



# Brighton City Council Meeting

200 N First St • City Hall Council Chambers • Brighton, Michigan 48116  
(810) 227-1911 • www.brightoncitymi.gov

## MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE BRIGHTON CITY COUNCIL HELD ON JANUARY 13, 2026

### 1. Call to order

Mayor Tobbe called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

### 2. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Tobbe led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance

### 3. Roll call

Present were Mayor Tobbe, Mayor Pro Tem Bohn, Councilmembers: Albert, Gardner, Gipson, Pettengill, and Schmenk.

Others Present: City Manager Gretchen Gomolka, DPS Director Marcel Goch, Community Development Manager Mike Caruso, Human Resources Manager Michelle Whitney, City Clerk Tara Brown, and Chief Brent Pirochta.

### 4. Consider approval of the agenda

**Motion** by Councilmember Pettengill, seconded by Councilmember Gardner to approve the agenda as presented. **The motion carried, 7-0.**

### 5. Consider approval of consent agenda items

**Motion** by Councilmember Schmenk, seconded by Councilmember Albert to approve the consent agenda. **The motion carried, 7-0.**

#### Consent Agenda Items

##### a. Approval of minutes: regular meeting of December 9, 2025

#### Correspondence

### 6. Councilmember updates

Councilmember Pettengill noted that the Brighton Arts and Culture Commission presented to the Downtown Development Authority during their December 16, 2025, meeting to discuss plans for 2026 events and initiatives. Also, the Brighton Arts and Culture Commission is planning to add two more sculptures for a call to arts in mid-2026.

Mayor Pro Tem Bohn reported that the Planning Commission met on January 5, 2026, and discussed three items. The Master Plan was tabled, proposed amendments to the zoning map were reviewed, and proposed amendments to the zoning ordinance were reviewed.

Councilmember Gardner noted that the Brighton Area Fire Authority met to elect its officers for 2026. The board also discussed Trinity Hospital, construction of station 31, and the addition of two new boats to the fleet.

Councilmember Albert asked that city staff look into reallocating funds towards streets due to the recent millage renewal and to maximize the construction of streets in an effort to spread dollars throughout the city and to look at beautification along the new I96 interchange to provide some kind of gateway welcome signage.

Councilmember Gipson noted the Downtown Development Authority will consider approval of a new summer concert series at the AMP and festival park area. More details come once the organizer is approved.

Mayor Tobbe asked that MDOT visit during an upcoming City Council meeting to discuss the next steps of the I96

interchange reconstruction with City Council and staff.

#### **7. Staff updates**

City Manager Gomolka stated that Finance Director Gaines and DPS Director Goch have been working on the street selection process in preparation for the retreat which will be held on Saturday, January 24, 2026, at 9:00 a.m. at City Hall.

Community Development Manager Caruso stated that the redevelopment of the Mobil gas station while the I96 interchange reconstruction is underway to enhance the location.

#### **8. Call to the public**

Mayor Tobbe opened the call to the public at 6:45 p.m.

Mike Monroe spoke regarding snow plowing near the parking lot near Hyne Road.

Susan Walters Bakhwas spoke regarding a charter reference to appointments to various boards and commissions.

Hearing and seeing no further comment, Mayor Tobbe closed the call to the public at 6:52 p.m.

Councilmember Albert asked for clarification in response to a concern raised during the call to the public regarding snow removal. DPS Director Goch explained the methods and timing of snow removal operations, noting that DPW crews often plow during the middle of the night. He also described the various equipment and techniques used to clear roads and parking lots. Mr. Goch noted that snow removal is made more difficult when homeowners and business owners push snow into City parking lots after crews have already plowed, and when vehicles remain parked in lots during a snow event, which can prevent crews from fully clearing snow around them.

Councilmember Gardner also asked about parking requirements for building owners with apartments above their businesses. City Manager Gomolka noted that some buildings provide parking through the business owner, while others do not, and added that the city could consider drafting an ordinance to prohibit overnight parking. Chief Pirochta referenced the laws related to abandoned vehicles and outlined the procedures for towing an abandoned vehicle. Community Development Manager Caruso noted that three buildings do not provide resident parking and instead rely on public parking, and that a parking permit option could be considered for residents who are not provided with parking. Mayor Tobbe stated that a broader discussion is needed to evaluate options and gather input.

