



City of Milwaukee

City Hall
200 East Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Meeting Minutes

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

ALD. RUSSELL W. STAMPER, II, CHAIR
Ald. Marina Dimitrijevic, Vice-Chair
Ald. DiAndre Jackson, Ald. Mark Chambers, Jr. and Ald.
Sharlen Moore

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Wednesday, June 10, 2026

1:30 PM

City Hall, Room 301-B

Meeting convened at 1:39 pm

Present 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., Moore

1. [260209](#) Reappointment of Jose Fernando Moreno to the Business Improvement District #4 by the Mayor. (12th Aldermanic District)

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Confirmed without attendance Jose has good attendance records.

A motion was made by ALD. DIMITRIJEVIC that this Appointment be RECOMMENDED FOR CONFIRMATION. This motion PREVAILED by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., and Moore

No 0

2. [260210](#) Reappointment of Russell Rossetto to the Business Improvement District #4 by the Mayor. (12th Aldermanic District)

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Confirmed without attendance Russell has good attendance records.

A motion was made by ALD. CHAMBERS JR. that this Appointment be RECOMMENDED FOR CONFIRMATION. This motion PREVAILED by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., and Moore

No 0

3. [260211](#) Appointment of Kurt Benzel to the Business Improvement District #41 by the Mayor. (3rd Aldermanic District)

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Kurt Benzel was confirmed as a new appointee to BID Number 41. He shared his background as a realtor with Shorewest Realtors and expressed his long-standing affection for Milwaukee's Upper East Side.

A motion was made by ALD. MOORE that this Appointment be RECOMMENDED FOR CONFIRMATION. This motion PREVAILED by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., and Moore

No 0

4. [260172](#)

Communication from the Department of City Development, Milwaukee Fire Department, and the Milwaukee Arts Board relating to the Public Artist in Residence Program.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Appeared Sally Svetic (DCD-General Mgmt & Policy Development)

Appeared Sarah Luther (Public Artist)

Appeared Paul Druecke (liaison)

Sally introduced the second iteration of the PAIR program, which is currently a pilot funded by the Milwaukee Arts Board and the Greater Milwaukee Foundation. For this cycle, the Milwaukee Fire Department (MFD) was selected as the host department.

Sally read a statement from Chief Lipski highlighting the department's unique position to address safe and survivable housing issues.

Sarah Luther was introduced as the public artist in residence, and Paul Druecke as the liaison. They aim to use fire stations as neighborhood hubs to collaborate with community members on housing-related art projects starting July 1st.

Alderman Moore requested that a formal memo be sent to the city clerk so council members can share participation opportunities with residents.

A motion was made by ALD. CHAMBERS JR. that this Communication be RECOMMENDED FOR PLACING ON FILE. This motion PREVAILED by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., and Moore

No 0

5. [260192](#)

Resolution relating to a Youth Council anti-nicotine scholarship contest.

Sponsors: Ald. Jackson

This Resolution was HELD TO CALL OF THE CHAIR

6. [260193](#)

Resolution relating to acceptance and funding of a Talking Book and Braille Library Grant.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

Appeared Sarah Leszczynski (Business Finance Manager-Milwaukee Public Library)

The grant of over \$1.2 million for the Talking Book and Braille Library (WIDB) program starting July 1st.

A motion was made by ALD. DIMITRIJEVIC that this Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION. This motion PREVAILED by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., and Moore

No 0

7. [260194](#)

Resolution relating to acceptance and funding of an Interlibrary Loan Services Grant.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

*Appeared Sarah Leszczynski (Business Finance Manager-Milwaukee Public Library)
The grant of approximately \$271,000 for Interlibrary Loan Services, program slated to begin July 1st.*

A motion was made by ALD. JACKSON that this Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION. This motion PREVAILED by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., and Moore

No 0

8. [260205](#)

Substitute resolution relating to the use and allocation of Community Development Block Grant 2026 reprogramming funds.

