



**CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
July 28, 2025**

The City Council met to have a Regular Council Meeting at City Hall.
102 Butler St., Saugatuck, MI 49453.

The meeting was called to order by Mayor Anderson at 6:30 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance.

Attendance:

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

Absent: None.

Others Present: City Manager Cummins, Clerk Wolters and Attorney Witte.

Mayor's Comments:

Mayor Anderson expressed gratitude for Saugatuck's beautiful summer, highlighting the city's parks, Oval Beach, and the joy of living in such a wonderful place. She emphasized feeling thankful for the community and its outdoor spaces, setting a positive tone for the meeting.

City Manager Comments:

City Manager Ryan Cummins praised the Rotary Club for the successful Venetian Festival and great turnout. He commended the Oval Beach staff for working hard in challenging hot conditions, noting the beach was sold out. He also mentioned that the township approved installing a new Saugatuck sign at Holland and Blue Star, and that they had interviewed six talented candidates for the director of planning and zoning position, with Luke Thompson's last day approaching.

Agenda Changes:

Motion by Muncey, second by Stanton to add Brad Lubbers to guest speaker from Allegan County. Via voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

Motion by Gardner, second by Peterson that agenda item 14c, Historic District Commission appointment, Helen Baldwin, a term expiring 8-1-28 be removed from consideration at this meeting. Via voice vote, motion failed 2-5. Yes – Gardner, Peterson. No – Anderson, Dean, Clark, Muncey, Stanton.

Guest Speakers:

County Commissioner Brad Lubbers reported on the Lake Shore Drive extension federal grant application, which was not accepted. He discussed the total project cost of about \$9 million, with the township contributing \$250,000. He highlighted the upcoming FEMA exercise for the Palisades nuclear power plant. Lubbers also explained a new AI tool called Value Base for property valuation, emphasizing that human assessors still make final decisions. He concluded by noting the county passed its annual audit with strong fund balances and pension funding and stressed the road extension's importance for public safety and emergency response times.

Public Comment on Agenda Item Only:

Sherry Tedaldi commented on item #14c.

Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of Workshop Meeting Minutes for July 23, 2025.
- B. Revocable License Agreement for Seating in Right of Way – JW Pizza LLC dba Scooters Café & Pizzeria.
- C. Special Event Application – 13th Annual Spear Street Block Party.
- D. Special Event Application – Annual Movie in the Park.
- E. Special Event Application – Annual Art in the Park.
- F. Designation of City Manager as Zoning Administrator and Historic District Administrator Effective 8-2-25.

Motion by Muncey, second by Dean to pass the consent agenda for July 28, 2025. Via roll call vote, motion carried 6-0. Abstain - Gardner.

Staff Reports, Boards, Commissions & Committees:

The City Manager, Treasurer, Clerk, Director of Planning & Zoning, Department of Public Works, Police and Engineer submitted status reports on current activities since the last regular council meeting for their respective departments.

Fire District Administration:

Dan fox reported on the fire district's recent activities. He noted the cancellation of the Fourth of July parade and the need for clear documentation about the event cancellation authority. Fox noted Blue Star and 64th as the new most dangerous intersection in the fire district. He shared updates on the South fire station proposal, ongoing funding efforts, and the sheriff's office using the fire station facilities. Fox detailed marine incidents, including rescuing an overheated boater and assisting a capsized sailboat. He emphasized the importance of emergency resources like fire boats, even if they seem underutilized. Fox also mentioned the fire district's continued leadership, with current officers remaining in their roles, and praised the district's approach to emergency preparedness and community service.

Interurban Board:

Councilmember Gregory Muncey reported that the Interurban's ridership increased by 16.32% in June, with 13,192 more passengers. The free parking shuttle operates on Wednesdays for Music in the Park and weekends from 1-9 pm. Riders can use on-demand service and park at alternative locations like Douglas elementary or the old Haworth property. The late-night service has been busy, bringing in an extra \$4,000 in June. They've scheduled seven buses and two dispatchers for Fridays and Saturdays. The board increased rider fares for Saugatuck Public Schools from 50 cents to \$3, with disabled riders still paying 50 cents. They also secured two

new contracts: one with a Fennville elementary daycare and another with the Fennville Migrant Program

Kalamazoo Lake Sewer & Water Authority:

Councilmember Joe Clark's reported on a special meeting called to discuss personnel matters regarding operations manager Darryl Van Dyke, which the board voted at to terminate Darryl. At the subsequent regular meeting, the board discussed covering Darryl's various roles and responsibilities. Barry Johnson stepped down as chair, with Abby Bigford taking over. The Kal-Lake staff voted to unionize, adding complexity to the situation. They are working to ensure coverage of tasks like billing, HR, accounts receivable, and field services. Clark noted ongoing challenges with audit reports and the need to validate information without Van Dyke's presence.

Kalamazoo Lake Harbor Authority: None.

Zoning Board of Appeals: None.

Historic District Commission:

Councilmember Russ Gardner reported on the meeting from July 10. He mentioned they have a meeting scheduled for July 31. Two items were approved in their last meeting, and one item at 234 Spear Street was tabled for a special meeting. Regarding the tabled item, there were concerns about the design and massing of the property. The contractor and property owner will return on Thursday with a revised plan for review.

Planning Commission:

Councilmember Joe Clark noted they have a special meeting on Wednesday to continue work on the master plan. Clark noted the survey questions are in the minutes for review.

