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Bloomington Common Council-Regular Session
Bloomington Council Chambers, City Hall, 401 North Morton Street, Bloomington, Indiana
Wednesday, July 22, 2026, at 6:30pm

Council President Isak Nti Asare called the meeting to order.

1. Roll Call: (*indicates participation via Zoom) [6:31pm]

Council Members:	
Isak Nti Asare	At-Large, Council President
Courtney Daily	District 5, Council Parliamentarian
Matt Flaherty*	At-Large
Isabel Piedmont-Smith	District 1
Dave Rollo	District 4
Kate Rosenbarger*	District 2
Andy Ruff (arrived at 6:35pm)	At-Large
Hopi Stosberg	District 3
Sydney Zulich (absent)	District 6, Council Vice President

City staff, officials, and guests present:	
Nicole Bolden	City Clerk
Larry Allen	Common Council, Attorney (temporary)
Michael Wagenaar	O'Neill Leadership Program Fellow
Emma Williams	Monroe County Human Rights Commission, Chair
Nathan Ferreira	Bloomington Housing Authority, Executive Director
Chris Cashman	Ice Miller, Bond Counsel

2. Agenda Summation [6:32pm]

Council President Asare summarized the agenda.

3. Approval of Minutes [6:32pm]

There were no minutes for approval.

4. Reports [6:32pm]

4.1. Councilmembers:

Stosberg spoke about infrastructure in Belize versus Bloomington.

Piedmont-Smith expressed disappointment that there was not a land swap for the College Square and Seminary Pointe sites.

Asare spoke about the local media site the Bloomingtonian, which was removed from Facebook by artificial intelligence (AI), and a potential hate crime or attack at the People's Market.

4.2. The Mayor, City Clerk, City Offices, and City Boards and Commissions:

Emma Williams, Monroe County Human Rights Commission, Chair, presented the 2026 Human Rights Awards. Melanie Davis was the recipient of the 2026 Individual Human Rights Award. Mother Hubbard's Cupboard received the 2026 Organizational Human Rights Award.

4.3. Council Committees:

Docusign Envelope ID: DAC49021-2E00-81DA-8338-981C6CA14F5D

There were no reports from council committees.

4.4. Public:

Jody Madeira, Monroe County Commissioner, and Julie Thomas, Monroe County Commissioner, asked council for a land swap or sale of the Hopewell site for use as a new county jail. Christopher Emge, Greater Bloomington Chamber of Commerce, spoke about the city's permitting process audit. Megan Betz, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, spoke about upcoming programs.

5. Appointments to Boards and Commissions [6:54pm]

There were no appointments to boards and commissions.

6. Legislation for First Reading [6:54pm]

6.1. Ordinance 2026-15

Amending Title 2 of the Bloomington Municipal Code Regarding Establishment of the Fire Merit Commission *Council Sponsor - CM Zulich*

Daily moved and Piedmont-Smith seconded that Ordinance 2026-15 be introduced and read by title and synopsis only. The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Clerk Nicole Bolden read the legislation by title and synopsis.

Daily moved and Piedmont-Smith seconded to discuss Ordinance 2026-15. The motion to discuss Ordinance 2026-15 received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

Council Attorney Larry Allen presented the legislation. The ordinance updated language in Title 2 to reflect that the Board of Public Safety no longer had oversight over the Fire Department due to the new Fire Merit Commission and added language about the new commission.

Wes Martin, Bloomington Firefighters Local 586 Political Action Committee, President, spoke in support of the ordinance.

Stosberg moved and Piedmont-Smith seconded to postpone consideration of Ordinance 2026-15 until the next Regular Session to be held on July 29, 2026 at 6:30pm. The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

7. Legislation for Second Reading and Resolutions [7:01pm]

7.1. Resolution 2026-12

Establishing Rules and Guidelines for Alcohol Permit Districts *Council Sponsor - CM Asare*

Asare asked council to not introduce but to postpone Resolution 2026-12 due to a large amount of feedback and lack of time to address it. Allen suggested tabling the resolution indefinitely.

Daily moved, and Piedmont-Smith seconded that Resolution 2026-12 be introduced and read by title and synopsis only. The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Bolden read the legislation by title and synopsis.