Sponsors: Ald. Stamper

*Appeared Mario Higgins (Director of Community Development)
Director Mario Higgins explained that the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) reprogramming process involves reconciling prior year awards and making those funds available again after closeout.
A total of approximately \$3 million was identified for allocation, representing one of the largest allocations in recent years.
Chairman Stamper emphasized that the primary focus of these funds is to support youth services and collaboration between organizations this summer.
The Youth Council Reserve was set aside by ordinance at \$80,000, with RFPs due back by the 15th for various programs.*

Youth Employment and Training Programs:

Romell Greer from Employ Milwaukee presented the Camp Rise program for 10-13 year-olds, operating June 22nd to August 7th at North Division. The program has a 300-participant capacity but received 650 applications this year.

Cody from Employ Milwaukee discussed the Earn and Learn community work experience program for ages 14-24. The \$250,000 award will support an additional 100 youth for the 2026 summer cycle.

Tony Kearney and Ken Lowery from Northcott Neighborhood House presented on Milwaukee Builds and Safe Zones, receiving \$300,000. Their construction training program has helped produce over 1,000 affordable housing units over 23 years.

Rebirth Milwaukee, led by Shyreeta Lane, was awarded \$45,000 for job training and construction pre-apprenticeship services, replicating the former Absolute Advantage model.

Silver Spring Neighborhood Center received \$100,000. Devin Hudson and Ashley Campbell explained their shift into green space and clean energy training, alongside

traditional youth social development and basketball programs. The Center continues to provide food pantry services, healthy food access initiatives, and early childhood programming.

Alderman Chambers spoke at the meeting to personally thank Silver Spring Neighborhood Center for its longstanding impact, mentioning he is a product of the Center's programs. He highlighted their partnership, commitment to the Westmont Gardens, neighboring northwest side communities, and the city at large. Chambers called attention to the Center's legacy in youth development, especially its Spartan AAU basketball program, which produced several professional athletes. He also expressed ongoing support for their leadership and encouraged further collaboration. Silver Spring Neighborhood Center can be contacted through their website (<https://www.ssnc-milw.org/>) or by visiting/calling the center in West Lawn for tours, orientations, or enrollment.

Public Service and Safe Summer Sites:

Appeared Karin Tyler (Director of the Department of Community Wellness and Safety)

Appeared Aziz Abdullah (Co-Founder-Empower)

Appeared David Muhammad (Department of Health and Human Services Milwaukee County)

Appeared Bridget Whitaker (Executive Director of Safe and Sound)

A \$500,000 award was granted for Public Services Safe Summer Sites, a collaborative effort involving Safe and Sound, Milwaukee County, MPS, and Empower.

Aziz Abdullah from Empower and David Muhammad from the County explained that 14 sites will operate from 5:30 PM to 10:30 PM, Monday through Saturday, to fill the evening safety gap for youth. The initiative focuses on addressing safety, extending hours beyond current offerings (such as Twilight Centers), and ensuring a culturally relevant response with enrichment activities, employment, and resource connection. The committee discussed filling the "August gap" when MPS Twilight Centers close on August 6th by activating other community locations.

Alderman Chambers requested a formal commitment to include "Lock In MKE" and partners like Vaun Mayes (Calm Force) and Natalia Renteria (Missing Piece) as integral parts of the plan.

Director Muhammad and the presenters agreed to formalize these specific community partners into the game plan before the full Council meeting.

To contact Safe and Sound directly for program participation, partnership, or inquiries, you can reach out to Bridget Whitaker, Executive Director, or visit their official website at <https://safesound.org/>. For Safe Summer Sites collaboration, attendance at VR FAST (Violence Response Public Health and Safety Team) meetings and following the "Tap In MKE" platform are primary entry points for organizations wishing to get involved. Safe and Sound is also accessible through the City of Milwaukee website and is responsive to referrals from committee members and the collaborative network.

Specialized Youth Innovation and Financial Services;

Appeared Alderman Perez. He expressed strong support for all youth investment and innovative programming. Alderman Perez congratulated the committee and Director Higgins on navigating tough funding decisions and emphasized that allocating reprogramming dollars to youth services demonstrates a real commitment to Milwaukee's young people. He pointed out that, traditionally, initiatives like Black Male Achievement received annual CDBG support, and now the Advisory Council is broadening those opportunities to smaller, innovative agencies.

