

City Council Meeting March 24, 2025

A regular Eaton Rapids City Council meeting was held at City Hall, 200 S. Main Street, on March 24, 2025, at 7:00 p.m.

Call To Order:

Mayor Colestock called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

Mayor Colestock, Mayor Pro-Tem Steele, Councilpersons Malewski, Nicholas, and Loftus were present.

Invocation:

Pastor James Haldane, from Eaton Rapids Church of the Nazarene, provided the invocation.

Approval of the Agenda:

Steele moved, and Nicholas seconded approving the March 24, 2025, Council meeting agenda as presented. **Motion carried.**

Approval of the February 24, 2025, Closed Session Meeting Minutes under MCL 15.268 (a):

Loftus moved, and Steele seconded approving the February 24 Closed Session meeting Minutes as presented. **Motion Carried.**

Approval of the March 10, 2025, Closed Session Meeting Minutes under MCL 15.268 (d):

Malewski moved, and Steele seconded approving the March 10 Closed Session meeting Minutes as presented. **Motion Carried.**

Approval of the March 10, 2025, City Council Work Session Meeting Minutes:

Steele moved, and Loftus seconded approving the March 10, 2025, City Council Work Session meeting minutes as presented. **Motion carried.**

Approval of the March 10, 2025, City Council Meeting Minutes:

Malewski moved, and Steele seconded approving the March 10, 2025, City Council meeting minutes as presented. **Motion carried.**

Approval of Expenditures totaling \$497,663.74:

Steele moved, and Malewski seconded approving expenditures of the City of Eaton Rapids, totaling \$497,663.74. **Motion carried.**

Public Comment:

Commissioner Barber - Presented information regarding the Neighborhood Road Fund, which suggests a \$0.50 tax on package deliveries, including those from Amazon. The budget process will commence on Friday through the Ways and Means appropriations, and the meeting will be available online. He expressed gratitude to the City Council and everyone for allowing him to speak at the recent Citizen Academy class. He appreciated the chance to share insights and learn more about the City.

Jessica Dexter- 5185 Stimpson Rd, presented a wonderful summary of the Citizens Academy, paying tribute to all who presented and participated in this 8-week class, highlighting subjects and emphasizing the preparedness of each presenter. She thanked the city employees for their dedication to their community and was extremely grateful to have taken the class to learn about our local government.

Unfinished and Special Business:

Citizen Academy Recognition

Mayor Colestock presented each attendee of the Citizens' Academy with a Certificate of Completion. Eighteen of the nineteen participants completed the 8-week class. Cake was provided for the celebration.

New Business

a. Adopt Resolution 2025-21 to approve application for the Eaton County Parks Community Grant Program to apply for Kayaks at the Eaton Rapids Outdoor Recreation Center in the amount of \$5000.00, with a match of \$5,000.00.

Loftus moved, and Steele seconded, approving the application for the Eaton County Parks Community Grant Program to apply for Kayaks at the Eaton Rapids Outdoor Recreation Center in the amount of \$5,000.00 with a match of \$5,000.00.

Roll call vote:

Yeas: 5 – Steele, Malewski, Loftus, Nicholas and Mayor Colestock

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

b. Adopt Resolution 2025-22 to approve the application for the T-Mobile Hometown Grant Program to install a Sound System on the Downtown Light Post in the amount of \$50,000.00 with a match of \$40,000.00.

Malewski moved, and Nicholas seconded approving the application for the T-Mobile Hometown Grant Program to install a Sound System on the Downtown Light Posts in the amount of \$50,000.00 with a match of \$40,000.00.

Roll call vote:

Yeas: 5 – Malewski, Loftus, Nicholas, Steele, and Mayor Colestock

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

c. Adopt Resolution 2025-23 to amend the budget for the general municipal purposes of the City of Eaton Rapids for the Fiscal Year of 2024-2025 for the Capital purchase of SQL Server 2022 Standard Core-2 in the amount of \$15,696.00.

Steele moved, and Loftus seconded to amend the budget for the general municipal purposes of the City of Eaton Rapids for the Fiscal Year of 2024-2025 for the Capital purchase of SQL Server 2022 standard Core-2 in the amount of \$15,696.00.

