

**REGULAR MEETING OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NOVI
MONDAY, APRIL 20, 2026, AT 7:00 P.M.**

Mayor Fischer called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Mayor Fischer, Mayor Pro Tem Casey, Council Members Gurumurthy, Heintz, Martinez, Smith, Staudt

ALSO PRESENT: Victor Cardenas, City Manager
Tom Schultz, City Attorney

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

CM 26-04-048 Moved by Casey, seconded by Smith; MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

To approve the agenda as presented.

Roll call vote on CM 26-04-048 **Yeas: Casey, Gurumurthy, Heintz, Martinez,
Smith, Staudt, Fischer**
Nays: None

PUBLIC HEARINGS: None

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Novi Youth Assistance - Greg Cocke and Sabrina Matsil

Ms. Matsil said Novi Youth Assistance is a collaboration between Oakland County Circuit Court, the city and the school district. She said it was important for them to be at the meeting to give some updates on the past year. She laid out their presentation by stating that she would give some updates on the casework side and then Mr. Cocke, their board chair, would give some updates on their community organization and outreach programs. From the casework end, for the '24-'25 school year, (they're still working on the totals for the '25-'26 school year), they had 99 cases that they served. 78% of those were from the school district, about 17% from police or court, and the rest were from the community. Most of those were prevention cases, meaning that they were in the child's life before a significant court or police event happened, and they were able to work with the family and resolve whatever it was that was going on with them. They are working very closely with the Novi Mental Health Alliance this year. The largest issues that they've seen coming up is that due to the high competition of this district, they are seeing a lot of mental health concerns and needs there may be an area of growth for families and for youth. They are working very closely with programming with the Novi Mental Health Alliance and growing their network of community and resources to refer families to. They are also working closely with the Novi community.

Mr. Cocke thanked Council for allowing them to share their updates and Fox Run for hosting them. Mr. Cocke said he chairs the Youth Assistance Organization, an organization that is sponsored by the City of Novi, Novi Community School District and

the Oakland County Circuit Court. Their goal is to reduce the number of incidents of delinquency, abuse, and truancy in the district. They do this in a variety of ways. They have many programs that they use to educate the community with. He thanked the organizations that support them like the police department and the fire department on some of the events they host such as Adopt-a-Family and Back-to-School Shopping. It's a wonderful event. With Chief Zinser and his team, and the fire chief, they've been able to touch a lot of students and support them in the past year.

Mr. Cocke shared some data points from the '24-'25 school district year. They did 60 scholarships, roughly \$16,000, in a variety of areas like sports, cheerleading, band, driver's training, summer school, field trips, the 8th grade trip, the 5th grade trip and tutoring. He mentioned their Adopt-a-Family program. It is very successful. They have 37 adopters. He said they have a very generous community. They supported 49 families and 120 students in that program. They have a backpack program that kicks off the school year. They had 28 backpacks they delivered. He said one of the things they're most proud of is that they've been able to build a mentor program. They are one of only three of the 26 school districts in Oakland County that has that program. There used to be Mentors Plus, which was a program that was managed by the Circuit Court with the Oakland County Youth Coordinating Council. He said, as you can imagine, after COVID, a lot of things withered on programs. They built this new mentor program with the efforts of Rosalie Johnson, Sabrina Matsil, him and many others. They're very proud to say they have 17 mentors this year and they support 28 students. The program has been very successful and well-recognized within the community.

Mayor Fischer said thank you to Mr. Cocke and Ms. Matsil. He thanked them for everything they do for the community. He said sometimes people will say to him, "Hey, this is Novi," like that means that there aren't any problems. He said there are people that need assistance and the Novi Youth Assistance Program is there for them. He said they appreciate everything they do. He said during COVID it was very hard to keep a lot of these things going and hard to revamp them up. He said Mr. Cocke's team has done an absolutely amazing job of turning this program back around into what this community needs. He thanked them very much for their time and dedication.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey thanked both Mr. Cocke and Ms. Matsil. She asked how interested people in the audience could get involved. They said they have a website www.noviya.org or if you Google Novi Youth Assistance, their website will come up that way. Mr. Cocke said they had given a presentation to Fox Run in the past and they have a gentleman that's kind-of a coordinator named Al Fletcher. The residents at Fox Run could ask him for more information, too. He said he and Ms. Matsil had done a little presentation on their in-house channel, so they could watch that, too.

Mr. Cocke thanked Mayor Fischer for his kind words. He said they have a wonderful board. Jay Dooley was there with them, Priya Gurmurthy was a former board member. He said they have some great people in the community that help them. It's not just him and Ms. Matsil. It is a very successful, talented board that has helped them grow this organization and make a big difference in the community.

Member Martinez thanked them for the work they are doing in the community. For the audience's sake, he pointed out the longevity that Novi Youth Assistance has been doing this work. Ms. Matsil said they have been here since 1960, nearly 70 years. Member Martinez said it's a great testament to the work that Mr. Cocke, Ms. Matsil and their entire team do. Growing up in Novi, he knows a lot of people who were greatly helped by the Youth Assistance program. Early intervention that they highlighted is so important and he really commended them, their board and everyone who works with them.

