



CITY OF IONIA

CITY COUNCIL

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

6:30 PM, Wednesday, February 4, 2026

IONIA CITY HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBERS

CALL TO ORDER

Mayor John Milewski called the meeting of the Ionia City Council to order at 6:30 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Mayor John Milewski led everyone present with the Pledge of Allegiance.

ROLL CALL

Roll call revealed a Quorum with Councilmembers Tim Lee, Margot Cook, Richard Starr, Troy Waterman, Brenda Cowling, and Mayor John Milewski present. Councilmembers Tom Millard, Jeff Winters, and Mary Patrick were absent.

Councilmember Starr made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Waterman, to excuse the absences of Councilmembers Tom Millard, Jeff Winters, and Mary Patrick.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

I. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

With no changes or additions, Councilmember Cowling made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Lee, to approve the agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

(II.1.) January 7, 2026 – Regular Meeting

Minutes from the regular meeting of January 7, were reviewed. Councilmember Cook made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Waterman, to approve the January 7, 2026, meeting minutes as presented.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

III. PROCLAMATIONS

None.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

V. PUBLIC HEARINGS AND ASSOCIATED ACTION

None.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS

(VI.1.) Vertical Pole Banner Application - Ionia High School Class of 2026

Councilmember Cowling made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Lee, to approve the vertical pole banner application submitted by the Ionia High School Senior Lock-In Committee to display up to 192 banners as specified, from April 2 – May 14, 2026.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Tim Lee, Margot Cook, Richard Starr, Troy Waterman, Brenda Cowling, John Milewski

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

MOTION CARRIED

(VI.2.) Granger Waste Services - 2025 Annual Refuse & Recycling Report

Jami Anderson from Granger Waste Services presented the 2025 Annual Refuse and Recycling Report to City Council and answered questions.

Councilmember Cook made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Cowling, to accept the 2025 Annual Solid Waste Report provided by Granger Waste Services.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

(VI.3.) Ionia Community Library 2025 Annual Report

Ionia Community Library Director Dale Parus and Ionia Community Library Foundation Board Member Gale Yeomans presented the library's annual report.

Councilmember Starr made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Lee, to accept the 2025 Ionia Community Library Report.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

(VI.4.) Ionia Housing Commission 2025 Annual Report

Executive Director of the Ionia Housing Commission Katie Bennett reported on the Housing Commission's activities from the previous year.

Councilmember Cowling made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Cook, to accept the 2025 Ionia Housing Commission Annual Report.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

(VI.5.) Planning Commission 2025 Annual Report

Assistant City Manager and City Clerk Jonathan Bowman presented the 2025 Community Development and Planning Commission Annual Report to Council, as recommended by the Ionia Planning Commission. Planning Commission Chair Logan Bailey thanked staff for their guidance over the past year.

Councilmember Starr made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Cowling, to accept the 2025 Community Development and Planning Commission Annual Report.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

VII. CITY MANAGER'S REPORT

(VII.1.) Introduction and First Reading - Ordinance No. 602 - Codification

Ordinance No. 602 was presented to Council by City Manager Garland. The ordinance would codify all ordinances and select resolutions enacted by City Council since March 5, 2025.

Councilmember Cook made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Cowling, to introduce and conduct a first reading of Ordinance No. 602, an ordinance to codify the ordinances adopted by the City Council since March 5, 2025, and to schedule a Public Hearing regarding the proposed ordinance for 6:30 PM, Wednesday, March 4, 2026, at Ionia City Hall.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Tim Lee, Margot Cook, Richard Starr, Troy Waterman, Brenda Cowling, John Milewski

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

MOTION CARRIED

**CITY OF IONIA
IONIA COUNTY, MICHIGAN
Ordinance No. 602**

AN ORDINANCE APPROVING THE EDITING AND INCLUSION OF CERTAIN ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS AS PARTS OF THE VARIOUS COMPONENT CODES OF THE CODIFIED ORDINANCES AND REPEALING ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS IN CONFLICT THEREWITH.

At a regular meeting of the City Council for the City of Ionia, Michigan held at City Hall on _____, 2026, beginning at 6:30 P.M., Councilmember _____ made a motion to adopt this Ordinance, which was supported by Councilmember _____.