Riverworks Development Corporation, represented by Darrell Johnson, was awarded \$250,000 for the Financial Empowerment Center, providing free counseling and legacy

planning for city residents.

The Emerging Youth Advisory Council received \$200,000 to fund innovative, smaller organizations.

Lavell Mabato from Biker Fest MKE explained their Smartech (STEAM) and Sliders (racing) programs, which teach kids aged 7-16 to build and race motorcycles. They plan to double their capacity from 8 to 16 kids.

Bill Nimke from All Hands Boat Works shared that their funding will enable participation for 60 or more additional youth in boat-building trades.

Alderman Perez also said the Center and similar organizations exemplify efforts to reach under served youth and that investing in data collection, STEM, trades, and civic engagement prepares young people for leadership and productive futures. He invited all to participate in upcoming summer events, particularly those kicking off youth programs.

A motion was made by ALD. MOORE that this Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION. This motion PREVAILED by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., and Moore

No 0

9. [260206](#)

Substitute resolution relating to the use and allocation of Home Investment Partnership (HOME) 2026 reprogramming funds.

Sponsors: Ald. Stamper

Appeared Mario Higgins (Director of Community Development)

Director Higgins presented \$2.7 million in HOME 2026 reprogramming funds for affordable housing.

KG Development Group: Awarded \$300,000 for a 31-unit supportive housing project on 50th and Lisbon. Anthony Casey noted the funds would cover unforeseen costs like asbestos removal and elevator code updates.

Milwaukee Habitat for Humanity: Awarded \$500,000 to support their goal of building 40 homes this year in Harambee, Amani, and other districts. Appeared Beth Van Gorp (Director of Advocacy and Government Relations)

North Star Companies (Austin Commons): Awarded \$500,000 for the redevelopment of vacant homes into 100 affordable housing units. Appeared Brandon McHugh and Tylor.

Milwaukee Development Corporation: Awarded \$1.1 million for senior housing at 2711 West Wells Street (the old county campus).

A motion was made by ALD. JACKSON that this Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION. This motion PREVAILED by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., and Moore

No 0

10. [260207](#)

Substitute resolution relative to the allocation of funding from the HOME ARP Funds, to fund Affordable Housing.

Sponsors: Ald. Stamper

Appeared Mario Higgins (Director of Community Development)

Mario explained that the city is shifting its HOME-ARP funding strategy from large, 60-unit congregate shelters to smaller, more sustainable noncongregate projects.

The previous approach involved renting hotels during the pandemic, but finding

suitable large buildings is no longer feasible as hotels have resumed normal operations.

Mario noted that lessons were learned from the failure of developer Heartland Housing, where a high density of supportive housing in one building created a risk of losing many units at once if the project failed.

The new focus is on smaller projects that fit better into neighborhoods and are easier to maintain and sustain long-term.

Hillview Non-Congregate Shelter Project

The Hillview project, located on South 12th Street near Mitchell, is being developed by Milwaukee County in a building previously used for winter warming services.

The building will undergo a rehab to include permanent supportive housing on the third floor and a non-congregate shelter on the second floor with 11 units.

Mario explained that non-congregate shelters provide residents with four walls and a bathroom, which is more effective for vulnerable populations, such as domestic violence survivors, who often avoid congregate settings.

While the county requested \$2 million, they were allocated \$1.4 million to assist with the build-out and the provision of 24-hour supportive services.

Collaboration with WCS and AK Developments

Wisconsin Community Services (WCS) is taking over the Capuchin Apartments, a space formerly operated by Heartland Housing.

Ariam Kesete of AK Developments is working with WCS on two sites: one on Atkinson and another on Tamarack, spanning two different aldermanic districts.

The Capuchin project will feature 6 to 8 units of non-congregate shelter, with the remainder of the building dedicated to permanent supportive housing.

Ariam Kesete highlighted that the projects aim to provide residents with "income producing opportunities" alongside their recovery and healing journeys.

Alderman Moore emphasized the critical importance of these supportive service partnerships for effectively supporting the un housed population.

Ariam emphasize working with Mario and his team has been amazing.

Senior Housing at West Wells Street

Pat O'Brien, President of the Milwaukee Development Corporation, presented a project located at 2711 West Wells Street, the site of the old county campus.