Daily moved and Stosberg seconded that Resolution 2026-12 be adopted.

Docusign Envelope ID: DAC49021-2E00-81DA-8338-981C6CA14F5D

Stosberg moved and Daily seconded to table Resolution 2026-12 indefinitely. The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

7.2. Resolution 2026-13

Authorizing Issuance of Bonds for the Bloomington Housing Authority *Council Sponsor - CM Zulich*

Daily moved and Piedmont-Smith seconded that Resolution 2026-13 be introduced and read by title and synopsis only. The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Bolden read the legislation by title and synopsis.

Daily moved and Piedmont-Smith seconded that Resolution 2026-13 be adopted.

Nathan Ferreira, Bloomington Housing Authority (BHA), Executive Director, and Chris Cashman, Ice Miller, Bond Counsel, presented the legislation. Cashman said the bonds would be issued under the local housing authority and explained the approval and bonds issuance process. Ferreira gave an overview of the properties and the scope of the project. The apartments were intended as workforce housing and would create a pipeline for future low-income tax credit deals, as revenue from the US Department of Housing & Urban Development had become less dependable.

Piedmont-Smith and Stosberg asked about the bond repayment timeline and amount. Cashman and Ferreira spoke about assuming debt versus paying debt off. The project would be partially funded by assuming the existing debt, and the remainder would be bond financed. Flaherty asked about workforce housing stability and proposal risks. Ferreira spoke about landlord issues and property management capacities. There was discussion on the property selection process, Seminary Pointe, BHA's authority limits, and resolution wording.

Mary Morgan, Heading Home of South Central Indiana, Executive Director, supported the project. Randy Cassaday expressed concern about property tax-exempt status and revenue impact. Kevin Keough stated finance concerns.

Piedmont-Smith asked about property tax-exempt status. Ferreira stated the properties were tax-exempt. Stosberg questioned the council's involvement. Cashman explained it was Indiana state statute, and Allen gave further context. Asare asked follow-up questions on risk, and Ferreira and Cashman responded in detail. There was further discussion on BHA approval, due diligence, and flexibility. Stosberg commented on the Kingston Manor Apartments and supported the resolution. Piedmont-Smith spoke in support of the resolution. Flaherty supported the legislation and commented on the council and BHA's relationship. Asare stated the project was bold but shrewd and he was supportive.

The motion to adopt Resolution 2026-13 received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0.

7.3. Ordinance 2026-12

To Amend Title 15 of the Bloomington Municipal Code Entitled "Vehicles and Traffic" to Seasonally Provide a Carless Kirkwood *Council Sponsor - CM Daily and Rosenbarger*

Clerk's note: On June 10, 2026, the council passed Ordinance 2026-12 by roll call vote of Ayes: 5 (Asare, Daily, Flaherty, Rollo, Rosenbarger); Nays: 4 (Stosberg, Piedmont-Smith, Zulich, Ruff); Abstain: 0. On June 19, 2026, Mayor Kerry Thomson vetoed the legislation.

Daily moved and Piedmont-Smith seconded that Ordinance 2026-12 be introduced and read by title and synopsis only. The motion received a roll call vote of Ayes: 8, Nays: 0, Abstain: 0. Bolden read the legislation by title and synopsis.

Docusign Envelope ID: DAC49021-2E00-81DA-8338-981C6CA14F5D

Daily moved and Piedmont-Smith seconded that Ordinance 2026-12 be adopted.

Rosenbarger presented the ordinance. She and Daily were aware the legislation would not have the votes to overturn the mayoral veto and were disappointed. The ordinance sought to make the Kirkwood vehicle closures a predictable occurrence, and she spoke about her positive experience working with and hearing from residents on the project. She spoke about accessibility and working with the Council for Community Accessibility. The ordinance was recommended by the Bloomington Commission on Sustainability & Resilience, the Transportation Commission, and the majority of councilmembers voted in favor of the proposal. 90% of respondents to a 2025 survey for program participants favored closing Kirkwood to cars. She gave examples of cities with similar programs and commented on the state's CreatINg Places grant program.

