



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes

MKE COMMUNITY IMPACT COMMITTEE

*Nik Kovac, Bill Christianson, Steve Mahan, Jordan Schettle,
Brook Stanley, Amanda Avalos, Tammy Rivera, Jamaal
Napoleon, Christlyn Frederick-Stanley, Ashley Harrell and
Anita Johnson*

*Staff Assistant, Chris Lee, 414-286-2232; Fax: 414-286-3456,
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Legislative Liaison, Beka Bein, 414-286-3789,
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Tuesday, March 24, 2026

1:30 PM

Room 301-B, 3rd Fl., City Hall

This also a virtual meeting via GoToMeeting. Should you wish to join this meeting from your phone, tablet, or computer you may go to <https://meet.goto.com/831498437>. You can also dial in using your phone United States: 831-498-437 and Access Code: 831-498-437.

1. **Administration of oaths.**

Administration of required oaths was completed prior to the meeting.

2. **Call to order.**

Meeting called to order at 1:37 p.m.

Mr. Lee presiding over the meeting absent there being an elected chair.

3. **Roll call.**

Member Kovac joined the committee at a later part of the meeting.

Present 11 - Mahan, Avalos, Kovac, Christianson, Stanley, Rivera, Napoleon, Frederick-Stanley, Harrell, Johnson, Schettle

Also present:

*Ald. Milele Coggs, 6th aldermanic district
Becca Bein, Legislative Reference Bureau
Dana Zelazny, Deputy City Clerk*

4. **Introduction of members.**

Members, staff, and participants at the table gave introductions.

Member Mahan stated he currently serves as Deputy Director for the City's Department of Administration. He previously served as Grants Director for the City's Community

Development Grant Administration for over 20 years. His prior experience also included serving as Deputy Director in the nonprofit sector with Harambee Ombudsman (now WestCare) and leading Amani House, a long-standing African-American treatment facility.

Member Christianson stated he serves as the City Comptroller, having been elected in April 2024. Prior to that role, he served as Deputy Comptroller and spent approximately 12 years in the City's Budget and Management Division. During that time, he led citizen engagement and participatory initiatives related to the city budget. He was a lifelong resident of Milwaukee.

Member Schettle stated he is an Assistant City Attorney with the City Attorney's Office and has been in that role for approximately four years. Prior to joining the City, he worked in private practice at Quarles & Brady. His work includes representing Milwaukee Public Schools as well as handling matters related to real estate and elections.

Member Stanley stated she is a Milwaukee resident with a background in clinical psychology and disability rights. Her work has focused on mental health and program development across nonprofit and healthcare sectors.

Ald. Milele A. Coggs stated she represents Milwaukee's 6th aldermanic district and is one of the lead sponsors of the participatory budgeting initiative that established this committee.

Member Harrell stated she is a Milwaukee resident with a professional background in nonprofit work, public policy, early childhood education, and community development.

Member Avalos stated she has been a resident of Milwaukee for several years and is engaged in community and youth organizing in Wisconsin and other states. She has appreciation for the long-term organizing efforts that contributed to the formation of this initiative.

Member Johnson stated she currently works for Souls to the Polls as an Outreach and Voter Education Specialist. She has more than 20 years of experience in civic engagement work and has previously participated in a participatory budgeting process with the African-American Roundtable.

Member Frederick-Stanley stated she is a retired educator from Milwaukee Public Schools with over 30 years of experience. She is currently active with St. Mark AME Church and expressed interest in continuing community-focused work.

Member Rivera stated she is a lifelong Milwaukee resident with approximately four decades of experience in nonprofit work, focusing on liberation and social justice efforts.

Member Napoleon stated he is a lifelong Milwaukee resident and currently serves as Global Manager of Virtual Learning and HR Technology at ManpowerGroup. In that role, he oversees learning and development initiatives across five regions and 74 countries.

Mr. Lee introduced himself as committee staff responsible for scheduling meetings and maintaining meeting records and minutes.

Ms. Bein introduced herself as the Legislative Reference Bureau liaison assigned to support the committee with research, policy analysis, and drafting.

Ms. Zelazny added that Ms. Bein is available to assist with research, analysis, and drafting of reports or legislation in support of the committee.

5. Welcome and introductory remarks.

Ald. Coggs provided remarks regarding the history and purpose of the participatory budgeting initiative. She noted that the concept had been introduced in the past by community organizations, including the African-American Roundtable and Liberate MKE. She stated that although prior legislation supported participatory budgeting, funding had not previously been allocated for it. The current initiative includes \$600,000 designated for the community through participatory budgeting. She looked forward to see what would be the recommendations and priorities from the community. Based on her research she established this steering committee to establish guidelines, and she looked forward to the committee's work ahead. She was thankful for the City Comptroller's research contribution that helped to shape the enabling legislation for the committee.

