more than 10 years since the millage was last increased and operational costs have continued to rise.

Police Department

Tavernier reviewed increased financial participation from Whitehall District Schools for the School Resource Officer program, along with planned equipment purchases including radar units, protective vests, and replacement of the administrative vehicle.

Financial Planning and Operations

Staff discussed conservative budgeting practices, including budgeting salary lines at maximum contractual pay scales for long-term financial planning purposes.

Council also reviewed projected taxable value growth, ongoing legal service demands, City Hall energy audit improvements, redevelopment and housing initiatives, and continued efforts to improve sidewalks, ADA accessibility, and pedestrian connectivity throughout the community.

Utility Rates and Staffing

Tavernier recommended 2% increases for water and sewer rates.

Union and non-union employees are proposed to receive a 2.7% cost-of-living increase, with future adjustments anticipated to utilize the Michigan Inflation Rate Multiplier.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

None

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lance Bernhardt provided comment on the Liberty Swing.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Ziemer adjourned the work session at 5:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Brenda Bourdon, City Clerk



WHITEHALL

CITY COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

Council Chambers
April 14, 2026

PRESENT Scott Brown, Tanya Cabala, Debra Hillebrand, Jeff Holmstrom, Bryan Mahan, Roger Squiers, and Tom Ziemer

ABSENT None

ALSO PRESENT Brenda Bourdon, Dan Tavernier, Will Meier

Mayor Ziemer called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion by Holmstrom, seconded by Mahan to amend the agenda to add Park Enhancements to New Business as it was not discussed during the work session.

Voice Vote: All yeses

MOTION CARRIED

Motion by Holmstrom, seconded by Mahan to approve the amended agenda for May 12, 2026.

Voice Vote: All yeses

MOTION CARRIED

APPROVAL OF THE CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Approval of the April 28, 2026 Council Meeting Minutes
- B. Accounts Payable \$513,410.10
- C. Communications: Marina Advisory Committee Minutes, Planning Commission Minutes

Motion by Cabala, seconded by Brown to approve the Consent Agenda.

Voice Vote: All yeses

MOTION CARRIED

MESSAGES FROM THE MAYOR, COUNCIL, AND CITY MANAGER

Messages were received from the City Manager, Council Members, and Mayor.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Kim Cyr and Ron Russell provided public comment.

OLD BUSINESS

None

NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution 26-24 Union Contract

Motion by Squiers, seconded by Brown, to approve the union contract as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Yes – Squiers, Brown, Mahan, Holmstrom, Hillebrand, Cabala, and Ziemer;

No – None; Absent – None

MOTION CARRIED

B. Resolution 26-25 Lot Split Request

Motion by Holmstrom, seconded by Mahan to approve the lot split request for parcel 61-22-034-400-0002-00.

Roll Call Vote: Yes – Holmstrom, Mahan, Hillebrand, Squiers, Cabala, Brown, and Ziemer;

No – None; Absent – None

MOTION CARRIED

C. Resolution 26-26 Well Pump Generator

Motion by Cabala, seconded by Mahan to approve the purchase of the budgeted well pump generator at the quoted price of \$37,317 and the installation of the soft starter by Windemueller for \$3,000.

Roll Call Vote: Yes – Cabala, Mahan, Brown, Holmstrom, Squiers, Hillebrand, and Ziemer;

No – None; Absent – None

MOTION CARRIED

D. School Resource Officer Memorandum of Understanding

Motion by Squiers, seconded by Hillebrand to approve the School Resource Officer Memorandum of Understanding as presented.

Roll Call Vote: Yes – Squiers, Hillebrand, Holmstrom, Mahan, Cabala, Brown, and Ziemer;

No – None; Absent – None

MOTION CARRIED

PUBLIC COMMENT

Nancy Yeager shared concerns with council.

ADJOURNMENT

Mayor Ziemer adjourned the Council Meeting at 7:02 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Brenda Bourdon, City Clerk