Piedmont-Smith asked about the CreatING Places grant. Rosenbarger gave further details.

Paul Rousseau appreciated Rosenbarger's comments and thanked those involved. Steve Volan, Transportation Commission, commented on the Transportation Commission's vote, a Downtown Circulator, and revenue from increasing parking meter rates. Buff Brown commented on his experience in transportation advocacy and city planning, urging the council to activate Kirkwood and close it to vehicles.

Daily and Rosenbarger were cosponsors and had decided to pause the ordinance after the mayoral veto, but they had received much positive community outreach so were bringing it before council again. Daily reiterated that there was money in the budget set aside for Kirkwood. Flaherty spoke about Kirkwood being the ideal location for the program and the proposal was in alignment with the Climate Action Plan. He expressed concerns about conflation of car access with accessibility, and quoted data stating that car-heavy cities were more dangerous for people with disabilities. There needed to be policy certainty for business owners to plan for, and most challenges were solvable. Asare spoke about lack of trust in city government to follow through with plans. Economic development conversations consistently included attracting a young workforce, and that target demographic was excited about a closed Kirkwood. Problems were opportunities for innovation, and doing nothing would not achieve the Bloomington they were trying to become. Stosberg said she was tempted to change her vote due to concerns over the mayor and legislative body power, but she would vote no because administration/council collaboration was required for success for a pedestrian-friendly Kirkwood. She preferred collaboration over adversarial debate. Rollo had previously supported the ordinance but would not vote yes because it would not succeed without community buy-in. An adversarial act of overriding a veto would not move the project forward, and there were divided community opinions. Ruff agreed with Rollo and spoke about riding his bike in Bloomington, feeling that it was less safe to bike on Kirkwood during the closure. He appreciated the enthusiasm but felt the program's positive impact was exaggerated. He had previously voted yes for the closure but had since heard from businesses and residents in opposition of the proposal. Piedmont-Smith spoke positively about pedestrian zones in Germany. Local governments in Indiana were facing decreased revenue due to changes by the Indiana General Assembly. She needed to be a steward of taxpayer dollars and would vote no. She had hesitations about collaborating with the administration due to prior experiences, but collaboration was possible. Rosenbarger thanked Asare and Flaherty for their comments. She stated that the mayor had failed to collaborate with the council. The point of the ordinance was to encourage the mayor to work with council. Kirkwood was platted 100 years ago and was not planned for cars. Council needed to take action on initiatives as opposed to continuing to pay for studies and talk about taking action and not doing so.

The motion to adopt Ordinance 2026-12 received a roll call vote: Ayes: 4 (Asare, Daily, Flaherty, Rosenbarger); Nays: 4 (Stosberg, Piedmont-Smith, Rollo, Ruff); Abstain: 0. FAILED

8. Additional Public Comment [9:24pm]

Docusign Envelope ID: DAC49021-2E00-81DA-8338-981C6CA14F5D

There was no additional public comment.

9. Council Schedule [9:24pm]

Asare reviewed the council's upcoming schedule. Stosberg mentioned the Fiscal Committee's upcoming meeting, and Piedmont-Smith stated the Committee on Council Processes schedule.

10. Adjournment [9:25pm]

Asare adjourned the meeting.

APPROVED by the Common Council of the City of Bloomington, Monroe County, Indiana, upon this day: 4th of October, 2026.

APPROVE:

Signed by:
11/10/2026 | 10:48 AM EST
31826BE6116F4B5...
Signature of Isak Nti Asare, Common Council President

ATTEST:

Signed by:
Nicole Bolden
11/10/2026 | 11:32 AM EST
60DF9211B070448...
Signature of City Clerk Nicole Bolden

Clerk's Note: The above minutes summarize the motions passed and issues discussed rather than providing a verbatim account of every word spoken. Bloomington Common Council meetings can be accessed on the following websites:

- Community Access Television Services[1] (CATS)
- City of Bloomington YouTube[2]

Background materials and packets[3] are available on the Common Council website.

[1] https://catstv.net
[2] https://youtube.com/@citybloomington
[3] https://bloomington.in.gov/council/meetings