



CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES

July 9, 2025

The City Council met for a Workshop Meeting at 4:00 p.m.
City Hall
102 Butler St., Saugatuck, MI 49453.

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Anderson at 4:00 p.m.

Attendance:

Present: Mayor Anderson, Mayor Pro-Tem Stanton and Councilmembers Clark, Dean, Gardner, Muncey and Peterson.

Absent: None.

Others Present: City Manager Cummins, Attorney Witte, Treasurer Bredeweg, Clerk Wolters and Engineer Moxey.

Agenda Changes: None.

Public Comment on Agenda Items Only: None.

Approval of Minutes:

Regular City council Meeting Minutes – June 23, 2025.

Closed Session City Council Meeting Minutes – June 23, 2025.

Motion by Peterson, second by Stanton to approve the regular city council meeting minutes as amended adding "Clark" to the second paragraph on page 5 and the closed session city council meeting minutes, both of June 23. Via voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

Discussion Items:

City Hall Interior Renovations – Proposal for Needs Study, Conceptual Design, & Structural Evaluation:

The City Council discussed interior renovations for City Hall, focusing on addressing aging infrastructure and space configuration. City Manager Cummins presented an engineering proposal for \$30,000 that would include conceptual designs for each floor and assessment of structural elements. The goal is to understand potential layout changes and associated costs. John Moxey explained they would conduct an architectural and structural review to ensure proposed changes are feasible. The council views this as a priority for fiscal year 2025-2026, with potential actual renovation work likely occurring in fiscal year 2027. Russ Gardner asked questions about the civil engineering firm's capability to handle space planning, which Moxey clarified would involve their architectural staff.

Creation of a Parking Improvements Task Force and Request for Proposals for Consulting Support:

The City Council discussed creating a parking improvements task force to address ongoing parking challenges in Saugatuck. City Manager Cummins outlined key issues including perceived lack of parking spaces, employee parking in prime spots, enforcement of parking regulations, and potential solutions like adding spaces, creating a parking ramp, implementing paid parking, and improving wayfinding signage. The proposed task force would include representatives from the City Council, Planning Commission, local businesses, Convention and Visitors Bureau, and The Interurban. The goal is to conduct a comprehensive parking study over 9-12 months, involving community stakeholders and potentially hiring a consultant to analyze current and future parking needs. Gregory Muncey was nominated to represent the city council, and the group discussed the importance of gathering data from other similar communities and taking a collaborative approach to solving parking challenges.

Potential Donor for Future Saugatuck Wilds Nature Preserve Pavilion:

An anonymous donor offered \$100,000 to construct a pavilion at the Saugatuck Wilds nature preserve after their passing. The proposed pavilion would be 20x40 feet and include benches, picnic tables, and potentially a fireplace. The donor wants the pavilion named after their dog. The City Council discussed the offer positively, with suggestions to involve the Parks and Public Works Committee in scoping the project to determine the specific design and placement, ensuring flexibility and alignment with the park's overall plans.

Temporary Sign Installation Agreement between City, Township, and Road Commission:

The City Council previously discussed a temporary sign installation agreement for the Saugatuck sign at the Holland and Blue Star intersection. City Manager Cummins explained the agreement allows the sign to remain for up to three years, with the city responsible for maintaining the sign and landscaping. The township and road commission want a more formal arrangement, and they're interested in potentially collaborating on a new, joint sign design in the future. The agreement is still pending approval from the township board and road commission. The city sees this as a temporary solution while working towards a more comprehensive signage approach, potentially tied to future wayfinding efforts.

Review of City Council Priorities for Fiscal Year 2025/2026:

The City Council reviewed their fiscal year priorities, noting progress on several initiatives. They discussed potentially removing the expansion of holiday lighting to Water and Griffith Street from the list due to budget constraints. Ryan Cummins suggested keeping the holiday lighting item open, as there might be more cost-effective ways to upgrade electrical infrastructure. The council kept wayfinding on the list, despite potential delays, and mentioned future considerations like the Dark Sky initiative and chicken-keeping regulations. They appreciated the progress made so far and agreed to keep the priorities list flexible, allowing for adjustments as the year progresses. The discussion was seen as a helpful way to track ongoing projects and ensure continued focus on key city objectives.

Closed Session:

Motion by Gardner, supported by Peterson, to move into a closed session pursuant to Pursuant to MCL 15.268 (h), to discuss a confidential written legal opinion regarding a proposed sand mining operation near the old landfill in Saugatuck Township; and Pursuant to MCL 15.268(d), to consider the purchase or lease of real property. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

The council entered the closed session at 4:58 p.m.

Motion by Muncey, second by Peterson to return to open session. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

The council entered the open session at 6:04 p.m.

Motion by Muncey, second by Gardner Motion to deny Site Work Solutions, Inc.'s request to reduce the setback of its sand mining operation adjacent to the old landfill property, and to direct City staff to communicate concerns about that proposed land use to the Saugatuck Township Planning Commission. Via roll call, motion carried unanimously.

Public Comments: None.

Correspondence: None.

Council Comments:

- Councilmember Joe Clark did not have a comment.
- Councilmember Muncey made two key points during council comments. First, he reminded everyone that city parking and property are not places for unauthorized businesses to operate. Second, he mentioned the upcoming Music in the Park event, noting he would be attending and had previously brought bubbles to a previous event. He also expressed hope that everyone had a nice and safe Fourth of July weekend.
- Councilmember Dean commented on the canceled Fourth of July events, expressing sympathy for those affected. He mentioned he would be going to Noble Twist, a new business in town, to see his daughter working there. He then planned to attend the SCA to watch the play "Come From Away". Dean expressed appreciation for the town's amenities and the exciting opportunities available in Saugatuck.
- Mayor Pro-Tem Stanton expressed sadness about the canceled Fourth of July parade. She specifically thanked April Gundy for her extensive work organizing the parade and other events. Stanton praised the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) for their efforts to create family-friendly events, acknowledging the difficulty of having to cancel planned activities due to rain.
- Councilmember Gardner commented on the Fourth of July parade cancellation, sharing that he was present with the city manager, police, and township fire department when the decision was made. He emphasized that the heavy rain led to the cancellation and that other communities also canceled their events. Gardner highlighted the importance of communication during such situations, acknowledging that while people were concerned, they ultimately understood the decision.
- Councilmember Peterson briefly mentioned that she was at the parade and standing on a dump truck's metal floor when lightning started along with a woman holding an umbrella, they decided to get out, which she noted was a wise decision.
- Mayor Anderson mentioned being out of town for the Fourth of July and missing the rain in Saugatuck. She noted she was in Sonoma County, which she described as beautiful, and expressed appreciation for getting away. She characterized the council meeting as having good discussions and led the meeting through its various agenda items.

Adjournment:

Motion by Peterson, second by Dean to adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously. Mayor Anderson adjourned the meeting at 6:08 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Jamie Wolters, City Clerk