

City of Kingsford

CITY COUNCIL MINUTES – REGULAR MEETING

TUESDAY, JANUARY 20TH, 2026

COUNCIL CHAMBERS, CITY HALL

305 S. CARPENTER AVE. KINGSFORD, MI 49802

Roll Call of Council: Present: Freeman, Olson, Groeneveld, Dixon-Miller

Excused: Flaminio

Others present: Michael Stelmaszek (City Manager), Holly Palmer (City Treasurer), Brandon Rutter (Kingsford Public Safety Director) Jeff DeMuri (DPW Superintendent), Maggie Lanthier (Daily News), Ken Wood (Citizens Advisory Committee Member), Scott Sternhagen (CLA Auditor), Tanya Hiltonen (Assistant City Clerk)

Mayor Groeneveld led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of the Minutes:

- A. Council Meeting of January 5th, 2026 – **Motion** by Freeman, **seconded by** Dixon-Miller to approve the minutes for the January 5th, 2026, Council Meeting as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Approval of Agenda: **Motion** by Olson, **seconded by** Dixon-Miller to approve the agenda as presented.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Invoices: **Motion** by Dixon-Miller; **seconded by** Freeman to approve the invoices payable from January 6th, 2026, to January 20th, 2026, in the amount or \$331,178.76.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Consent Agenda:

- A. Public Safety Report – December 2025
- B. Treasurers Report – December 2025
 1. Training Request – Request for Holly Palmer to attend the Michigan Municipal Treasurer's Association (MMTA) virtual Treasurer-to-Treasurer sessions (8 of them) held throughout 2026. The cost is \$99.00 for the bundle of 8 trainings.

Motion by Dixon-Miller; **seconded by** Olson to approve the training request for Holly Palmer.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Motion by Freeman, **seconded by** Dixon-Miller to receive and place on file the consent agenda.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Public Comment: None.

Communications: None.

Manager's Report:

1. There will be a legislative reception at the Ski Jumps that council members were invited to attend. Any interested council members can RSVP for themselves, or Stelmaszek can RSVP for them. A flyer was handed out.

1. OSHA Form 300A was recently completed for the 2025 Calendar Year indicating no work-related injuries occurred involving city employees for 2025.
2. Tanya has requested to attend a one-day Upper Peninsula Human Resource Association training seminar in Marquette on April 23rd, 2026. Early Bird pricing is currently available for \$70. Attendance will provide her points toward maintaining her certification in UPHRA. Request for her to attend the training and for the city to pay the costs associated with her attendance.

Motion by Freeman; **seconded** by Dixon-Miller to approve the training request for Tanya Hiltonen and the costs associated with her attendance.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. A review of the projects needed in the city was conducted with the department heads. Jacob Marotz has selected to construct a K9 exercise and training compound at Public Safety for his Eagle Scout Project.
4. The Citizens Advisory Committee met last week. They are now fully staffed with nine members and enthusiastic about goals set for the coming year. These goals include evaluation and proposed uses for the city's new property adjacent to Lodal Park, continuing to work on the Hometown Heroes Program, monitoring goals set for the DPW on incremental improvements to the city park system and city decorations for the country's 250th anniversary.

Motion by Dixon-Miller; **seconded** by Angela Olson to receive and place on file the Manager's Report.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Old Business: None.

New Business:

- A. Presentation of FY 2024/2025 Audit by Scott Sternhagen of CLA – Scott Sternhagen approached the council provide an overview of their audit report that was provided to each of the council members to review. There were two findings this year, one of the findings is related to CLA preparing the audit report and is a significant deficiency but he noted that it's unavoidable and is not uncommon with other municipalities. The other was a journal entry finding – he noted that in the previous years there were multiple, so it was a significant improvement from previous years. He commented that CLA had no issues working with city staff or management, that the process ran smoother and improvements had been made to processes addressing previous findings. He went over the city's financials and showed that the city is in good standing.
- B. Sewer Fund Action Plan Resolution 2026/1/20.1 – Sternhagen explained the need for the resolution. The City's sewer fund had a deficit fund balance on June 30th, 2025, which requires that a Deficit Elimination Plan be formulated by the local unit of government and filed with the Michigan Department of Treasury. With the resolution, Kingsford City Council adopts the following as the City of Kingsford's Sewer Fund Deficit Elimination Plan: During the fiscal year ended 6/30/2025, the Sewer Utility of the City of Kingsford used cash on hand to fund capital infrastructure for the sewer utility as a large water infrastructure was occurring, and the City decided to do the sewer improvements at the same time as the street was already under construction. The city was aware that the sewer utility may not have enough cash to cover the entire project, and the general fund would "borrow" to the sewer fund up to \$180,000 if needed, with the Sewer Utility to pay back the general fund in the following year. With the debt being fully retired during the 2025 fiscal year, the Sewer Utility will have sufficient cash to pay back the city's general fund. Furthermore, the city will be increasing sewer rates effective 7/1/26 to increase the fund balance further to provide for aging

infrastructure replacement, and expansion. Therefore, the Sewer Utility will be out of a deficit for the year ended 6/30/26.

Motion by Dixon-Miller; **seconded by** Freeman to adopt the Sewer Fund Action Plan Resolution No. 2026/1/20.1

ROLL CALL VOTE: YEAS – FREEMAN, OLSON, GROENEVELD, DIXON-MILLER; NAYS – NONE; ABSENT – FLAMINIO

MOTION CARRIED

C. Request to Purchase New Patriotic Banners for Our Country's 250th Anniversary – The Citizens Advisory Committee selected patriotic banners that they recommend the city to purchase. Their request is for thirty 30" by 60" banners that includes the brackets (this is the lower quote). These banners are the same size and configuration of the ones that will be used in the Hometown Heroes Program and can be used either with these banners or separately. There is only \$4,689.00 remaining in the budget for "Community Decorations" If this purchase is approved, the budget category will need to be amended to pay for this and the installation of the banners. With the addition of a bucket truck installation costs are going down.

Motion by Freeman, **seconded by** Olson to approve the purchase of 30 patriotic banners from Display Sales.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

D. Update on the Hometown Hero Banner Program by the Citizen Advisory Member Ken Wood – Ken Wood and Jennifer Castro approached the council to provide an update on the Kingsford Hometown Heroes Banner Program. As of 1/5/26, they had received 11 applications. Wood stated that he had attended around 5 community events to help promote the program. They noted that some of the honorees aren't necessarily Kingsford Residents but are from the local area but may have worked in Kingsford or have a connection with Kingsford. The location of the banners is still to be determined but depending on the number of applications that they receive, they plan to place them in Lodal Park and then if they outgrow that area, move to placing them along Breitung Avenue, focusing on areas with walking paths for more visibility. Their hope is that the program will continue to grow and more communities participate.

Hearings – None.

Public Comment – None.

Councilmember's Privilege – Groeneveld thanked Scott for the good news along with Holly and Jennifer. He said he was happy to hear that the city is doing very well compared to other communities. He also mentioned the cold weather and asked told those attendance to stay inside, safe and warm.

Adjournment: **Motion** by Freeman; **seconded by** Dixon-Miller to adjourn the meeting at 7:22 PM.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Joe Groeneveld, Mayor

Michael Stelmaszek, City Manager/Clerk