The project involves rehabilitating two vacant buildings that have been empty for over 10 years to create 124 units of affordable senior housing.

All 124 units will be affordable, with 11 units specifically dedicated to the unhoused population and others for individuals with physical or mental disabilities.

Jewish Family Services will provide internal supportive services, and the developers are seeking a partner to occupy first-floor space for community services at below-market rent.

Mario and the council members expressed appreciation for the hard work of the staff and developers involved in these allocations.

A motion was made by ALD. MOORE that this Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION. This motion PREVAILED by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., and Moore

No 0

11. [260222](#)

Resolution declaring Beet Street Fall Festival to be an official city event and authorizing the acceptance and expenditure of contributions for this

purpose.

Sponsors: Ald. Dimitrijevic

Alderman Dimitrijevic explained that this designation is necessary to "unlock support" and allow for the acceptance and expenditure of contributions for the festival. The festival is organized by Cactus Club and involves various groups including the African American Round Table, Diverse & Resilient, LIT, the library, and the Queer Zine Archive Project.

The event is described as an inclusive, one-day street festival featuring worldwide music, held primarily on Wentworth Avenue in the Bay View neighborhood.

A motion was made by ALD. MOORE that this Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION. This motion PREVAILED by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., and Moore

No 0

12. [260230](#)

Substitute resolution relating to declaring the Granville Business Improvement District Kids Pop-Up Event an official city event.

Sponsors: Ald. Taylor

A motion was made by ALD. DIMITRIJEVIC that this Resolution be HELD TO CALL OF THE CHAIR. This motion PREVAILED by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., and Moore

No 0

File reconsider and approved by Alderman Jackson.

A motion was made by ALD. JACKSON that this Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION. This motion PREVAILED by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., and Moore

No 0

13. [260231](#)

An ordinance relating to the membership of the Sister Cities Committee.

Sponsors: Ald. Stamper

Appeared Tony Snell Rodriguez (Director of Community Engagement and Inclusion at Visit Milwaukee)

The resolution proposes adding a formal representative from Visit Milwaukee to the committee to foster innovative partnerships and global expansion.

Tony spoke in support of the partnership, noting that VisitMilwaukee already aligns with the committee's mission by hosting international delegations and promoting cultural festivals.

Tony mentioned that formal representation would better connect Sister Cities' efforts with tourism and international engagement opportunities.

The committee is also working on a "Milwaukee fun pack" for the national conference auction in DC this year to promote the city to Sister Cities peers.

Tony highlighted the community events calendar available at visitmilwaukee.org/community, which allows local businesses and organizations to

post networking events, galas, and sessions.

The calendar is designed to help local organizers be strategic with scheduling and to help residents and visitors find things to do among the city's 191 neighborhoods.

Alderman Moore requested that Tony send a memo to the Common Council as a reminder to share this calendar link with neighborhood groups for events like "Washington Park Wednesdays" or "Concert on the Green" at Endres Park.

Tony noted that a weekly events newsletter titled "Peggy's Insights" is sent out every Friday by the CEO of Visit Milwaukee.

A motion was made by ALD. MOORE that this Ordinance be RECOMMENDED FOR PASSAGE. This motion PREVAILED by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., and Moore

No 0

14. [260234](#)

Substitute resolution rescinding Common Council File Number 250855 and designating certain City of Milwaukee events and initiatives as eligible for contributions.

Sponsors: Ald. Stamper

Resolution designates certain city events and initiatives as eligible for contributions.

A motion was made by ALD. JACKSON that this Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR ADOPTION. This motion PREVAILED by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., and Moore

No 0

The following file may be Placed on File as no longer needed:

15. [241501](#)

Communication relating to the 2025 activities of the Sister Cities Committee.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR

A motion was made by ALD. MOORE that this Communication be RECOMMENDED FOR PLACING ON FILE. This motion PREVAILED by the following vote:

Aye 5 - Stamper, Dimitrijevic, Jackson, Chambers Jr., and Moore

No 0

Meeting adjourned at 3:39 pm

Carmen O Roman

Staff Assistant

This meeting can be viewed in its entirety through the City's Legislative Research Center at <http://milwaukee.legistar.com/calendar>.