



CITY OF BURTON

CITY COUNCIL MEETING

MARCH 16, 2026

MINUTES

Council Chambers

Regular Meeting

7:00 PM

**4303 S. Center Road
Burton, MI 48519**

A. Call To Order

The Council President called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

B. Invocation

LED BY: Councilman Kris Johns

C. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America

LED BY: Councilman Kris Johns

D. Roll Call

Present: Council President Gregory Fenner, Council Member Steven Heffner, Council Vice-President Gary Wines, Council Member Ellen Ellenburg, City Council Member Kris Johns, Council Member Tina Conley

Absent: Council Member Candice Miller

E. Approval of Agenda

1. Approve the agenda as presented.

Motion by Council Member Ellenburg, second by Council Member Conley, to Approve.
Voting Yes: Gregory Fenner, Steven Heffner, Gary Wines, Ellen Ellenburg, Kris Johns, Tina Conley

Voting No: None

Motion Passed 6 - 0.

F. Staff Present

Duane Haskins, Mayor
Racheal Boggs, City Clerk
Charles Abbey, DPW Director
Ted Valley, HR Director
Brian Ross, Police Chief
Kirk Wilkinson, Fire Chief
Amanda Odette, City Attorney

G. Approval of Minutes

1. City Council Regular Meeting March 2, 2026 at 7:00PM

Motion by Council Vice-President Wines, second by Council Member Ellenburg, to Approve.

Voting Yes: Gregory Fenner, Steven Heffner, Gary Wines, Ellen Ellenburg, Kris Johns, Tina Conley

Voting No: None

Motion Passed 6 - 0.

H. Administrative Reports

Mayor Haskins reported the following:

Happy Saint Patrick's Day to everyone. I hope you enjoy yourselves. Be safe and remember to use a designated driver. The Easter Egg Hunt Event is on Saturday, March 28th, at City Hall from 12 to 2 PM. We are praying for nice weather, so that we can accommodate most of the event outside. The latest wind and weather have caused power outages. Please check on your neighbors. Levi is here from the Nathaniel Group. He is happy to answer any questions. He has been instrumental in helping the city to acquire funding. We have recently applied and have been moved to the second level due to the efficient work of Levi and his group. We were in Lansing around a week ago, where we met with several different Senators and House Reps to get pre-development dollars for the Southmoor property. Levi was born and raised in Burton and graduated from Atherton. We have discussed the ZBA appointments and the number of applicants that have come in. We decided to send the applications to the City Council to review them before putting them on the agenda. I ask that the council decide if we plan to accept any more or close it out.

I. Committee Reports

Mrs. Ellenburg stated last week, I was proud to be elected to the Executive Board for Genesee County 911. It was important for me because Mr. Fenner held that spot and that was the first time we had representation on the board. 911 is looking into software and may be transferring to BS&A. They are having trouble with their current software having the capabilities they need. 911 meetings are open to the public, and everyone is welcome. It's a good chance to get to meet some of our Police Chiefs and officers. We had a Legislative Meeting tonight. We discussed our ordinances, and the City Clerk and Attorney are working together to get them up to date on our website. We discussed limiting our codified books to save costs and utilizing our website instead. Our next Legislative Meeting will be on the third Monday in June at 6:00 PM before the City Council meeting.

Mrs. Conley stated the library had their first book sale, and it was packed. Thank you for all the donations. It was a great success. Thank you to everyone who showed up.

Mr. Johns stated Parks & Recreation had a transition to the new Parks & Recreation Directors. The handoff was very smooth. We are seeing more information on social media related to BYL sign-ups. It's wonderful to see what the future holds for Burton Parks & Recreation.

J. Audience Participation

Now is the time set-aside for members of the audience to address the Burton City Council. I would ask each individual to give their name and address for the record and to limit their comments to three (3) minutes and to speak on the topics germane to City business.

Patrick Dargel of 6119 Hugh Street spoke about agenda item 10 and asked for clarification of the item. He also asked about notifications related to agenda item 7.

Mona Ballge of 2288 S. Term Street spoke about the Burton Area Historical Society. The wolverine is coming to For-Mar for about a month from Memorial Day until July 6th.