Member Heintz applauded them for their stats and their efforts. He asked if this was their first year working with the Novi Mental Health Alliance group. Ms. Matsil said it is their second year. He thinks that's wonderful. So many times, there are challenges in any fashion, like mental health or well-being is a crucial element to address as well. He feels like that is often overlooked. He thinks it's a wonderful place to continue to grow as much as they can. Mr. Cocke said they are fortunate to have Rosalie Johnson who sits on their board. Rosalie is the Director of Mental Health and Awareness in the Novi Community School District and she works very closely with the Mental Health Alliance as well as Novi Youth Assistance. They do a lot of programming together. It's been very beneficial for the community.

Member Gorumurthy said it was good to see them both. She still remembers when she approached Lisa to join the Novi Youth Assistance and board. It was tough right after COVID getting volunteers to support the programs and get the program back up. It's so nice to see it growing. The board has done an amazing job under their leadership in turning this whole thing around with so many programs now and so many numbers they shared in their presentation. She encouraged anyone, if they can, to step up and volunteer.

CITY MANAGER REPORT:

City Manager Cardenas said at their last council meeting last week, it was determined that the renewal of the city's capital improvement millage would appear on the November 2026 ballot. A renewal is being requested as the initial 10-year limit for the millage is upon them. A plan for the educational efforts will appear in their weekly packet later this week. As a part of that plan, he believes they'll be returning to Fox Run to give an update and presentation when that time comes. They'll get those information session dates on the Fox Run calendar. He asked Council to look for that packet item later this week to talk about the capital improvement millage renewal.

ATTORNEY REPORT: None

AUDIENCE COMMENTS:

Doreen Poupard commended Mayor Fischer and City Council for the rapid, respectful and forceful way they addressed the water outage. They were able to watch the City Council meeting where they hosted the Director of the Great Lakes Water Authority. She said for those of us who were the recipients of their third or fourth water outage since she has lived there, the rapidity with which they required accountability is to be commended.

Aditya said he is a member of the Frog Force Robotics team in Novi, Michigan. He is a junior at Novi High School and he and his colleague, Yashas, wanted to share an update about their team, especially this year because it is their 25th anniversary. This year, they were able to open their very own Novi Robotics Center. With support of the school district, it has been over a decade in the process of trying to get this approved. Essentially, it is a massive STEM facility for all students in Novi and beyond to get involved in robotics. It's right where the Novi Meadows 6th grade building was. They had a grand opening a few weeks ago and it was amazing. Yashas said he is a member of Frog Force 503 and he is also a junior. He wanted to share an update on what the NRC has allowed them to do in terms of their competition season. First, the award they won is the Engineering Inspiration Award. They won this award because they inspire engineering and STEM, not only in their community, but on the global scale, too. Another award they won is the Sustainability Award which they won because they have a very strong team with strong leadership. They also promote their environmental sustainability values through their CAN Bot Initiative. Regarding the competitions themselves, they recently won the Troy District Competition, ranking first out of 40 teams. At their most recent statewide competition, they were ranked second out of 40 teams. Thanks to the NRC, they were able to accomplish all these feats. Mayor Fischer congratulated them and said he understands it's their 25th anniversary and he believes staff is working on a proclamation recognizing that. It's great to see that program continuing.

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS AND APPROVALS:

CM 26-04-049 Moved by Casey, seconded by Gurumurthy; MOTION CARRIED: 7-0

To approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

- A. Approval of request for Pyrotechnics Display Permit by Brightmoor Christian Church to be operated by James Herr, from April 23, 2026 to April 24, 2026.
- B. Consideration of approval to award a three-year SentinelOne software renewal to People Driven Technology, in the amount of \$77,066.48.
- C. Approval of a Resolution Authorizing overflow attendee parking for "2026 Comic-Con" to occur on the Vibe Credit Union Showplace at 46100 Grand River Avenue and nearby properties on May 15 - May 17, 2026.
- D. Approval of claims and warrants – Warrant 1201

Roll call vote on CM 26-04-049

**Yeas: Gurumurthy, Heintz, Martinez, Smith,
Staudt, Fischer, Casey**

Nays: None

MATTERS FOR COUNCIL ACTION:

1. Consideration of approval to award a three-year VMware Cloud Foundation software license renewal to People Driven Technology, in the amount of \$103,812 per year.

City Manager Cardenas said the City has been using this cloud software since 2017. VMware allows employees to access files and certain software from anywhere they are. Essentially, it mimics them being on-site at City Hall or at their office, wherever they may be, at a conference, at home, or maybe home ill or taking care of a loved one. It proved valuable during the pandemic. This new agreement solidifies their pricing for the next three years. He said their Information Technology team looked at other options, including possibly shifting to another provider; however, while an alternative platform could be modestly cheaper annually, switching now would require an upfront cost of \$200,000 for hardware purchases and would significantly increase the cost over the next three years.

