

CITY OF ST. JOHNS
CITY COMMISSION MINUTES
DECEMBER 8, 2025

The regular meeting of the St. Johns City Commission was called to order by Mayor Dzurka at 6:00 p.m. at the Clinton County Courthouse, 100 East State Street, 2nd Floor, Suite #2200, St. Johns, Michigan.

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Eric Hufnagel, Brad Gurski, Scott Dzurka, Chris Hyzer, Chris DeLiso

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Chad A. Gamble, City Manager; Mindy J. Seavey, City Clerk; Justin Smith, Director of Public Services; Anne Seurnyck, City Attorney (arrived at 6:09); Chris Khorey, McKenna (arrived at 6:09)

Mayor Dzurka asked if any of the commissioners or persons present wished to discuss any of the items on the consent agenda.

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Gurski that the consent agenda be approved as presented.

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

NAY: None

Motion carried.

a. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Gurski that regular meeting minutes of November 24, 2025 be approved.

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

NAY: None

Motion carried.

b. Receipt of Warrants

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Gurski that warrants be approved as presented in the amount of \$764,140.66.

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

NAY: None

Motion carried.

c. Board Re-appointments

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Gurski that the city commission reappoint the following: Henry Burkhardt, Compensation Board (5-year term); Kathy Elliott, Board of Ethics (3-year term).

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

NAY: None

Motion carried.

AGENDA

Mayor Dzurka asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda. He added Introduction of Officer Adam Hoy at the beginning of presentations.

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Hyzer that the city commission approve the agenda as presented with additional presentation.

AGENDA**A. OPENING:**

1. Invocation
2. Pledge of Allegiance
3. Consent Agenda

The staff proposes the following items for the Consent Agenda. If any Commissioner wishes to discuss any of these items, it should be placed on the regular agenda. The remaining items and recommendations may be approved en masse:

- a. Approval of Minutes
 - Regular meeting minutes of November 24, 2025
- b. Receipt of Warrants
 - In the amount of \$764,140.66
- c. Board Re-appointments
 - Staff recommends the city commission reappoint the following: Henry Burkhardt, Compensation Board (5-year term); Kathy Elliott, Board of Ethics (3-year term).
4. Approval of Agenda:

B. PUBLIC HEARINGS:**C. PRESENTATIONS:**

1. Introduction of Officer Adam Hoy (*Added to Agenda*)
2. Quarterly Budget Report
3. Social Media Update

D. PERSONS WISHING TO PRESENT TESTIMONY:

1. Public comment - agenda & non-agenda items

E. COMMUNICATIONS:

F. OLD BUSINESS:

1. Resolution #35-2025 – Resolution to Adopt Fire Code Ordinance Amendment
2. Resolution #51-2025 – Request for Rezoning 823 N. Lansing Street – Adoption of Ordinance
3. Resolution #52-2025 – Request for Rezoning of Three Unzoned Industrial Parcels – Adoption of Ordinance
4. Resolution #53-2025 – to Adopt an Ordinance Related to Drug Paraphernalia and Marihuana Accessories - Amend Title VIII, Chapter 139, Section 139.01 Definitions and Section 139.02 Drug Paraphernalia and Marihuana Accessories, to add Section 139.03 Possession or Use of Marihuana, to add Section 139.04 Possession or Use of Other Controlled Substances, and to Repeal Section 139.99
5. Resolution #54-2025 – to Adopt an Ordinance to add 138.03 and Adopt the Offenses of Minor in Possession of Alternative Nicotine or Vapor Products, Furnishing Alternative Nicotine or Vapor Products to a Minor, and Use of Fraudulent Identification by a Minor
6. Resolution #55-2025 – to Adopt an Ordinance to Add Section 138.02 and Adopt the Offenses of Minor in Possession of Tobacco Products, Furnishing Tobacco to a Minor, Use of Fraudulent Identification by a Minor, and Furnishing False Identification to a Minor
7. Updates and Consideration for Approval of Bulk Water Agreement with Bingham Township

G. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Resolution #56-2025 – to Adopt the 2026-2030 Parks and Recreation 5-Year Master Plan
2. City Manager Comments
3. Commissioner Comments

H. ADJOURNMENT:

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

NAY: None

Motion carried.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

PRESENTATIONS

1. Chief Kirk – Introduction of Officer Adam Hoy

Chief Kirk discussed how wonderful it is to get new candidates. He said we are fortunate to get our new officer, Adam Hoy. He introduced Adam and his wife Sheila.

Officer Hoy said he is from St. Johns and has been here for 30 years; policing for 8-9 years at Gratiot then Ovid. He said he is happy to be here, his wife works at the school, and his kids are here in school.

The city commission welcomed him.

Attorney Anne Seurnyck and Chris Khorey arrived at 6:09 p.m.