Alan Squires of 3511 Cross Creek Blvd spoke about litter and plastic bags near Walmart, Volunteers of America, the old Lowe's building, Speedway at Court and Center, and BP at Belsay and Atherton. There are businesses in Burton that do not pick up the trash on their own properties. Is this a requirement? Are there fines? Can we ban plastic bags in Burton?

K. Council Discussion

Mr. Johns recognized Brennan Eaton, a senior bowler from Atherton High School. He is a state qualifier and part of the Dream Team. He is a four-time recognized bowler on the All-State Team. I have been a past sponsor of the Atherton Bowling Team, and I am very proud of what they have done on the lanes. I invited him here tonight to be recognized, and we are thankful you came. Congratulations!

L. Council Action

1. Approve and Authorize the payment of Attorney Billing (Odette) invoice 1070 & 1071, 2/26/26 to 3/11/26 in the amount of \$3,105.00.

Motion by Council Vice-President Wines, second by Council Member Conley, to Approve.
Voting Yes: Gregory Fenner, Steven Heffner, Gary Wines, Ellen Ellenburg, Kris Johns, Tina Conley

Voting No: None

Motion Passed 6 - 0.

2. Approve and Authorize the payment of Attorney Billing (Miller Johnson) invoice 2051451, 2/1/26 to 2/28/26 in the amount of \$370.80.

Motion by Council Vice-President Wines, second by Council Member Heffner, to Approve.
Voting Yes: Gregory Fenner, Steven Heffner, Gary Wines, Ellen Ellenburg, Kris Johns, Tina Conley

Voting No: None

Motion Passed 6 - 0.

3. Approve and authorize the Mayor's re-appointment of Debra Dunsmore, 2156 Judd Rd., Burton, MI 48529, to the Parks and Recreation Commission, with a term to expire March 2029.

Motion by Council Member Heffner, second by Council Member Conley, to Approve.
Voting Yes: Gregory Fenner, Steven Heffner, Gary Wines, Ellen Ellenburg, Kris Johns, Tina Conley

Voting No: None

Motion Passed 6 - 0.

4. Approve and authorize the Mayor's appointment of Desiree Hoffman, 2047 Judd Rd., Burton, MI 48529, to the Parks and Recreation Commission, with a term to expire March 2029.

Motion by Council Vice-President Wines, second by Council Member Conley, to Approve.
Voting Yes: Gregory Fenner, Steven Heffner, Gary Wines, Ellen Ellenburg, Kris Johns, Tina Conley

Voting No: None

Motion Passed 6 - 0.

5. Approve and authorize the Mayor's appointment of Lary Michael, 2122 E. Mclean Ave., Burton, MI 48529, to the Parks and Recreation Commission, with a

term to expire March 2029.

Motion by Council Member Ellenburg, second by Council Member Heffner, to Approve.
Voting Yes: Gregory Fenner, Steven Heffner, Gary Wines, Ellen Ellenburg, Kris Johns,
Tina Conley

Voting No: None

Motion Passed 6 - 0.

6. Approve and authorize the Mayor's appointment of Jacob Pickett, 4339 Chicory Ln., Burton, MI 48519, to the Parks and Recreation Commission, with a term to expire March 2029.

Motion by Council Vice-President Wines, second by Council Member Conley, to Approve.
Voting Yes: Gregory Fenner, Steven Heffner, Gary Wines, Ellen Ellenburg, Kris Johns,
Tina Conley

Voting No: None

Motion Passed 6 - 0.

7. Approve and Authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a contract with Elexco Land Services 1232 North Eifert Road, Holt, MI 48842 to comply with the requirements of the Michigan Department of Transportation for easement acquisition on the Iron Belle Trail project.

Motion by Council Member Ellenburg, second by Council Vice-President Wines, to Approve.

Voting Yes: Gregory Fenner, Steven Heffner, Gary Wines, Ellen Ellenburg, Kris Johns,
Tina Conley

Voting No: None

Motion Passed 6 - 0.

