



**CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING
August 25, 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, Attorney Witte.

Mayor's Comments:

Mayor Anderson highlighted that the Douglas City Council recently approved a development agreement that will include both affordable apartments (targeted to household incomes between \$40,000 and \$100,000) and market-rate housing. While acknowledging some frustration from neighboring homeowners, she emphasized that the project addresses a significant need in the tri-communities and aligns with Douglas's master plan. Mayor Anderson expressed excitement for the project, noting that it will benefit local workers and the broader community.

City Manager Comments:

City Manager Ryan Cummins began his comments by thanking the council and sharing positive news that the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) approved a \$20,200 grant to help expand the city's holiday lighting, following the council's approval of additional lighting and necessary electrical upgrades. He mentioned ongoing efforts to bring light installations to Cook Park, possibly with a kickoff event. Cummins also updated the council on the Mt. Baldhead restroom project, which is scheduled to start after the Mount Bald Head Challenge. He noted that the master plan survey, previously reviewed by the council, will be released soon along with an invitation to an open house to gather more community feedback.

Agenda Changes: None.

Guest Speakers: None.

Public Comment on Agenda Item Only: None.

Consent Agenda:

- A.** Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for August 11, 2025.
- B.** Resolution 250825-A Temporary Polling Location Change for November 4, 2025, election.
- C.** Special Event – Havana Club Ride.
- D.** Right of Way Sign Application – Fall Gallery Stroll.

Motion by Muncey, second by Dean to pass the consent agenda for August 25, 2025. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Staff Reports, Boards, Commissions & Committees:

The City Manager submitted a status report on current activities.

Fire District Administration:

Dan Fox's fire board report covered several key topics:

- He emphasized parade and event safety and offered to share a safety packet with the council.
- He updated the council on the fire board's recent meeting, focusing on the municipal bonding process for the South Station project and the township's positive outlook on funding.
- Dan discussed equipment and training, noting a donation of wrecked cars by Ray's Towing Service for rescue training and reviewing apparatus costs, maintenance, and call statistics, including an increase in calls from Douglas Cove.
- He mentioned the potential for cost recovery from frequent 911 callers and highlighted a \$5,000 donation from the Fire Chiefs Association.

Interurban Board:

Councilmember Gregory Muncey's Interurban report highlighted the following points:

- The Interurban Transit Authority has served the community since 1980 and is funded by federal, state, and local sources, as well as rider revenue and grants.
- The authority complies with federal regulations, including ADA requirements, and maintains a fleet of nine lift-equipped buses.
- Staffing includes one executive director, one full-time mechanic, six full-time employees, 16 part-time employees, and three seasonal employees.
- Ridership has reached record highs, with July 2025 seeing 15,524 riders—the highest monthly total ever.
- The Interurban provides essential transportation, prescription delivery, and food delivery services, supporting access to jobs, education, healthcare, and community engagement.
- The authority may seek a millage increase in the next fall election to support continued growth and service expansion.

Kalamazoo Lake Sewer & Water Authority:

Councilmember Joe Clark's Kalamazoo Lake Sewer & Water Authority report included the following key points:

- The board decided to split the operations manager position into two roles: one for back-office functions (HR, finance, planning, board relations) and one for field operations and workforce management. An advisory committee is developing job requirements and overseeing interviews, with several candidates under consideration.
- Pump station eight needs significant repairs due to water intrusion and a leaning electrical panel, with costs estimated at \$60,000. While the budget can cover it, this is a major early-year expense.
- The board elected new leadership: Abby Gifford as chair and Joe Clark as vice chair.

Kalamazoo Lake Harbor Authority: None.

Zoning Board of Appeals: None.

Historic District Commission:

Councilmember Gardner noted the next meeting is September 4th at 6:00 p.m.

Planning Commission:

Councilmember Joe Clark's Planning Commission report included the following points:

- The master plan survey will be released soon, and the format for the September 30 open house is nearly finalized.

- The Planning Commission decided to postpone discussions on zoning consolidation until after the master plan is completed, ensuring any changes will align with the new plan.
- No other significant updates were reported.

Parks & Public Works Committee:

Mayor Pro-Tem Lauren Stanton's Parks and Public Works Committee report included these key points:

- The committee's next meeting is scheduled for tomorrow morning.
- They recently held a kickoff meeting for the Kalamazoo River Greenway group, which will meet quarterly.
- The main focus for the coming year is education about the Greenway and treating invasive species, with middle school students participating in these efforts at the Saugatuck Wilds in partnership with the ODC.
- The ODC is actively working on grant applications, providing valuable support to the city's efforts.