2. Quarterly Budget Report

Treasurer Kinde presented the Quarterly Budget Report. She discussed:

- Budget use is around 25%.
 - On target.
- Property taxes – 95% collected.
- Expenditures.
 - General Fund at 30% (due to transfer of grant funds to Fantasy Forest Fund).
- No transfers yet to Wilson Center or Fire Fund.
 - Do this about twice per year.
- Water/sewer expenditures.
 - 16% so far.

Mayor Dzurka asked if there is any impact from changing from quarterly to monthly (utility billing).

Treasurer Kinde said there are a lot more online payments happening.

Commissioner DeLiso asked if we segregate water payments vs. late penalty payments?

Treasurer Kinde said we do separate those out and she could run a report internally.

3. Social Media Update

City Manager Gamble said he wanted Russ to provide commission the fruits of his team's hard work.

Russell Shellberg, Marketing & Media Coordinator, presented a social media update. He discussed:

- March – November 2025.
 - Posting consistency.
 - Key metrics summary.
 - Total followers up 11.9%.
 - 137,000 views per month.
 - Interaction up by 19%.
 - Engagement trends.
 - What performed well?
 - Fantasy Forest groundbreaking.
 - Did You Know series.
 - Agro Expo.
 - What worked well?
 - What's next?

Commissioner DeLiso asked if you have to follow the city on Facebook in order to see this.

Coordinator Shellberg said it pops up since it is a government page.

Commissioner Hufnagel said thank you for the update and it is fulfilling a vision the commission had quite a few years ago.

Mayor Dzurka thanked Russ and said it was great to see the transition. He said he appreciates the education; it is critical. We talked about branding and how we measure our brand. How do we continue to push our online application, so people are getting updates?

Coordinator Shellberg said the website is huge for us. It is a new system, and we are still getting our feet wet. He said the branding they are still kind of working on.

PERSONS WISHING TO PRESENT TESTIMONY

1. Public Comment

Mayor Dzurka asked if there were any public comments regarding agenda or non-agenda items. He discussed the rules regarding public comment.

Darrilyn Fraser, 511 W. Cass Street, was present. She said she loves the St. Johns newsletter that comes out and it has been very useful for her. She said in the newsletter, the turn-off program for water service says 3-months or 1 billing cycle and said we are now on a monthly billing cycle.

COMMUNICATIONSOLD BUSINESS1. Resolution #35-2025 – Resolution to Adopt Fire Code Ordinance Amendment

Fire Chief Douglas discussed his meeting with City Manager Gamble, Treasurer Kinde, Mayor Dzurka and Commissioner DeLiso. He presented the memo/roadmap that was in the packet. He discussed the roles of building code and fire code: the building code tells when it will be done and how to do it and the fire code is maintaining it. They discussed inspections at the meeting and how often.

The commission discussed:

- The memo was extremely helpful.
- Sprinkler systems have been installed because of building code and building code says when it needs to be tested.
 - Testing and inspections need to be done by a third party.
- The building code drives this.
- Existing buildings will not see a difference unless a business significantly changes the type of business.
- Enforcement and civil infractions.
 - Under section 112.4 Violations/Penalties.
 - Fire Chief Douglas said he is education over enforcement and will work with business owners to talk and educate them.
 - Appeals area.
 - We can have a board of appeals; qualifications.
- Reason we put a \$ amount in the ordinance instead of the resolution.
 - We could refer to the fee & rate schedule.
 - Attorney Seurnyck said it gives a range of \$50 to \$500. The \$500 for misdemeanor is a statutory thing and she discussed consistency.
 - City Manager Gamble said it is not uncommon in fire fees to have 1st offense, 2nd offense, 3rd offense. We can build that into fee structure we can present along with the budget process.

Attorney Seurnyck recommended adding language after the “\$500”.

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner DeLiso that the city commission adopt Resolution #35-2025 with the clause that a change to be made to add language after \$50 to \$500 “as listed in the fee and rate schedule”.

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

NAY: None

Motion carried.

2. Resolution #51-2025 – Request for Rezoning 823 N. Lansing Street – Adoption of Ordinance

Mayor Dzurka discussed the ordinance.

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Gurski that the city commission adopt Resolution #51-2025.

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

NAY: None

Motion carried.

3. Resolution #52-2025 – Request for Rezoning of Three Unzoned Industrial Parcels – Adoption of Ordinance

Mayor Dzurka discussed the parcels we discovered as unzoned.

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Gurski that the city commission adopt Resolution #52-2025.

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

NAY: None

Motion carried.

4. Resolution #53-2025 – to Adopt an Ordinance Related to Drug Paraphernalia and Marihuana Accessories - Amend Title VIII, Chapter 139, Section 139.01 Definitions and Section 139.02 Drug Paraphernalia and Marihuana Accessories, to add Section 139.03 Possession or Use of Marihuana, to add Section 139.04 Possession or Use of Other Controlled Substances, and to Repeal Section 139.99

Mayor Dzurka discussed the resolution.