8. Approve and Authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to execute a contract with Wade Trim, Inc. 555 S. Saginaw Street, Suite 201 Flint, MI 48502, for Preliminary Engineering of Maple Road TIP project from Dort Hwy to Center Rd., at a cost not to exceed \$64,100.00.

Motion by Council Member Heffner, second by Council Member Conley, to Approve.

Voting Yes: Gregory Fenner, Steven Heffner, Gary Wines, Ellen Ellenburg, Kris Johns,
Tina Conley

Voting No: None

Motion Passed 6 - 0.

9. Approve and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to enter into a government affairs service agreement with the Nathaniel Group, LLC, 425 8th St. NW, Washington, DC 20004, for strategic advisory services.

Mr. Wines posed questions about travel expenses, retainer fees, and asked for examples of work done in other communities and approximately how many hours per week work would be done on behalf of the city.

Mr. Todd stated that the travel expenses in Michigan and Washington, DC are included in the retainer fee. This year, the president signed over \$8.6 million for a city in this county for economic development. Our group was instrumental in getting those funds for the municipality. We secured \$7.5 million for a local non-profit in the City of Flint related to building a cultural district. We have helped communities in Detroit, Flint, and throughout Genesee County. I expect that our entire group would spend about 40-50 hours per

month in the City of Burton.

Mrs. Ellenburg asked if there is current economic development money that could benefit the City of Burton.

Mr. Todd said, absolutely. There are dollars right now at the state and federal level that the city needs to access. I have a lot of ties in Burton and the city means a lot to me. I would love to help bring real dollars to our community to help with economic development here.

Mr. Wines asked if the mayor or the administration would be receiving monthly reports about the group's activities.

Mr. Todd said, yes. We provide monthly reports. Also, if the council would like me to come in and speak at any time, I am happy to do that.

Mr. Heffner asked about where the office is located. When I looked up the address, it was an apartment.

Mr. Todd stated that we are based in Michigan and Washington, DC. The Washington DC office is a corporate building that includes office spaces and corporate housing.

Mr. Heffner asked why we didn't go out to bid for this.

Mayor Haskins stated it is a professional services contract and doesn't require a bid. Furthermore, Levi has already been helping the city acquire funding over the last couple of months.

Mrs. Conley asked if this was monthly. If we don't feel like continuing, can we get out of it?

Mayor Haskins stated that the agreement states that either party can give a 30-day written notice to terminate.

Attorney Odette agreed with the mayor's statement.

Mr. Heffner asked how many times the city administration has gone to the NLC hub for grants?

Mayor stated I'm not sure that we use the NLC, but we apply for every grant we are notified about.

Mr. Heffner stated the past administration was given a database through the NLC for grants and never once used it. Will council get regular updates on their progress? If this doesn't work out, does the council or the mayor pull the plug?

Discussion continued about the Nathaniel Group, their footprint in Washington, and the kind of work they do to secure funding for cities.

Mayor Haskins stated they will provide at least quarterly updates to the council. If the council votes to terminate the agreement, I will honor that request.

Mrs. Ellenburg stated I look at this as Levi being our lobbyist on a national level. The

county does this. Grants with the big dollars come from the federal government. We will get our money back. I have faith in Levi that he will fight and make sure Burton gets money for our projects.

Mr. Johns stated in terms of priorities, where do you see the opportunities for Burton?

Mr. Todd stated the government loves to take its time. Each appropriation cycle is on a different timeline. Requests are open at the federal and state levels right now. It will then be vetted by the committee. Around July we should know how far we have moved through the process and where the mark-ups are. We will make sure someone is always there, giving the City of Burton a seat at the table. People with representation in these rooms are the ones who get priority funding.

Discussion continued about funding opportunities, building relationships, and leveraging the money.

Mrs. Conley stated I like the idea that you are from Burton and trust that you are going to work hard to bring something to Burton.

Mr. Johns asked what you see as the tip of the spear, or what could you achieve in six months for Burton?

Mr. Todd stated that Southmoor is really important. Identifying pre-development dollars is a priority. Once the property is acquired, you can move straight into clearing the site, architectural and civil engineering, and get into the full scale of the project and build on that.