Parks & Public Works Committee:

Mayor Pro-Tem Stanton announced that DPW Superintendent Herbert hired Michelle Gibson as the new Project Manager/Administrative Assistant, and she will be starting on August 4. DPW Superintendent Herbert reported they received 130 applicants and conducted eight interviews. They are still working to fill other positions, including an Oval Beach manager. Scott noted that Chad Bouwman left for a job closer to home, but Noah Aramendi and Ellis Mack have stepped up to handle parks duties. He hopes to schedule interviews for the vacant positions by the end of the week. Lauren Stanton added that they've posted updates about invasive species on their website and are seeking bids for managing invasive species at Mount Bald Head and the Saugatuck Harbor Natural Area.

Tri-Community Non-Motorized Trail Study Committee: None.

Water Systems Operations Contract Advisory Committee:

City Manager Ryan Cummins provided the consultant with an update.

Wildlife Management Committee:

Councilmember Scott Dean mentioned Douglas City Council met and approved deer archery hunting on private property and homeowners association lands during hunting season.

Approval of Accounts Payable:

Motion by Stanton, second by Clark to approve the accounts payable in the amount of \$469,409.13. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing: None.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business:**Spear Street – Streetlight Removal Request:**

Motion by Dean, second by Muncey to have Consumers Energy remove the street light located near 555 Spear Street, light ID# 188348, contingent on payment from the residents who have promised. Via roll call vote, motion carried 6-1. Yes – Anderson, Stanton, Clark, Dean, Muncey, Peterson. No – Gardner.

Updated Law Enforcement Services Agreement with Allegan County:

Motion by Stanton, second by Gardner to approve the Allegan County Sheriff's Office Law Enforcement Services Agreement as presented. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Historic District Commission Appointment – Helen Baldwin with term expiring 8-1-28:

Motion by Stanton, Second by Clark to approve Helen Baldwin for an appointment onto the Historic District Commission with the term expiring 8-1-28, that is in the best interest of the City. Via roll call vote, motion carried 5-2. Yes– Anderson, Dean, Clark, Muncey, Stanton. No – Gardner, Peterson.

Public Comment:

Tim Straker noted updates to the Historic District Commission August agenda.

Council Comments:

Councilmember Peterson commented on the joy of living in Saugatuck, highlighting the Venetian Festival as a fantastic event. She mentioned her grandsons visiting from Nebraska and how much they enjoyed the festival, to the point where they didn't want to go home. Peterson expressed pride in everyone who put the event together and appreciated the community's efforts.

Councilmember Gardner discussed his visit to Oval Beach on Sunday, noting the long line of cars and the beach's busy atmosphere. He praised Linda, the beach manager, for her excellent traffic management and customer service during a hot day. Gardner shared an incident where he helped a stranded motorist and highlighted how the beach staff, including the deputy, went above and beyond to assist visitors. He suggested having a post-season debrief to discuss the beach operations, calling it a critical revenue generator for the city's parks. Gardner emphasized the importance of reviewing what went well and what could be improved during the beach season.

Mayor Pro-Tem Stanton echoed comments about the Venetian Festival, thanking the Rotary Club and numerous volunteers who made the event successful. She praised the community's spirit and the way people step up to help make events family-friendly. Stanton also warned about upcoming staffing challenges for local businesses in August, as college and high school students begin to leave for school and sports. She encouraged patience from visitors and locals alike during this transition period.

Councilmember Dean thanked the Rotary leadership for the successful Venetian weekend. He specifically highlighted Helen Baldwin's leadership in the Rotary and her contributions to the community, such as helping create the Saugatuck Wilds natural area. Dean also humorously thanked his wife Max Dean and Mary Eileen for allowing their husbands to take a boating trip to the Straits of Mackinac and Les Cheneaux Islands during the festival weekend, praising the beauty of Michigan's waters.

Councilmember Muncey commented on the Venetian Festival, noting it was the first time in 20 years he hadn't volunteered due to a wedding work commitment. He served as a judge for the boat parade, sitting with Lisa Mize and Eric Peterson. Muncey suggested potentially offering a boat slip or prize to encourage more boat parade participation, referencing Charlevoix's event with 30 boats. He thanked Sean Steele and Julie at the Star of Saugatuck for their boat decoration efforts. Muncey also paid tribute to Tim Harrell, a young employee at Phil's who recently passed away, describing him as a friendly giant who was an integral part of the Saugatuck community. He emphasized how people like Tim make the town special, beyond just the residents.

Councilmember Clark expressed pride in the town during the Venetian Festival weekend, highlighting how happy people were and how the event puts Saugatuck on the map. He thanked everybody who helped make the weekend wonderful. Clark also acknowledged Ryan Cummins for stepping up into the planning role in Luke Thompson's absence, recognizing the additional work and burden this places on him and hoping the city can find someone to help share the workload.

Mayor Anderson noted that Saugatuck is a great city, and volunteerism is the secret sauce of making special events work. Good luck to Ryan and Jamie on staying healthy due to sickness going around the office.

Correspondence:

- A. Jim Smit submitted correspondence on 145 Grant Street water service.
- B. Jim Sellman submitted correspondence on the Spear Street light removal.
- C. The clerk submitted a Parking Task Force Notice for Applicants.

Adjournment:

Motion by Stanton second by Dean to adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously. Mayor Anderson adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Jamie Wolters, City Clerk