CITY OF CHARLOTTE COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS
111 E. Lawrence Ave., Charlotte, MI 48813 (517) 543-2750
Regular Council Meeting 7:00 p.m.
September 22, 2025 – as amended

CALL TO ORDER:

By Mayor Lewis on Monday, September 22, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Mayor Lewis, Mayor Pro-Tem Duweck, Council members, Fullerton, Christensen, Scott, and Chin. *Rodriguez arrived at 7:07 p.m.* A quorum was met

City staff in attendance; City Manager Hillard, City Attorney Revore and City Clerk LaRocque. In the audience Finance Director/Treasurer Horton, Public Works Director Whitney, Community Development Director Benavidez.

INVOCATION:

Chuck Jenson, West Carmel Church

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Led by Lewis

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

a. September 08, 2025 Regular Council Meeting Minutes

Motion by Chin supported by Scott to approve September 08, 2025 Regular Council Meeting Minutes. Carried; Yea 6; Nay 0; Absent 1 (Rodriguez - tardy)

b. September 16, 2025 Special Council Meeting Minutes

Duweck noted a name correction for City Manager Hillard

Motion by Fullerton supported by Chin to approve September 16, 2025 Special Council Meeting Minutes, as amended. Carried; Yea 6; Nay 0; Absent 1 (Rodriguez - tardy)

ABSENCE OF COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Mayor Lewis reported that Council member Rodriguez will be arriving approximately 10-15 minutes late

PUBLIC HEARING:

a. Ordinance 2025-08 To amend City Code Article II, Division 2, Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan, and to provide an effective date hereof

Mayor Lewis opened the public hearing at 7:02 pm and closed at 7:03 pm with no comments received

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Owen Whitkopf, resident, praised the Department of Public Works for improving the town's appearance but raised concerns about poor communication of city codes. He suggested sharing code information through local media and real estate agents to improve community awareness and support for code enforcement.

Nicole Christensen, resident, promoted the upcoming Woof Stock event on September 27, organized by Friends of Eaton County Animals. The event will include free microchipping, low-cost pet services, activities, and vendors. She emphasized safety guidelines for attending dogs.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

Mayor Lewis reported a request to remove item e from the Business agenda.

Motion by Chin supported by Scott to approve the agenda, as amended. Carried; Yea 7; Nay 0; Absent 0

COMMUNICATIONS AND COMMITTEE REPORTS:

a. City Manager report

City Manager Hillard provided an overview of agenda items within the city's strategic framework, noting upcoming discussions on downtown services, utility and infrastructure reviews, sidewalk snow removal, and agreements scheduled for October. He highlighted community development topics including the downtown strategic plan, Mikesell Street resurfacing, and an anticipated Congressional decision on the Combs Industrial Improvement Review. Neighborhood enrichment items included Bennett Park improvements and fall street resurfacing projects. Hillard also reported completion of evaluations for all six department heads, with a more detailed review of police, fire, and public works due to their size and scope

b. Council member committee reports

Scott reported that CARC held a productive meeting prior to the Council session, where discussions centered on diversifying investments and exploring partnerships with local organizations, including downtown groups and the Chamber of Commerce, with opportunities extending beyond baseball.

Christensen announced that the next Camp Francis meeting would take place on October 14 at 6:30 PM at the cabin, and noted that there would be no Planning Commission meeting in October.

Fullerton reported on the Park Board meeting, highlighting the completion of the Oak Park sign, preparation of ground for a five-year tree nursery project involving potential school participation, and discussions on Bennett Park, where the Board recommended a $10,000–$20,000 survey to support future grant applications. He also noted concerns about Oak Park project delays related to Consumers Power, with the grant expiring in June.

Duweck provided an update on the Housing Committee, which meets biweekly and continues to advance initiatives such as returning building inspection services to the city and finalizing zoning code revisions. He also emphasized the importance of the Brownfield authority board and bylaw updates on the agenda, as a pending multi-unit housing project depends on their establishment.

Chin reported on the EATRAN board meeting, underscoring the importance of the upcoming millage renewal in Delta Township for maintaining routes to Charlotte and Grand Ledge. He encouraged outreach to support the measure and noted personnel policy updates to align with MDOT and federal requirements, as well as MDOT's recent certification of the transportation system for another three years following a successful evaluation.

CONSENT AGENDA:

a. Approval of Claims and Expenditures totaling $544,339.22

b. Approval of Resolution 2025-42 To authorize street closure and no parking areas for the Lighted Holiday Parade and Tree Lighting event to be held November 29, 2025 from 3:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

c. Approval of Resolution 2025-43 To approve the street closure and no parking areas for the "Charloween" downtown trick or treating event to be held October 27, 2025 from 4:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

d. Approval of Resolution 2025-44 To repeal paragraph No. 2 of resolution dated August 9, 2004; to reestablish and appoint Brownfield Redevelopment Board; To recommend by laws and effective date thereof

Mayor Lewis noted that the Brownfield Redevelopment Board would include Council members Duweck, Chin, and Scott, former Mayor Michael Armitage, and Richard Bearup.