Mr. Johns stated he would like to see six months effort focused on Southmoor and maybe one other project.

Mr. Fenner stated I am sorry that I am skeptical because we have been down a road like this before. The money seems to always go to Flint and Detroit. Are there more communities like ours that you have been successful in getting money for that you can share?

Mayor Haskins stated this agreement is not like the others. If there is no movement in funding, we can move on.

Mr. Johns asked what we can expect to see on the monthly breakdown?

Mr. Todd stated that we log and track everything, including who we met with and what the city needs to do.

Motion by Council Vice-President Wines, second by Council Member Ellenburg, to Approve.

Voting Yes: Steven Heffner, Gary Wines, Ellen Ellenburg, Kris Johns, Tina Conley

Voting No: Gregory Fenner

Motion Passed 5 - 1.

10. Approve and Authorize resolution 2026-06 to decertify portions of the roads that are no longer improved for public use as identified by the Michigan Department of Transportation, during the certification process of the City of Burton's Act 51 roads.

Mrs. Ellenburg stated there was a question from the audience about the types of roads. What are we talking about here?

Mr. Abbey stated that the state has a new process. In their review of our Act 51 streets, they determined sections of our streets that are not for public use. As an example, on Bergin Street, where it backs up to the Bendle High School football stadium, there is an approximately 150 ft area that we don't plow or maintain.

Motion by Council Vice-President Wines, second by Council Member Conley, to Approve.
Voting Yes: Gregory Fenner, Steven Heffner, Gary Wines, Ellen Ellenburg, Kris Johns, Tina Conley

Voting No: None

Motion Passed 6 - 0.

11. Approve and authorize the sale of the vacant lot, Scottwood 59-31-526-037, to give first and final approval for the sale of this parcel to Matthew Jennings 1492 E. Scottwood Ave. Burton, MI 48529 (adjacent to parcel) for the sum of \$220.00 cash or its equivalent and authorizing the Mayor and the Clerk to execute any and all documents required to effectuate this sale.

Motion by Council Vice-President Wines, second by Council Member Heffner, to Approve.
Voting Yes: Gregory Fenner, Steven Heffner, Gary Wines, Ellen Ellenburg, Kris Johns, Tina Conley

Voting No: None

Motion Passed 6 - 0.

12. Approve a budget amendment within the Major Streets Fund as follows; Add 202-451-802.633 Maple Ave (Dort-Center) \$324,250 funds to be used from fund balance.

Motion by Council Member Heffner, second by Council Member Ellenburg, to Approve.
Voting Yes: Gregory Fenner, Steven Heffner, Gary Wines, Ellen Ellenburg, Kris Johns, Tina Conley

Voting No: None

Motion Passed 6 - 0.

Mr. Heffner asked the mayor if he noticed the VFW Hall for sale on Bristol Rd. I would love to get the tank they have there.

Mayor Haskins stated we have been working on that for a couple of months.

Mr. Heffner stated if you get the tank, I will get the cement slab donated.

Mr. Heffner asked if the city is involved in the First Net system.

Chief Ross stated that it is more for individual customers.

Mayor Haskins stated it is through AT&T, and it's not the best service. It was meant for people in the First Responder field.

Mr. Johns stated I have been getting repeated calls from constituents regarding ATV's.

Mayor Haskins stated that anyone seeing these problems in our city should call 911.

Mrs. Ellenburg stated 911 is using AI to filter out actual emergencies from other calls. This should be helpful.

Mr. Wines stated the mayor does a Day of Service each year. It's May 2nd this year and he has dozens of people who volunteer to clean up trash in the city. Also, Mr. Johns runs a non-profit called Beautify Burton. We will do our best to get the areas cleaned up that were mentioned tonight. He thanked Mr. Squires for coming to let us know.

Mrs. Conley stated if anyone is looking to get rid of their plastic bags, there is a box in the back of the Burton Library. The library uses them for benches in the park.

M. Meeting Adjournment

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Monday, April 6, 2026 @ 7:00 PM.

Agendas and minutes may be found at www.burtonmi.gov.

President Fenner adjourned the meeting at 7:57 PM.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]