



CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES

August 19, 2026

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 and Councilmembers, Gardner (*arrived at 4:28 p.m.*), Dean, Peterson, Muncey and Stanton.

Absent: Mayor Pro Tem Clark.

Motion by Peterson, second by Dean to excuse councilmember Clark from today's meeting. Via voice vote, motion carried 5-0.

Others Present: City Manager Cummins, Attorney Witte, Zoning Director Moore, DPW Director Ondersma and Clerk Wolters.

Agenda Changes:

Motion by Muncey, second by Stanton to change discussion item 7b to the next workshop so that all councilmembers are present during the discussion. Via voice, motion carried 5-0.

Public Comment on Agenda Items Only:

Christopher Hauck commented on agenda item 7c.

Approval of Minutes:

Regular City Council Meeting Minutes – August 10, 2026:

Motion by Stanton, second by Muncey to approve the regular city council meeting minutes from August 10, 2026. Via roll call vote, motion carried 5-0.

Guest Speaker: None.

Discussion Items:

Presentation on Recommended Brand Direction:

Tim Straker of the Branding Advisory Committee recommended a new city logo developed with Concept A. The project's goal is to create a modern brand that feels distinctly Saugatuck by being authentic, "artful by nature," and elevated yet approachable. The primary audience is visitors and tourists, with residents as a crucial secondary audience whose pride and perception influence how visitors experience the community. Survey feedback from roughly 322 respondents showed support for either a moderate refresh or a completely new direction, with only limited interest in a subtle evolution of the current logo, and the recommended identity reflects that appetite for change.

Concept A presented a custom, hand-drawn “City of Saugatuck” wordmark. They demonstrated how the logo could appear on official stationery, city vehicles, signage, website, and social media, including color-coding content areas to improve clarity. Council members and committee participants reacted very positively, describing the mark as bold, readable, playful, nostalgic, and reflective of Saugatuck’s artsy, slightly quirky character, with some noting a ‘60s counterculture feel that aligns with the city’s identity as an art and diversity-focused community. Several emphasized that, while it stands out, it still fits alongside Saugatuck Township and Douglas branding.

A significant portion of the discussion focused on protecting and controlling the new identity. Because the logo is fully custom, it is considered protectable, and council members raised concerns about unauthorized use or imitation, especially for merchandise. The city attorney’s office will explore protection options and coordinate with Concept A and staff on how the logo is shared and marked (e.g., TM or watermark) when posted publicly. Next steps are to place formal approval of the logo on the upcoming Monday council agenda; if approved, Concept A will complete a full set of brand guidelines, and staff and legal counsel will proceed with implementing protection and controlled usage of the new identity.

Right of Way Permit Application - 731 Pleasant Street:

Zoning Director Moore presented a request from 731 Pleasant Street focused on a right-of-way permit request to install retaining walls, hardscaping, a reconfigured driveway, and a new staircase on an extremely steep slope along Pleasant Street. Moore and the engineers concluded there were no engineering objections, noting that the steep grade and limited usable space make this portion of the right-of-way unlikely to be needed for future public improvements. Council Member Chris Peterson, who lives across the street, raised concerns about historical flooding and prior slope failures after a severe rain event, asking how the terraces would be filled and stabilized. The applicant’s engineer/contractor (Eric Rosendall, Lake Shore Property Services) explained that the design uses three-quarter by half-inch crushed limestone, geotextile fabric, and footing drains behind the walls to manage water and hydraulic pressure, and that the driveway footprint itself would remain the same with only one new off-street parking space added near the street. Council members then debated precedent, especially in light of anticipated changes on Park Street where some existing encroachments may need to be removed, and the city attorney advised that each right-of-way request can be evaluated on its own merits so long as the record clearly identifies the unique characteristics here (notably the extreme slope and infeasibility of sidewalks or widening on that side). Additional attention was given to drainage and downstream impacts, given other local drainage-related disputes, but staff reiterated that the city engineer’s concerns about drainage and historic flooding can be addressed through plan modifications and permit conditions. Property owners and the contractor spoke in public comment, emphasizing their intention to improve drainage by adding proper driveway drains, infiltration areas, and piping to lower areas, and their commitment to a well-engineered, stable solution. Staff and the city manager also stressed that, because this remains city right-of-way, the approval is not permanent in perpetuity: robust conditions will be drafted, and the city will retain authority to make future public improvements if needed.

Public Comments:

Christopher Hauck
Eric Rosendall

Council Comments:

Councilmember Peterson did not have comment.

Councilmember Gardner did not have comment.

Councilmember Dean complimented the branding team on their presentation.

Councilmember Muncey congratulated the property owners on the river for the \$1 million grant received from EGLE for removal of the gas tank.

Councilmember Stanton did not have comment.

Mayor Anderson loves the logo from the branding committee, it was great work and creative.

Adjournment:

*Motion by Muncey, second by Dean to adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion unanimously.
Mayor Anderson adjourned the meeting at 4:49 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted

Jamie Wolters, City Clerk