City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes

MKE COMMUNITY IMPACT COMMITTEE

AMANDA AVALOS, CHAIR
Anita Johnson, Vice-Chair

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

Staff Assistant, Chris Lee, 414-286-2232; Fax: 414-286-3456, clee@milwaukee.gov
Legislative Liaison, Beka Bein, 414-286-3789, Beka.Bein@milwaukee.gov

Tuesday, July 14, 2026 | **5:00 PM** | **Room 301-B, Third Floor, City Hall**

This is 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/157422741. You can also dial in using your phone United States: +1 (408) 650-3123 and Access Code: 157-422-741.

1. Call to order.

Meeting called to order at 5:06 p.m.

2. Roll call.

Present 7 - Mahan, Avalos, Kovac, Stanley, Frederick-Stanley, Harrell, Schettle

Excused 4 - Christianson, Rivera, Napoleon, Johnson

Also present:

Beka Bein, LRB
Dana Zelazny, Deputy City Clerk

3. Review and approval of the previous meeting minutes from June 10, 2026.

4. Public comments and/or announcements.

Later during discussion of additional capacity, Elle Halo asked whether any consultant hired would be required to be based in Milwaukee and invested in the communities eligible by zip code.

Chair Avalos replied that geographic connection would be taken into consideration when the committee reached that stage.

5. Review and discussion to devise a method for allocating funds within the MKE Community Impact Fund.

a. Defining the proposal to present to the Common Council.

Chair Avalos commented. She had a recent conversation with Ald. Coggs regarding the November deadline established in the legislation. Ald. Coggs had clarified that what would be due by November was not a launched program, but a packaged and ready set of materials that would include the structure, the rulebook, and the method for accepting proposals from the community without yet going live or publishing. She would plan to meet with Ald. Coggs again within the next month, and Ald. Coggs planned to join the committee at its next meeting to answer questions and provide direct feedback. She would circulate any updates via staff.

b. Additional capacity.

Ms. Zelazny addressed questions about additional capacity. She explained that the $600,000 that had been allocated for the community budgeting process was held within the City Clerk's operating budget and that any expenditure would require Common Council approval. There were two theoretical routes for adding staffing, but in practicality, only one was feasible for this project. Adding a position as a City employee would be a long and drawn-out process that would take an estimated three months at minimum, whereas retaining a consultant on an hourly or retainer basis to complete a defined scope of work would be more appropriate for a one-time, discreet project. Even the consultant route would not be fast. The committee would need to decide how much it wanted to set aside and what deliverables it expected, and then a file would need to be sponsored by a Council member or introduced as a chair file and moved through a committee cycle. Historically these files had gone through Finance and Personnel Committee, though an argument could be made for Community and Economic Development Committee. If the committee had been able to make a decision today, a file could potentially be heard by the July 31st Council meeting cycle, but if not, the August recess would push the next opportunity to mid-September. After Council approval, the Department of Administration City Purchasing Division would require multiple quotes or a formal RFP, a minimum posting period, scoring, and contracting, which would add additional weeks to months.

Members discussed the implications of that timeline for their November goal. It was noted that the timeline for bringing anyone on board would mean an October start at the earliest, which would be too late to support the initial drafting work.

Members discussed that a consultant was intended not for the immediate rulebook drafting, but as a recommendation the committee would make to the Common Council for who would oversee implementation in 2027. Program sustainability was a concern. A consultant whose bread and butter was already community work would be preferable to asking someone to leave a job for a short-term, grant-funded City position.

Other members agreed that the initial work would therefore need to fall on the committee itself and that the once-a-month meeting schedule would not be sufficient to meet the November target. The committee concluded that work outside of the full monthly meeting would be essential.

On the question of whether volunteer or pro-bono support could be utilized, Ms. Zelazny said that the committee could certainly accept voluntary assistance.

c. Budget and funding.

It was discussed that funding for any acquistion of additional staffing or support would come out of the MKE Community Impact Funds as an amount to be determined by the committee.

d. Timeline.

It was discussed that original timeline draft was ambitious, may have to be adjusted, and that any additional staffing would not be able to support the committee's initial work.

e. Program definition.

The committee reviewed the plain language version of the program definition, which had been updated by member Stanley to be accessible at a third-grade reading level.

Member Stanley said that she had used a reading level checker and had defined concepts in context rather than through a separate glossary, recognizing that some nuance would be lost in order to balance length, attention, and accessibility.