Motion by Christensen supported by Chin to approve Consent Agenda items a, b, c and d. Carried; Yea 7; Nay 0; Absent 0

BUSINESS AGENDA:

a. Second reading and consider approval of Ordinance 2025-08 To amend City Code Article II, Division 2, Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan and to provide an effective date hereof.

Motion by Christensen, seconded by Rodriguez to approve of Ordinance 2025-08 To amend City Code Article II, Division 2, Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan and to provide an effective date hereof. Carried; Yea 7; Nay 0; Absent 0

b. Consider approval of proclamation naming the month of November, 2025 Family Court Awareness Month

Mayor Lewis and Council member Chin read a proclamation recognizing Family Court Awareness Month, highlighting the importance of prioritizing child safety in custody decisions. The proclamation cited statistics on domestic abuse and child fatalities during visitation, acknowledged advocacy efforts such as Rowan's Act and Kent County's specialized domestic violence court, and emphasized the need for judicial education and evidence-based practices. No formal vote was required.

c. Consider approval of CharlotteRising invoice in the amount of $25,000.00

The Council discussed a $25,000 payment to CharlotteRising as part of a three-year agreement. Concerns were raised about potential overlap with the newly formed Downtown Development Authority (DDA), the organization's compliance with legal requirements for city funding, and current budget constraints. Suggestions were made to redirect funds to other priorities, such as infrastructure.

The City Attorney clarified that the contract did not provide discretion to withhold payment based on service evaluation and that the arrangement was legally sound, as CharlotteRising was providing economic development services that the city could legally outsource.

It was confirmed that this payment would be the final installment under the existing agreement. While some members expressed reservations, others emphasized honoring the original contract and noted that CharlotteRising had adjusted operations to better focus on managing the social district. The importance of continued economic development efforts and collaboration among organizations was also highlighted.

Motion by Scott, seconded by Duweck to approve the CharlotteRising invoice in the amount of $25,000.00. Carried by roll call vote; Yea 6; Nay 1 (Chin); Absent 0

d. Consider approval of Resolution 2025-46 Declaration to create a Special Assessment District – Downtown Sidewalk Snow Removal for the 2026-2030 winter seasons – resolution No. 1

Motion by Fullerton, seconded by Scott to approve Resolution 2025-46 Declaration to create a Special Assessment District – Downtown Sidewalk Snow Removal for the 2026-2030 winter seasons – resolution No. 1. Carried; Yea 7; Nay 0; Absent 0

e. ~~Consider approval of Resolution 2025-47 Order a public hearing regarding the establishment of Special Assessment District Downtown Sidewalk Snow Removal for the 2026-2030 winter seasons – resolution No. 2~~

Item e – Resolution 2025-47 was removed from the agenda

f. Consider approval of a sealed bid contract with Kennedy Industries for the Tirrell Pump Replacement project, in the amount of $146,818

Rodriguez inquired about Kennedy Industries' prior work with the city, and the City Manager and Council member Christensen confirmed the company had completed several past projects satisfactorily.

Motion by Scott, seconded by Christensen to approve contract with Kennedy Industries for the Tirrell Pump Replacement project, in the amount of $146,818. Carried by roll call vote; Yea 7; Nay 0; Absent 0

g. Consider approval of adding Mikesell St. resurfacing in the amount of $170,000 and Bennett Park driveway replacement in the amount of $500 to the Horatio, Lincoln, and Seminar St. contract with Reith-Riley

Motion by Christensen, seconded by Fullerton to approve adding Mikesell St. resurfacing in the amount of $170,000 and Bennett Park driveway replacement in the amount of $500 to the Horatio, Lincoln, and Seminar St. contract with Reith-Riley. Carried; Yea 7; Nay 0; Absent 0

h. Consider approval of MDOT IIJA Agreement No 2025-0697/FAA Grant No 3-26-0018-22525 to secure grant funding; and contract amendment No. 1 with Prein & Newhoff regarding the airport parking lot and entrance road reconstruction project, in the amount of $34,000

Motion by Duweck, seconded by Christensen to approve MDOT IIJA Agreement No 2025-0697/FAA Grant No 3-26-0018-22525 to secure grant funding; and contract amendment No. 1 with Prein & Newhoff regarding the airport parking lot and entrance road reconstruction project, in the amount of $34,000 Carried; Yea 7; Nay 0; Absent 0

i. Consider approval of cooperative purchasing contract (Sourcewell) with Clear Heights Construction, LLC for the purchase and construction of a new salt shed, in the amount of $297,926.00

Jake Dykstra of Clear Heights Construction presented a proposal for a 48' x 60' salt storage building with a capacity of 600 tons. Dykstra highlighted the company's extensive experience constructing similar facilities for municipalities and road commissions across Michigan. In response to Council member Chin's question, he confirmed Sourcewell is a government agency that streamlines the procurement process for public projects, ensuring compliance with competitive bidding requirements.