Tri-Community Non-Motorized Trail Study Committee:

City Manager Ryan Cummins reported that the Tri-Community Non-Motorized Trail Study recently included a collaborative walk-through of the proposed trail route with tribal nations, city staff, and the project engineer. The state noted this level of collaboration with tribal nations was unique and positive. The walk-through allowed both the tribes and the city to better understand each other's perspectives, especially regarding sensitive areas like the cemetery and mature trees. A follow-up meeting is planned for next month to continue the discussion and review additional feedback.

Water Systems Operations Contract Advisory Committee: None.

City Manager Cummins noted the next meeting will be in September.

Wildlife Management Committee:

Councilmember Scott Dean reported that the Wildlife Management Committee's work was acted on by the council two weeks ago, and the committee is scheduled to sunset later this year—either at the end of the year or the start of hunting season. No further reports are expected in upcoming meetings, but the topic can remain on the agenda until the committee officially concludes its work.

Approval of Accounts Payable:

Motion by Gardner, second by Peterson to approve the accounts payable in the amount of \$390,458.41. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing: None.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business:

Appointments to the Parking Improvements Task Force:

Motion by Stanton, second by Muncey, to suspend the 2020 Boards and Commissions Selection Policy related to the appointments to the advisory Parking Improvements Task Force and to appoint the following members:

- **City Council Representative and Chair:** Gregory Muncey
- **Planning Commission Representative:** Auston Marineau
- **City Resident (non-business owner) Representative:** Cathy Brockington
- **City Resident (non-business owner) Representative:** Wendy Colsen
- **Restaurant Owner Representative:** Alec Payleitner
- **Retail Business Owner Representative:** Michael Gustaitis
- **Convention and Visitors Bureau Representative:** Gary Kott
- **Interurban Representative:** Becky Carten-Crandell.

Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment: None.

Closed Session:

Motion by Muncey, second by Stanton to move into a closed session pursuant to MCL 15.268(e) and (h) to discuss a confidential written legal opinion regarding the ongoing lawsuits filed against the City by Dune Ridge, captioned Dune Ridge v. City of Saugatuck (Case No. 22-65713-CK) and Dune Ridge v City of Saugatuck (Case No. 21-64709-CZ) regarding trial or settlement strategy, which if discussed in an open meeting, would have a detrimental financial effect. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Council entered closed session at 7:23 p.m.

Motion by Peterson, second by Gardner to go into open session. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.

Council entered open session at 8:23 p.m.

Correspondance:

Knights of Columbus provided correspondence regarding their annual fund-raising event known as the Tootsie Roll Drive.

Council Comments:

Joe Clark's council comments included praise for the successful sidewalk sale event and the sense of community it fostered. He reflected on the excitement of the back-to-school season and the arrival of all. Clark also thanked Gregory Muncey for leading the parking task force and expressed appreciation for the productive meeting and the contributions of his fellow council members.

Gregory Muncey's council comments included praise for Douglas's affordable housing project and encouragement to seek information directly from those involved. He promoted upcoming "Music in the Park" and commended April Gundy for her work. Muncey noted that local merchants have experienced a record year for business, gave a shout-out to the Department of Public Works for their dedication, and observed that parking in town is becoming easier as summer ends and school starts.

Scott Dean's council comments included encouraging everyone to thank local teachers as the new school year begins, wishing everyone a happy Labor Day weekend, and expressing his anticipation for seeing the community at the upcoming Mount Bald Head Challenge event.

Mayor Pro-Tem Lurne Stanton council comments included expressing gratitude to Gregory Muncey for taking on the role of chairperson for the parking task force, acknowledging the significance of the responsibility. She shared her excitement that the task force will begin addressing parking challenges and expressed confidence in the group's ability to make progress.

Councilmember Russ Gardner's comments focused on the recent Spear Street block party, which brought together about 75-80 people and has been a community tradition since 1984. He emphasized the event's role in building community and welcoming both residents and short-term rental guests as neighbors. Gardner thanked Councilmember Muncey for attending and noted the popularity of the event's chocolate chip cookies.

Councilmember Chris Peterson's closing council comments were brief and positive. She expressed agreement with the previous comments made by other council members, echoed their sentiments, and wished everyone a good night.

Mayor Anderson shared that she received a folder of historical parking recommendations from Sandra Randolph, which has been scanned for city records and will be given to Gregory Muncey for review. She also mentioned receiving positive feedback from several community members about the playground, highlighting its value to the community

Adjournment:

Motion by Dean second by Peterson to adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously. Mayor Anderson adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Jamie Wolters, City Clerk