Roll call vote:

Yeas: 5 – Loftus, Nicholas, Steele, Malewski, and Mayor Colestock

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

d. Adopt Resolution 2025-24 to approve Opt-In of the Low-Income Energy Assistance Fund (LIEAF) for 2025-2026.

Steele moved, and Malewski seconded, approving the Opt-In of the Low-Income Energy Assistance Fund (LIEAF) for 2025-2026.

Roll call vote:

Yeas: 5 – Nicholas, Steele, Malewski, Loftus, and Mayor Colestock

Nays: 0

Absent: 0

- e. Approve appointment of Dana (Scout) Sengstock to the Arts Council as an alternate with a term ending December 31, 2027.**

Malewski moved, and Steele seconded approving the appointment of Dana (Scout) Sengstock to the Arts Council as an alternate with a term ending December 31, 2027.

Public Comments:

Brian Wixom, 209 S. River St., had inquiries regarding the surcharge that will appear on the utility bills and wondered if the sound system would be installed by the Urban Air event.

Reports:

Fire Chief – Thanked all of the participants of the Citizens Academy and reported a very busy time for the fire department with regular calls and mutual aid calls, the largest payroll he has seen.

Police Chief- As the council knows, the department is in the process of completing its accreditation and requires improved storage solutions for firearms, drugs, and cash. They have recently learned that the Emergency Manager Funds are still accessible through the State. The administration overseeing those funds has reached out and will be applying on behalf of the Eaton Rapids Police Department. This grant offers a relatively swift turnaround, potentially as quick as 60 days.

City Manager – She gave an update on Planned Unit Development (PUD) 400 Dexter, an awarded grant funding for the Hollow Ridge Road Project, the April 14 at 9 am Public Testing, the Michigan Municipal League CapCon conference, the Mobile Recycling trailer weekly visit to city, Rottenbucher Pharmacy Apartment project, Urban Air, Citizens Academy, and the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF). Several discussions have taken place concerning Resource Adequacy (electric), appropriations for the Horner Mill project, Fire Truck, and Water pressure filters with the offices of Representative Bollin, Senator Peters, and Congressman Barrett respectively.

Council Members:

Malewski – Proud of the Citizen Academy, wishing the County would offer this. March 29 is another food distribution at the alumni stadium. She has also accepted the day chair position for the Urban Air event. There is a need for many volunteers and sponsors.

Steele – Stated that Eaton County had a Citizens Academy at one time. Also, reported that a City Property appraisal with CBIZ Valuation Group was concluded in March of 2024. This type of appraisal had not been done since 2012, which led to an increase in value of \$29.4M and a premium increase of \$34 thousand. This adds to the complexity of budget generation. Planning Commission is updating the City's Master Plan, which is done every 5 years. In reading the 2020 Master Plan, the National Land Coverage Database determined the downtown tree coverage is 35% combined with residency, and a conservancy group "American Forest"

recommends 40% tree coverage. Conclusion, if we want to increase our green infrastructure, plant a tree.

Nicholas – Report that ZBA reviewed and approved a variance for 400 Dexter Rd. Also, congratulated the participants of the Citizens Academy.

Loftus – He expressed gratitude to Jessica for her kind remarks about Citizens Academy. He completed the Citizens Academy, where presentations, attendance, and engagement were terrific. He toured the Rottenbuchers' building to explore the vision for renovating four apartments, which will make a great behind-the-scenes improvement downtown.

Mayor Colestock – She participated in the Michigan Municipal League CAP CON conference, where she attended two valuable sessions:

1. Brownfield Authority and
2. Active Shooter training.

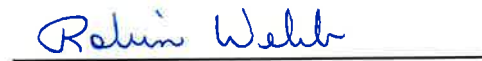
She hopes to initiate a tabletop discussion on active shooter training in our city. Additionally, she met with City Manager Ridge, Eaton County Treasurer, and Representative Ann Bollin to discuss funding for the Horner Mill project. A budget committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 27th. Congratulations to the Citizen Academy participants! This class was initiated by my father during his time as Mayor, and I know he would be pleased to see it revived. I appreciate City Manager Ridge for making this possible.

Adjournment

Steele moved, and Malewski seconded adjourning the Council meeting. **Motion carried.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:02 pm.


Pamela Colestock, Mayor


Robin Webb, City Clerk