CM 26-04-050 Moved by Smith, seconded by Gurumurthy: MOTION CARRIED 7-0

Approval to award a three-year VMware Cloud Foundation software license renewal to People Driven Technology, in the amount of \$103,812.72 per year subject to final review and approval of agreement terms by the City Manager and City Attorney's office.

Roll call vote on CM 26-04-050

**Yeas: Heintz, Martinez, Smith, Staudt, Fischer,
Casey, Gurumurthy
Nays: None**

2. Consideration of awarding a contract to Robinson Capital for Portfolio Management Services.

City Manager Cardenas said historically, the investment of city's operating and capital non-pension funds has been managed internally by the Treasury Division and the Finance Department. Given the continued growth and complexity of their portfolio, engaging an outside firm with specialized investment management expertise was necessary to support an effective oversight and optimization of the city's investment strategy. These involve their liquid assets, which are pooled and can be invested in short-term and long-term vehicles. This arrangement will also include an analysis of their investments to determine how much we need on hand and how much we can have tied up in long-term investments. However, in the days leading up to this meeting, staff received some questions regarding the annual fee proposed by the chosen firm. Because of these questions, City Manager Cardenas asked City Council to postpone this to the next meeting so they can get those pricing questions answered fully.

Mayor Fischer said he supports this endeavor. He thinks it's very smart to do something like this. Clearly, they want to make sure the pricing is appropriate. He is in support of postponing this item. Mayor Pro Tem Casey said she'll make the motion to table this item until the meeting on May 4, 2026, to give administration time to answer the questions they have.

CM 26-04-051 Moved by Casey, seconded by Gurumurthy: MOTION CARRIED 7-0

To postpone the approval to award a contract to Robinson Capital for Portfolio Management Services.

Roll call vote on CM 26-04-051

Yeas: Martinez, Smith, Staudt, Fischer, Casey, Gurumurthy, Heintz

Nays: None

3. Approval of the Beautification Commission's recommendation to award the Neighborhood Entryway Enhancement Matching Grant to Beckenham, Bradford of Novi, Carlton Forest, Churchill Crossing, Liberty Park, and Willowbrook Farms

City Manager Cardenas said it's hard to believe this program is going into its 11th year. The Neighborhood Entry Enhancement Matching Grant offers homeowners' associations in the City of Novi a 50/50 matching grant up to \$5,000 for the beautification of neighborhood entrances and common areas. The proposed projects may be permanent physical improvements, such as an addition or rehabilitation of entrance signs, construction of flower beds, planting of trees, upgrading of lighting, or installation of other entry-related improvements. The grant stipulates that all improvements must be located on the perimeter of the neighborhood and must be visible from the public right-of-way. It must be something that happens once, rather than an on-going or yearly project and it cannot be a maintenance-related item. The organizations are not eligible to receive grants in consecutive years. The Beautification Commission received six applications by the deadline, March 31, 2026. City staff organized the applications and the commission deliberated about them based upon the evaluation criteria: project need, impact, feasibility and sustainability. The Beautification Committee met on Wednesday, March 18, 2026, to discuss the applications and vote in the public meeting. All applicants who sufficiently met the requirements are recommended for City Council approval.

Member Gurumurthy thanked the Beautification Commission for all their work. She's glad to see all six applicants are recommended. As the commission indicated, some of the applicants indicated that some of the subdivisions, when they indicated what they are going to install, they listed only one or two native plants. She encouraged them to reconsider that because it helps with the environment, it reduces water needs and it supports native pollinators. She recommended that they look at it and then do as much as possible in terms of native plants.

Member Smith said he'd be a little stronger on the native plants. He believes they should require 50%. They're funding 50%, they can require 50% native plantings. He thinks it's great that they're doing this program. He thinks it really helps the city. He said he will totally approve this year's budget, but hopefully, next year, they can be a little stronger on their native plantings.

Mayor Pro Tem Casey said this is one of those projects that they brought back from one of the trips that Council takes every other year where they go visit another community and learn what they do, learn how their city operates, and then a lot of times, they'll bring back ideas. She believes this is one of those ideas that they brought back 11 years ago

the Post Office has installed a row of 24 parking spaces adjacent to and accessible from the northerly drive of the Post Office parking lot.

CM 26-04-053 Moved by Smith, seconded by Casey: MOTION CARRIED 7-0

Approval of a Resolution for the extension of a lease of City Property to the US Postal Service for approximately 10,680 square feet of City-owned land on the west side of Novi Road, north of Ten Mile Road, immediately north of the US Post Office Branch, for one term of five years beginning March 1, 2028, until February 28, 2033.

**Roll call vote on CM 26-04-053 Yeas: Staudt, Fischer, Casey, Gorumurthy, Heintz,
Martinez, Smith
Nays: None**

CONSENT AGENDA REMOVALS: None

AUDIENCE COMMENT: None

COMMITTEE REPORTS: None

MAYOR AND COUNCIL ISSUES: None

COMMUNICATIONS: None

ADJOURNMENT – There being no further business to come before Council, the meeting was adjourned at 7:27 P.M.

Cortney Hanson, City Clerk

Justin Fischer, Mayor

Transcribed by Diana Charles
Customer Service Representative

Date approved: May 4, 2026