City Manager Gomolka clarified, in response to a comment made during the call to the public regarding appointments to boards and commissions, that Section 5.8, Filling Vacancies in Appointive Offices, states vacancies in appointive offices shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment—meaning the Mayor makes a recommendation and City Council considers the recommendation or as outlined in bylaws or ordinance.

#### **Discussion**

#### **9. Potential changes to the current parking lot at Center and N 1<sup>st</sup> Street to improve circulation**

City staff provided options to enhance to the parking lot at Center and N 1<sup>st</sup> Streets to improve circulation and safety. Staff will get estimates and come back to City Council for consideration.

#### **10. University of Michigan Gerald R. Ford School of Public Policy project**

Students from the University of Michigan Ford School are working on a semester long project where they will partner with the City to create a FY25 Popular Annual Financial Report (PAFR) based on the City's Annual Comprehensive Financial Report (ACFR). Because ACFRs are lengthy and highly technical, the PAFR will provide a more accessible, visually engaging summary of Brighton's finances for residents. The project will include background research and benchmarking, 2–3 in-person stakeholder engagement meetings, development of a draft PAFR and reusable template, and a final presentation of the completed report to City Council, along with staff training on future use. City staff

liaisons for the project will be Management Assistant Joe Gaikema and Finance Director Liz Gaines.

### **New Business**

#### **11. Officers Compensation Commission presentation and consider approval of compensation recommendations**

Officers Compensation Commission members Christina Quinn and Tim Moore provided City Council with a slideshow outlining Officers Compensation Commission background information, the compensation comparison process with similar municipalities, how the recommendation was determined, and the proposed compensation levels for both City Council and other boards and commissions.

**Motion** by Councilmember Albert, seconded by Councilmember Schmenk to approve the recommended compensation for boards and commissions along with necessary budget amendments. **The motion carried, 7-0.**

#### **12. Reappointment to the City of Brighton Election Commission**

**Motion** by Councilmember Pettengill, seconded by Councilmember Gardner to reappoint Michelle Petrak to the Election Commission. **The motion carried, 7-0.**

#### **13. Conduct a first reading and consider setting a public hearing date of February 10, 2026, for Ordinance 609, amendments to the City of Brighton Code of Ordinances, Chapter 14, "Animals"**

Community Development Manager Caruso discussed changes to the proposed ordinance to allow up to six hens and City Council discussed inspection frequency as well as fees associated with Ordinance 609. Additional conversation centered around accessory structures and newly amended ordinances.

**Motion** by Councilmember Gardner, seconded by Councilmember Schmenk to set a public hearing date of February 10, 2026, for Ordinance 609, amendments to the City of Brighton Code of Ordinances, Chapter 14, "Animals". **The motion carried, 7-0.**

### **Public Hearing**

#### **14. Conduct a second reading and public hearing for proposed ordinance 612, amendments to of the City of Brighton Code of Ordinances, Chapter 78, "Streets, Sidewalks and Other Public Places"**

City Manager Gomolka provided background context for the proposed amendment, noting the challenges that occur when businesses or homeowners push snow onto parking lots and sidewalks that City staff has already plowed. Ms. Gomolka stated that issues identified early in the snow season have been addressed; however, enforcement of this ordinance will ensure the city is prepared if problems arise in the future. As always, the City Manager will continue working with business owners and homeowners to resolve issues as needed.

Mayor Tobbe opened the public hearing at 8:14 p.m. Hearing and seeing no comment, the public hearing was closed.

**Motion** by Mayor Pro Tem Bohn, seconded by Councilmember Albert to approve ordinance 612, amendments to the City of Brighton Code of Ordinances, Chapter 78, "Streets, Sidewalks and Other Public Places". **The motion carried by roll call vote, 7-0.**

### **Other Business**

**15. Call to the public**

Mayor Tobbe opened the call to the public at 8:16 p.m.

Giovanna Tessmer noted that she and neighbors that she spoke with would prefer that Woodlake Drive is reconstructed all at once rather than have disruption twice if reconstructed in phases.

Susan Walters Bakhaus spoke regarding board and commission positions with respect to the recently adopted compensation.

Hearing and seeing no further comment, Mayor Tobbe closed the call to the public at 8:21 p.m.

**16. Adjournment**

**Motion** by Councilmember Gardner, seconded by Councilmember Gipson, to adjourn the meeting at 8:21 p.m. **The motion carried, 7-0.**

---

Tara Brown, City Clerk