Motion by Commissioner Gurski seconded by Commissioner Hufnagel that the city commission adopt Resolution #53-2025.

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, DeLiso

NAY: Hyzer

Motion carried.

5. Resolution #54-2025 – to Adopt an Ordinance to add 138.03 and Adopt the Offenses of Minor in Possession of Alternative Nicotine or Vapor Products, Furnishing Alternative Nicotine or Vapor Products to a Minor, and Use of Fraudulent Identification by a Minor

Motion by Commissioner Gurski seconded by Commissioner DeLiso that the city commission adopt Resolution #54-2025.

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, DeLiso

NAY: Hyzer

Motion carried.

6. Resolution #55-2025 – to Adopt an Ordinance to Add Section 138.02 and Adopt the Offenses of Minor in Possession of Tobacco Products, Furnishing Tobacco to a Minor, Use of Fraudulent Identification by a Minor, and Furnishing False Identification to a Minor

Motion by Commissioner Hufnagel seconded by Commissioner Gurski that the city commission adopt Resolution #55-2025.

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, DeLiso

NAY: Hyzer

Motion carried.

7. Updates and Consideration for Approval of Bulk Water Agreement with Bingham Township

Mayor Dzurka discussed the new copy that was emailed over the weekend. He said there is a lot of work to be done after this. He said Bingham Township is having their meeting also this evening.

Commissioner Gurski said he appreciated all the work from both parties, and he is looking forward to getting this moving.

Mayor Dzurka said this is the first step.

Motion by Commissioner DeLiso seconded by Commissioner Gurski that the city commission adopt the Bulk Water Agreement Between the City of St. Johns and Bingham Township.

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

NAY: None

Motion carried.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Resolution #56-2025 – to Adopt the 2026-2030 Parks and Recreation 5-Year Master Plan

Parks and Recreation Director Schafer said this resolution is supporting the 2026/2030 Parks and Recreation 5-year Master Plan. He discussed: the process began in July of 2024; the board met and reviewed the parks; the questionnaires; draft document was available for 45 days; sent to the Planning Commission where they held a public hearing and the sent to the city commission for approval; approval of the resolution is the next step to send it to the DNR; it is required to be on file for us to apply for grants; and funding of \$1,309,400 received from the DNR to fund projects. He said he is happy to answer any questions.

City Manager Gamble commended Director Schafer and the entire team that worked hard to create the surveys, send them out, and placed them on our website; we used social media and held an open house. He said it was a very heavy lift by the entire city team led by Director Schafer and he commended him.

Mayor Dzurka said they have been seeing a lot of this with doing the master plan concurrently.

Commissioner Hufnagel thanked Bill and said it was a lot of great information. He asked if there was any discussion regarding additional costs incurred by the city beyond creating amenities such as maintenance? He asked if that was part of the group's charge.

Director Schafer said not so much, a lot was redevelopment and taking what we have and redoing things. He said the plan doesn't really address adding employees.

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Gurski that the city commission adopt Resolution #56-2025 to Adopt the 2026-2030 City of St. Johns Parks and Recreation Five Year Master Plan.

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

NAY: None

Motion carried.

2. City Manager Comments

City Manager Gamble discussed:

- Wilson Center roof project is complete.
 - We haven't received a final bill yet.
 - It should be close to the projected budget.
 - We haven't heard results from National Parks Historic Preservation yet.
- We received an external hard drive of the 2025 Tri-county Regional Planning Commission; they flew the entire county for aerals.
 - Our contribution was small.

- Aerial images.
- He wished the commission a very Merry Christmas.

3. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Gurski attended the MML Workers Comp. Board meeting as a liaison. He said he is hearing across the board that mid-2026 is lining up as a correction type year for the housing market. He said to keep that in mind for the 2026/27 budget. Happy holidays.

Commissioner DeLiso said Merry Christmas and see you in new year.

Commissioner Hufnagel thanked everyone for a successful strategic planning session. He said it was tweaked from last year and he feels good about the progress. Happy holidays.

Commissioner Hyzer said Merry Christmas and travel safely.

Mayor Dzurka said he is appreciative we had the parks and recreation here tonight. He appreciated having updates and having Russell here. He said he had questions about the library come up this week and it would be nice to have updates from others. He recognized the work of the PSD (Principal Shopping District) at the Christmas celebration downtown on Friday night. He said there were comments online regarding parking downtown shutting down and asked them to review that. Merry Christmas. He discussed the celebration with employees coming up. He wished all of them a Merry Christmas.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Commissioner Hyzer seconded by Commissioner Gurski that the meeting be adjourned.

YEA: Hufnagel, Gurski, Dzurka, Hyzer, DeLiso

NAY: None

Motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 p.m.