Councilmember Rodriguez inquired about the condition of the existing structure. The DPW Director noted that the current salt shed, dating from the 1960s, has been in poor condition for approximately 20 years. Dykstra added that the proposed structure features a pre-engineered galvanized steel frame and a polyethylene roof, offering high resistance to corrosion, a 25-year warranty, and an expected roof lifespan of 25–30 years.

Motion by Christensen, seconded by Fullerton to approve contract with Clear Heights Construction, LLC for the purchase and construction of a new salt shed, in the amount of $297,926.00 Carried; Yea 6; Nay 1 (Chin); Absent 0

j. Approval of Resolution 2025-45 To amend the operating and capital budget appropriation of funds fiscal year 2025-26

The Council discussed the budget amendment request for three vehicles. Two would replace aging code enforcement Tahoe's with smaller, lower-cost models such as Chevy Trax, expected to reduce maintenance costs and have better resale value. The third would serve the wastewater department for transporting staff to training and well sites. It was clarified that the Council was approving the budget amendment rather than specific vehicle purchases.

Motion by Scott, seconded by Duweck to approve Resolution 2025-45 To amend the operating and capital budget appropriation of funds fiscal year 2025-26. Carried; Yea 7; Nay 0; Absent 0

k. Consider sole source purchase contract with ETNA Supply Company for the purchase and implementation of the Sensus AMI FlexNet Meter System in the amount of $1,080,255

The Council discussed the proposed purchase of the Sensus AMI system, with the City Manager noting urgency due to upcoming tariff increases that would raise the cost by approximately $23,000 if not approved before September 30. It was explained that the system is necessary to communicate with the city's existing Sensus iPearl meters and justified as a sole source purchase, since switching systems would require replacing all meters at roughly double the cost. The Finance Director emphasized that current meters cannot communicate issues such as bypasses or battery failures, resulting in unbilled water usage and significant revenue loss.

Motion by Christensen, seconded by Fullerton to approve contract with ETNA Supply Company, in substantial form, for the purchase and implementation of the Sensus AMI FlexNet Meter System in the amount of $1,080,255. Carried by roll call vote; Yea 7; Nay 0; Absent 0

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Elena Reed, resident, CharlotteRising, Vice President: Thanked the Council for continued funding; reported the social district is operating well and should be "fantastic" with another year; noted she's been delivering cups; highlighted their website where businesses can claim pages; and announced Fall Fest and Shadow Season are posted.

John Laupp resident, DDA member: Announced his election as DDA Board Chair replacing Bob Phillips; thanked Phillips for his leadership; expressed the DDA's interest in increased collaboration with the city and other groups.

JoDee Pruden, resident, (via Zoom): Voiced concerns about Charlotte Rising's social district metrics (three participants, ~1,000 cups sold) relative to the $75,000/three-year investment and requested stronger reporting for future funding; praised city transparency on spending; raised issues with snow banks between parking and sidewalks; and suggested evaluating in-house downtown snow removal versus fixed-price contracting.

STAFF COMMENTS:

No staff comments

MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMENTS:

Scott**:** Had no further comments.

Chin**:** Reported on the MML conference, where he moderated a session on tree species selection for urban areas and shared legislative updates, including proposals to eliminate August elections, state budget concerns, and revenue sharing changes. He noted Senate efforts to create a revenue sharing trust fund and discussions on hazardous waste disposal. He also announced his three-year appointment to the MML board beginning in January, where he will oversee the pension program and represent Charlotte.

~~Rodriguez: Addressed downtown snow removal, suggesting businesses assist in keeping walkways clear. He inquired about a housing project, which was described as 6–8 buildings with 60–80 units on land accessible from Sumter Street. He emphasized the need for a Council work session to clarify priorities for the City Manager and expressed pride in progress on street repairs and overall accomplishments with support from staff and department heads.~~
Rewording language as provided by Rodriguez:
Rodriguez: Addressed a downtown snow removal comment by, suggesting able-bodied business owner help their downtown neighbors and clear a path near the curb for customers. He inquired about a housing project, which was described as 6–8 buildings with 60–80 units on land accessible from Sumter Street. He emphasized the need for a Council work session to clarify priorities for the City Manager and expressed pride in progress on street repairs and overall accomplishments with support from staff and department heads

Christensen: Thanked attendees and online viewers, and reported on the MML convention, describing it as a valuable opportunity to learn from other cities. He highlighted a downtown revitalization project.

ADJOURN:

Motion by Christensen supported by Duweck to adjourn the meeting at 8:29 p.m. Carried; Yea 7; Nay 0; Absent 0

Respectfully submitted,
Mary LaRocque MiPMC, CMC
City Clerk