

**CITY OF SAINT MARYS COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING**

FEBRUARY 16, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

The regular monthly Council meeting of the City of Saint Marys was called to order by Mayor Lyle Garner on Monday, February 16, 2026, at 7:00 p.m. Notice of this meeting was sent to Council on February 12, 2026, posted at City Hall, and published in the Daily Press.

PLEDGE TO THE FLAG

ROLL CALL

Mayor Lyle Garner, Deputy Mayor Anthony Gregory, J. Clark Lecker, Alex Wendel, Joe Sarginger, Shane Schneider, Manager Joseph Fleming, Solicitor Lauren Brennen, and Recording Secretary Rachael Hughes.

Stephen Bagley was excused.

City Staff: Director of Community and Economic Development
Matt Pfeufer

VISITORS

Aria Wendel, Cheryl Ruffner, Richad Phillips, Warren Stewart, Dani Kugler, Victor Pasi, Veronica Hauber, Duane Herbstritt, Kristy Newell, Steve Wendel, Michael Groll, Ryan Wehler, Jacey Williamson, Jennifer Bish, Bill Carr, Nadine Carr, Thomas Herzing, Molly Reddinger, Marcia Hoare, Chuck Nunamaker, Michelle Hackett, Jim Hackett, Tony D'Amore, Richard Sadley, Andrea Stewart, Phoebe Menard, Gretchen Bonfardine, Amy Cherry.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

January 19, 2026 – Regular Meeting

Motion Passed

Joe Sarginger made a motion to approve the January 19, 2026 minutes, seconded by Shane Schneider, and all were in favor.

January 29, 2026 – Special Meeting

Motion Passed

Shane Schneider made a motion to approve the January 29, 2026 minutes, seconded by Joe Sarginger, and all were in favor.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION –

Cheryl Ruffner, Elk County Riders

Cheryl Ruffner of Elk County Riders presented an update on the Trail of Dreams ATV network, established in 2018 to connect Elk County communities through designated ATV routes. The organization has secured DCNR grant funding, multiple easements and leases, and expanded access through the Pennsylvania ATV Pilot Program. The Southern Tier network currently includes approximately 75 miles of connected roads and trails.

Ruffner outlined a proposal to connect the trail to downtown St.

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Marys, allowing riders access to local lodging, restaurants, and fuel. The proposed route would utilize the existing lease property, township and state roads, and enter the City via Route 120 and Mill Street to the Cobblestone area. The goal is to increase economic activity while maintaining permitted and insured ATV use.

Future plans include forming a municipal authority with participating townships and implementing a permit fee to support maintenance and operations.

Council received a map of the proposed route.

A motion was made by Anthony Gregory, seconded by J. Clark Lecker to show interest in Elk County Riders possible route through St. Marys, and all were in favor.

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON AGENDA TOPICS There were no citizen comments on agenda topics.

MANAGER'S REPORT The Manager provided the following report:

- “With Mike Shaffer being appointed Chief of Police of the St. Marys Police Department, it leaves a vacancy for the position of Sergeant and K9 Officer. Sergeant testing will take place next month and interviews will be taking place in the near future for a new K9 Officer.
- Parks and Recreation is busy getting ready for the summer programs.
- The 2024 Audit should be completed by the end of this month. The financials are still not complete for FY 2025 as the City is still receiving revenue, especially the 4th Quarter EIT of 2025.
- The bridge at the Wastewater Treatment Plant is currently under construction and with the nice weather we are currently experiencing the street crew has been working on trimming along the roadways and pushing any leftover snow or material along the edges.”

SOLICITOR'S REPORT Solicitor Lauren Brennen provided the following report:

“First, I understand that some members of the public may be frustrated by what is perceived as a lack of immediate responses or open forum during meetings. The reality is that, under the Sunshine Act, public comment is intended to provide input on issues that may come before the governing body – not turn

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meetings into open-ended question and answer sessions or debate forums This is heavily cautioned by many reputable municipal advisory services due to the potential for this particular segment to derail a public meeting. Council meetings serve the purpose for the governing body to conduct official business. Further, Council is made up of part-time elected officials within a city with numerous boards, commissions, departments, and employees. Council deserves an opportunity to gather appropriate information instead of being pressed for immediate answers. I would encourage you to utilize City Hall in an appropriate manner.

Second, I wish to clarify that my role as a Solicitor is to provide legal advice to the governing body. I do not represent or advise members of the public, and my participation in meetings is limited to legal and procedural matters as appropriate to achieve this.

Third, I would like to provide Council with an update regarding the status of the Data Center Ordinance As a brief recap, public hearing and potential adoption was delayed so that a related Power Generation Ordinance could be developed concurrently, consistent with the recommendation of the City's Planning Commission. The Power Generation Ordinance has been referred to the Planning Commission for review, which they should review at their March 3 meeting. To allow Council adequate time to consider any comments received, I am preparing for a Public Hearing on the Data Center and Electrical Power Generation Ordinance for our April meeting."

TREASURER'S REPORT

Manager Fleming provided the following Treasurer's Report for January 2026:

As of January 31, 2026, revenue for the General Fund is at .33% of budget. For 2025, revenue was at .44%, in 2024 revenue was at .45%, and in 2023 it was at .36%. As of January 31, 2026, expenditures are at 7.41%. In 2025, expenditures were at 7.74%. 2024 expenditures were at 5.33% of budget, and for 2023, the expenditures were at 5.16% of budget. Revenue will be low for the first few months of the year; Real Estate Tax bills are not mailed out until March 1st. Earned Income Tax collected in January and February of 2026 will be the 4th quarter 2025 revenue. We will start seeing the 1st quarter of 2026 EIT collections in May. The pension plans market value increased for January 2026.

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

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Consider for adoption:
Resolution No. 26-05 –
Disposition of City Records

Resolution No. 26-05 – Disposition of City Records was presented for adoption.

Manager Fleming explained that the records requested to be destroyed are outdated and irrelevant records, not pertaining to local current matters or even any issues that may arise. This is at the request of the Police Department and the Finance Department.

Motion Passed

Alex Wendel made a motion to approve Resolution No. 26-05, seconded by Shane Schneider, and all were in favor.

Resolution No. 26-06 –
Authorizing Tax Collector as
Liaison between Berkheimer and
The City of St. Marys

Resolution No. 26-06 – Authorizing Tax Collector as Liaison between Berkheimer and The City of St. Marys was presented for adoption.

Manager Fleming explained that this resolution is necessary for the City's new Tax Collector, Tom Nicklas, to receive records from Berkheimer.

Motion Passed

Anthony Gregory made a motion to approve Resolution No. 26-06, seconded by Shane Schneider, and all were in favor.

Resolution No. 26-07 – Local
Share Account Grant Application
– Bavarian Hills Municipal Golf
Course Authority

Director of Community and Economic Development, Matt Pfeufer, explained that The Bavarian Hills Municipal Golf Course Authority previously submitted a request to apply for a Local Share Account grant to replace the ADA entrance to the main building at the Bavarian Hills Golf Course. The LSA grant program specifies that applicants must request a minimum of \$25,000, however the request was only for \$21,000. The Authority has elected to add landscaping restoration and replacing an entrance door to the project. The Authority is requesting the City's assistance in revising the grant application for the Local Share Account with the Commonwealth Financing Authority. The Local Share Account grant program requires the approval of a resolution with the total project from the governing body as part of the application.

Motion Passed

2022 CDBG Modification #1

Anthony Gregory made a motion to adopt Resolution No. 26-07, seconded by Alex Wendel, and all were in favor.

Director of Community and Economic Development, Matt Pfeufer, explained that this activity has funds remaining that must be utilized as soon as possible. The 609-621 Bruxelles Street project is almost ready to bid, and the project will be added to this activity. The notice of public hearing for this modification was advertised and posted on February 3, 2026,

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and the public hearing was held February 9, 2026, with no comments received on the modification. The modification needs to be approved by the governing body before being sent to DCED for its review and approval.

Motion Passed

Anthony Gregory made a motion to approve the modification of the 2022 CDBG Blight/Demolition Project, seconded by Alex Wendel, and all were in favor.

2025 CDBG Application
Modification #1

Director of Community and Economic Development, Matt Pfeufer, explained that the Memorial Park ADA Restroom activity proposed to renovate the existing bathrooms on the west side of the park to remove architectural barriers. Unbeknownst to the CDBG administrator, CDBG funding can only be used to correct ADA facilities that are not in compliance with codes. This resulted in a re-evaluation of the scope of work. The restrooms were inspected by a code official trained in ADA compliance and specific items were identified as noncompliant with the current code; however, they were much fewer than in the original scope of work. With this reduced scope of work, the cost to remove these barriers was reduced and the amount of CDBG funding eligible for the project was lessened. The CDBG funding was to be used as a match for a DCNR C2P2 grant application. The reduction in eligible CDBG funding resulted in a match deficiency and the project was abandoned due to lack of funds. The allotted funding will be transferred to the S. Michael Street Sidewalk Replacement Activity. The notice of public hearing for this modification was advertised and posted on February 3, 2026. The public hearing was held February 9, 2026. No comments were received from the public. The modification needs to be approved by the governing body before being sent to DCED for its review and approval.

Motion Passed

Alex Wendel made a motion to approve the modification of the 2025 CDBG Application, seconded by Anthony Gregory, and all were in favor.

TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION:

Shane Schneider provided the following updates regarding the Community Pool Committee of Council:

- The Committee's first meeting was held on February 11, and it went very well with good discussion among members
- Multiple local businesses and organizations offered free or reduced costs for services to help with the project
- There was outreach from a local organization to assist

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with fundraising efforts

- The Committee's main effort is to investigate whether there is a way to make the current pool safe enough for the short term, while working toward fundraising for new construction

**CITIZEN COMMENTS ON
NON-AGENDA TOPICS**

Warren Stewart provided Council with a paper copy of a page of the Home Rule Charter regarding City Manager's position and Council's position but did not elaborate.

He then stated that on a drive to DuBois, he noticed "No Jake Brake" signs in Benezette. He questioned why Benezette can have a sign, but St. Marys can't. He knows it can't be enforced, but it is something St. Marys should investigate.

COUNCIL COMMENTS

Anthony Gregory stated he is proud of the Pool Committee of Council, and they are trying to find the best outcome for everyone.

Alex Wendel seconded Anthony Gregory's thoughts on the Committee.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mayor Garner made the following announcements:

- Council next regular meeting will be held on Monday, March 16, 2026, at 7:00 p.m in the Council Room at City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT

J. Clark Lecker made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Alex Wendel, and all were in favor. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.



Recording Secretary



Mayor