Members offered feedback. The phrase referencing "places kids can play" should be revised to "places people can play safely" to avoid implying that only children play and to remove personal bias toward the word kids. The "Here's How It Works" section should be tightened to emphasize that community members would propose solutions, not just problems, and that the tone should be more aspirational on what could be possible rather than focusing on existing problems. Regarding the final paragraph referencing the African-American Roundtable, the language "fought for this for over six years" should be strengthened to language such as "successfully organized" or "advocated". Credit to the African-American Roundtable should be moved to the top of the document to recognize them. It was acknowledged that "successfully organized" might exceed a third-grade reading level, but members agreed the credit was important and asked member Stanley to explore alternative phrasing that would retain both accuracy and accessibility.

Member Stanley said that she would sent a revised draft to staff for redistribution.

f. Establishing work groups.
   i. Eligible Projects & Proposals
   ii. Community Building & Outreach
   iii. Rulebook & Online Organization

The committee reviewed the status of its three work groups.

Mr. Lee said that he was not aware of any work group meeting formally met yet. A list of interested members had been compiled. Work groups should notify his office so that a public notice and agenda could be posted. Meetings could be held hybrid, virtually, or in person. His office can assist with establishing a meeting venue within City Hall or a GoToMeeting virtual platform, if needed. Other similar City meeting bodies had allowed outside community members to contribute to work groups in a supporting capacity. Members could attend work group meetings even if they were not formal members of that group, and that membership could be changed in the future *with a report out to the full committee.*

Mr. Lee read the listing of initial interested members under each work group.

Members inquired about walking quorum, open meetings rules for scheduling, and staffing of work group meetings.

Ms. Zelazny replied that purely logistical emails for scheduling among subgroup members would be permissible, provided substantive discussion did not occur, and that mass communication or information sharing should continue to flow through staff for transparency. Setting the next meeting date while in a meeting was the preferred practice.

Mr. Lee replied that staff would not have the capacity to staff work group meetings. Work groups would be expected to staff and lead their meetings within their membership.

Members made adjustments to the membership listed under each work group.

Member Schettle moved approval, seconded by member Frederick-Stanley, to establish the following work groups and membership:

Eligible Projects & Proposals Work Group consisting of members Christianson, Napoleon, and Mahan. Community Building & Outreach Work Group consisting of members Frederick-Stanley, Avalos, Stanley, and Harrell. Rulebook & Online Organization Work Group consisting of members Rivera, Napoleon, and Schettle.

There was no objection.

Members said that members who had not yet signed up would have opportunity to join a work group.

g. Outreach plans.

Ms. Zelazny said that the City Clerk's office could support creation of a page on the City website for the program, with moderate design support from graphic designer staff, including the ability to host a digital application form and generate QR codes for social media sharing.

Members asked how community participation and document sharing would be handled in their work groups.

Ms. Zelazny and Mr. Lee replied that there were no restrictions on members sharing public meeting information on personal social media or via email, and that community members and organizations could be invited to attend and be heard. For agendas, posting would continue on the legislative calendar and the City's main events page. Their office did not have a social media account or capacity, and any broader social media outreach could be leveraged through individual alderpersons' social media and e-notify databases. The City Clerk's Public Information Division could create a designed flyer or brochure for work groups to utilize for community distribution if the work groups provided the necessary messaging parameters. Document sharing and Google Doc could be used as long as it was made accessible in readable form and its link was disclosed or included on an agenda to maintain transparency.

h. Other.

There was no other discussion.

6. Items for future agenda(s).

Agenda items to include a follow-up review of the plain language draft, updates from any work groups that met between full meetings, and an update from Chair Avalos following her next meeting with Ald. Coggs.

Chair Avalos said that work groups should start meeting and forward information to staff for agenda creation, noticing, and distribution of substantive meeting materials. Any requests for graphic design support for public outreach should also be sent to City Clerk staff.

7. Next meeting date and time.

a. Tuesday, August 11, 2026 at 5 p.m.

Members noted that this date coincided with the fall primary election and that several members had commitments to work at polling sites.

Chair Avalos acknowledged the conflict and stated that the group would work offline to determine whether the meeting should be moved so as not to discourage voting.

8. Adjournment.

Meeting adjourned at 6:01 p.m.

Chris Lee, Staff Assistant
Council Records Section
City Clerk's Office

Meeting materials for this meeting and past meetings can be found within the following file:

251987 Communication relating to the activities of the MKE Community Impact Committee.

Sponsors: THE CHAIR