WHEREAS, American Legal Publishing Corporation will soon complete its most recent updating and revision of the Codified Ordinances of the City;

WHEREAS, various ordinances and resolutions of a general and permanent nature that have been passed by Council since the date of the last updating and revision of the Codified Ordinances (March 5, 2025) have been included in the Codified Ordinances of the City;

THE CITY OF IONIA ORDAINS:

Section 1. That the editing, arrangement and numbering or renumbering of the following ordinances and resolutions are hereby approved as parts of the various component codes of the Codified Ordinances of the City, so as to conform to the classification and numbering system of the Codified Ordinances:

<u>Ord. or Res. No.</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>C.O. Section</u>
593	4-2-25	Amend Ch. 1246: Zoning Map to reflect rezoning of 848 and 850 E. Lincoln Avenue from B-1 to HDR

Res. 25-16	6-24-25	Amend water and sewer fees in accordance with Sec. 214.05 and Sec. 1040.10
594	7-2-25	Amend Ch. 1276: Site Plan Review, Sec. 1289.08, and Sec. 1290.09
595	8-6-25	Amend Sec. 606.01, Ch. 804: Sidewalk Cafes, Sec. 1020.17, and Sec. 1062.13 – Alcoholic Beverages
Res. 25-23	9-3-25	Revise and change City Ward boundaries in accordance with Sec. 6.03 of City of Ionia Charter
596	10-1-25	Amend Ch. 1612: Emergency and Fire Services Response Cost Recovery
597	10-1-25	Amend Ch. 1246: Zoning Map to assign the T Zoning District to parcel 34-204-800-000-005-13
Res. 25-24	10-1-25	Establish a schedule of rates, fees, and charges in accordance with Sec. 1612.02 and Sec. 1612.03
598	11-5-25	Enact new Ch. 1294: Short-Term Rentals and amend Sec. 1240.11, Sec. 1248.02, Sec. 1250.02, Sec. 1252.02, Sec. 1258.02, and Sec. 1260.02
599	11-5-25	Amend Ch. 858: Renting of Residential Property
600	11-5-25	Amend Sec. 214.06 – Establish ADU Fees
Res. 25-25	11-5-25	Establish rental registration program fees in accordance with Sec. 858.08
601	1-7-26	Enact new Sec. 1274.10 and amend Sec. 1260.03 – Parking as an Accessory Use to an Adjacent Lot

Section 2. If any section, clause or phrase of this ordinance is declared to be invalid, the same shall not affect the validity of the ordinance as a whole or any part thereof other than the part so declared to be invalid.

Section 3. This ordinance shall be published and recorded as provided in the City Charter and shall take effect upon publication.

(VII.2.) Policy 4-007 Amendment - City of Ionia Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Policy for Administration of Brownfield Redevelopment Projects.

City Manager Garland presented a revised version of Policy 4-007, as recommended by the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, to assist in collecting detailed information to evaluate large housing developments and their associated tax increment financing capture requests.

Mayor Milewski made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Starr, to approve Policy #4-007, Policy for Administration of Brownfield Redevelopment Projects, as amended.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Tim Lee, Margot Cook, Richard Starr, Troy Waterman, Brenda Cowling, John Milewski

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

MOTION CARRIED

(VII.3.) Resolution 2026-05 - Request from County Seat Brewing Company, LLC for a Social District Permit

Resolution 2026-05 was introduced on behalf of County Seat Brewing Company for a social district permit.

Councilmember Cook made a motion, seconded by Mayor Milewski, to approve Resolution 2026-05, a resolution to grant City of Ionia approval for a Discover Ionia Social District Permit on behalf of County Seat Brewing Company, LLC and to submit a recommendation for approval to the Michigan Liquor Control Commission.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Tim Lee, Margot Cook, Richard Starr, Troy Waterman, Brenda Cowling, John Milewski

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

MOTION CARRIED

Resolution 2026-05



COUNTY OF IONIA, MICHIGAN

A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE A SOCIAL DISTRICT PERMIT

At a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Ionia, held at the Ionia City Hall, 114 North Kidd Street, Ionia, Michigan, on the 4th day of February, 2026 at 6:30 PM, there were:

PRESENT: Margot Cook, Brenda Cowling, Tim Lee, Richard Starr, Troy Waterman, and John Milewski

ABSENT: Tom Millard, Jeff Winters, and Mary Patrick

The following Resolution was offered for adoption by City Councilmember Cook and was seconded by Mayor Milewski:

WHEREAS, the City of Ionia has established the Discover Ionia Social District, which has also received approval by the Michigan Liquor Control Commission; and

WHEREAS, to participate in the sale of alcoholic beverages within the commons area of the District, qualified businesses are required to individually apply for a Social District Permit; and

WHEREAS, a Social District Permit has been received from County Seat Brewing Company, LLC, located at 326 and 328 W. Main Street, Ionia, Michigan, which is contiguous to the Discover Ionia Social District commons area, and has subsequently been reviewed and found to be administratively complete.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

1. The application from County Seat Brewing Company, LLC is approved by the Ionia City Council for consideration for approval by the Michigan Liquor Control Commission.
2. If not recommended, the stated reason is as follows: _____.

3. All prior resolutions and parts of resolutions in conflict herewith are, to the extent of such conflict, hereby repealed.
4. This Resolution shall take effect immediately.

RESOLUTION 2026-05 DECLARED ADOPTED.

(VII.4.) 2026 Independence Holiday Fireworks Permit

Councilmember Starr made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Lee, to approve the Fireworks Display Permit for Pyrotecnico Fireworks, Inc., of New Castle PA for the launching of fireworks on Thursday, June 25, 2026, in the in-field of the Ionia Fairgrounds and to waive the \$25 application fee.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Tim Lee, Margot Cook, Richard Starr, Troy Waterman, Brenda Cowling, John Milewski

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

MOTION CARRIED

(VII.5.) Development Area Citizens Council Establishment

City Manager Garland explained that a new Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and Development Plan is being drafted to allow for the capture of increment revenues from increased property values within a smaller subset of the DDA District identified as the Development Area. She further detailed that under the Recodified Tax Increment Financing Act, PA 57 of 2018, a Development Area Citizens Council (DACC) shall be established if the proposed Development Area has 100 or more residents within it, and the City's proposed Development Area has an estimated 133 residents per the 2020 Decennial Census.

Mayor Milewski made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Cook, to establish a Development Area Citizens Council in accordance with the Recodified Tax Increment Financing Act, PA 57 of 2018.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Tim Lee, Margot Cook, Richard Starr, Troy Waterman, Brenda Cowling, John Milewski

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

MOTION CARRIED

(VII.6.) Schedule Capital Improvement Plan Worksession

Councilmember Cowling made a motion, seconded by Mayor Milewski, to schedule a special City Council meeting and public hearing for 5:30 PM on Wednesday, March 4, 2026, for the purpose of receiving public comments on the proposed Capital Improvement Program.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Tim Lee, Margot Cook, Richard Starr, Troy Waterman, Brenda Cowling, John Milewski

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

MOTION CARRIED

VIII. APPOINTMENTS

(VIII.1.) DDA Board Appointment

In accordance with Section 2.03 of the City Charter of the City of Ionia, Mayor John Milewski recommended for Council approval the appointment of Mark Ludema to the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Board of Directors.

Mayor Milewski made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Starr, to appoint Mark Ludema to serve on the DDA Board of Directors for a four-year term ending December 31, 2029.

Roll Call Vote:

Ayes: Tim Lee, Margot Cook, Richard Starr, Troy Waterman, Brenda Cowling, John Milewski

Nays: None

Abstentions: None

MOTION CARRIED

IX. CITY DEPARTMENT REPORTS AND MINUTES FROM BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

(IX.1.) Accounts Payable

February 5 - Councilmember Winters and/or Councilmember Cook

February 19 - Councilmember Patrick and/or Councilmember Waterman

(IX.2.) January Reports & Minutes

Written department reports and minutes from various City boards and commissions were provided to Council.

X. GOOD OF THE ORDER/ CITY COUNCILMEMBER COMMENTS

City Clerk Bowman: Announced that July 24 was the filing deadline for anyone who desired to run for City Council and that the required signature petitions were available at the City Clerk's Office.

City Manager Garland: Reminded everyone that the upcoming 2026 Street Projects would commence in April.

Mayor John Milewski: Indicated that the next free movie date at the Ionia Theatre would be on Presidents' Day, February 16.

XI. CLOSED SESSION

None.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Councilmember Cowling made a motion, seconded by Councilmember Cook, to adjourn.

MOTION CARRIED BY VOICE VOTE.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:38 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jonathan T. Bowman
Ionia City Clerk