6. Election of a chair and/or vice-chair.

Mr. Lee commented. Members were to discuss and make nominations to elect a chair, at minimum, and/or a vice-chair at their discretion. Members could not nominate themselves. It was important for the committee to elect a chair, which was typical of a meeting body, to facilitate and preside over meetings, coordinate meetings, and establish meeting agendas.

Members Rivera and Harrell expressed their disinterest in serving as the chair.

Member Johnson said she had some familiarity with participatory budgeting through her work with the African-American Round Table for the northwest side of Milwaukee. She was only interested in serving as a vice-chair.

Members discussed and expressed concern about selecting a chair at the initial meeting without first gaining familiarity with the role and responsibilities of a chair and familiarity with each other's experience with participatory budgeting. Members also discussed the options to operate with an interim chair and delaying the election to allow for additional time and information.

Member Rivera moved to hold to the next meeting the election of a chair and vice-chair. There was no objection.

Members requested for staff to collect and forward the resumes or biographies of all members to everyone to consider for the next meeting, for any interested members to communicate their interest to staff to collect and forward to the whole body, and for descriptions of a chair and vice-chair to be provided.

Ms. Zelazny commented. A chair's role was mainly administrative and would not be time-consuming. The most significant responsibilities would be coordinating with staff to set meetings and agendas. During a meeting, a chair's role would be to work with staff to administer the meeting proceedings in an orderly fashion, take roll call, recognize speakers, and recognize motions. A chair would limit his/her own

participation in debate, act as a facilitator, help adjudicate issues, and allow members to initiate discussion and motions to maintain neutrality. A vice-chair would assume the chair's responsibilities in the absence of the chair.

7. Review of enabling legislation.

- a. *Duties of the committee.*
- b. *Consideration of deadline(s).*

Ms. Zelazny explained that the committee was established by Common Council resolution to develop a method for allocating funds within the MKE Community Impact Fund, present that method to the Common Council within the deadline of November 6, 2026 for review and approval, and administer distribution of those funds until all funds have been expended. The committee's recommendation would go before the Common Council's Community and Economic Development Committee. Allocation of funds would occur after Common Council approval of the committee's methodology. It was the desire of the Common Council that the MKE Community Impact Fund be expended through a resident-led, community (participatory) budgeting program.

8. Background information regarding MKE Community Impact Funds.

Ms. Zelazny gave an overview. The City had received approximately a total of \$394 million in ARPA funding for 2021 and 2022. Most of the funding was expended with rigid guidelines. 2024 budget adjustments for the City allowed city tax levy funds to be redirected. \$2.4 million was allocated to a separate Council-led Transformational Fund, which was largely spent. \$600,000 of that amount was designated specifically for the MKE Community Impact Committee to oversee.

Ald. Coggs commented. The committee should set parameters and guidelines for community submittals. The had thought that the legislation specified \$100,000 of the \$600,000 be used for acquiring a consultant or technical assistance to the committee. The committee had discretion whether to allocate the full amount to the community or to use any amount to acquire technical assistance.

Ms. Zelazny added that legislation only specified that funds be used for non-police public safety solutions.

9. Discussion regarding frequency of meetings.

Mr. Lee said that members had the most availability on Tuesday afternoons.

Members discussed options to conduct meetings on a regular schedule. Options included monthly meetings for either the 3rd or 2nd Tuesday of a month or on the same day of a Common Council meeting (3 week cycle). There was preference to have meetings on the second Tuesday of every month in the early evening to provide opportunity for the public and community to attend meetings. Meetings would be hybrid.

10. Set next meeting date(s) and time(s).

Meetings to occur every 2nd Tuesday of every month unless otherwise directed.

Next meeting to be Tuesday, April 14, 2026 at 5 p.m. and hybrid. Meeting location details to be determined.

11. Items for further agenda(s).

Members discussed action items going forward. The committee should learn from those with participatory budgeting experience; discuss a public education communication strategy (website and social media outreach); research existing use cases, best practices, and efforts from local or other communities where participatory budgeting has been employed; and think about formulating program parameters, criteria, and methodology. The committee should not have to necessarily recreate the wheel. The African-American Roundtable should be invited to present to the committee regarding their experience with participatory budgeting. Other action items, as discussed earlier in the meeting, to include dissemination of members' resume and/or biographies for the committee to consider, dissemination of description regarding the roles and responsibilities of a chair and vice-chair, and notification from interested or uninterested members concerning the chair and/or vice-chair position.

Ald. Coggs said that she had previous discussion with the City of Eau Claire regarding their participatory budgeting program. The committee's research would benefit to include the City of Eau Claire, especially regarding lessons learned from their mistakes.

Items for the next or future meetings to include election of a chair and/or vice-chair; presentation from the African-American Roundtable; discussion regarding research on use cases and best practices; discussion on a public education communication strategy; and discussion on formulating a methodology, parameters, and criteria.

12. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 2:29 p.m.

*Chris Lee, Staff Assistant
Council Records Section*

Materials for this meeting can be found within the following file:

[251987](#)

Communication relating to the activities of the MKE Community Impact Committee.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR