



Legislation Text

File #: 15-0978, **Version:** 1

Resolution to Authorize Public Access to Historical City Council Records in the Hathi Trust Digital Library

The Ann Arbor Public Library has a scanned and searchable database of City Council minutes from 1891 (the earliest record) to 1930 in its catalog, while Legistar contains minutes from 1990 to present. Staff in the City Attorney's Office have been working with the Clerk's Office to explore further digitization of City Council records from 1930-1992, both for public and staff use.

Through conversations with University of Michigan staff, it has come to staff's attention that almost all City Council minutes up to 1986 have already been scanned from the University of Michigan's Bentley Library collection to the online Hathi Trust Digital Library, but are not publicly available because of potential copyright concerns. In order to open the database to the public, the University and Hathi Trust require a permissions letter from the owner of the documents. This resolution authorizes the City Administrator to sign the permissions letter on behalf of the City and take any other action appropriate to make City Council minutes available to the public in digital form.

Staff will continue to explore digitization of any remaining volumes of minutes, including the years 1986-1990.

Prepared by: Michele Yanga, Legal Assistant

Reviewed by: Christopher Frost, Assistant City Attorney

Approved by: Steven D. Powers, City Administrator

Whereas, The Hathi Trust Digital Library currently possesses a database of scanned and searchable versions of almost all City Council minutes up to the year 1986 obtained from the University of Michigan Bentley Library;

Whereas, The Hathi Trust and University of Michigan require authorization from the City to open this database to the public;

Whereas, The City Council deems it desirable to provide the public with searchable, digital access to these historical public records; and

Whereas, The database will be made available to the public through the Hathi Trust at no cost to the City;

RESOLVED, That the City Council authorizes the City Administrator to sign a permissions letter and to take all appropriate actions to open this database and provide City Council minutes to the public in digital form.

Sponsored by: Mayor Taylor and Councilmembers Briere, Lumm, Grand, and Krapohl