



CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES-*proposed* **March 21, 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, Clerk Wolters.

Agenda Changes:

Motion by Muncey, second by Peterson to add the sign at Holland Street and Blue Star Highway as discussion item 6c. Via voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

Public Comment on Agenda Items Only: None.

Approval of Minutes:

Regular City council Meeting Minutes – May 12, 2025:

Motion by Stanton, second by Muncey to approve the regular city council meeting minutes from May 12, 2025. Via voice vote, motion carried unanimously.

Discussion Items:

Updates to Personnel Policies Manual:

Ryan Cummins presented updates to the personnel policies manual, which included:

- Adding new policies on:
 - Disability accommodations
 - Remote and hybrid work
 - Longevity
 - Artificial intelligence tools
 - Social media
 - Lactation/breastfeeding
- Removing the personal health information policy

- Updating language on part-time employee benefits
- Modifying pay time off policy to comply with the earned sick time act
- Adding new holidays
- Updating non-discrimination language to include gender identity/expression
- Revising cell phone reimbursement, funeral, harassment, and computer usage policies

The council discussed remote work extensively, with concerns about public accessibility balanced against the need for workplace flexibility. They also debated the process for handling complaints that may arise about whomever is in the City Manager role.

Administrative/Project Coordinator Position:

Ryan Cummins proposed creating a new position to support the Public Works Department, with the following key points:

- Will be dedicated to supporting Public Works
- Provide the first point of contact for public works-related calls and service requests
- Help manage service requests and customer service
- Salary range is \$49,429 – \$64,493. Benefits will be an additional 40%. A total of \$100,000 is included in next year's budget.

Cummins explained the position would help Department of Public Works Superintendent Herbert's balance administrative and field work. The council was generally supportive of creating the position, seeing it as a way to improve city operations and support staff efficiency with the increase in city responsibilities.

Holland Street and Blue Star Highway Sign:

City Manager Cummins explained the history of sign damage and reason the sign was removed:

- The original wooden sign was damaged multiple times
- Initial replacement quote was nearly \$20,000

Suggestions included:

- Replicating the old sign - Using the paint palette design similar to the Lake Street sign - Creating a temporary solution

Consensus:

- Do not spend significant money on a permanent sign
- Create a simple, temporary replacement
- Wait for future city branding and wayfinding project

The council ultimately agreed to have staff develop a quick, inexpensive temporary sign while planning for a more comprehensive branding approach in the future.

Public Comments:

Renee Zita commented on the condition of the Mt. Baldhead area.

Dan Fox commented on the Fire District Budget.

Closed Session:

Motion by Peterson, second by Gardner 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.

The council entered the closed session at 5:44 p.m.

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

The council entered the open session at 6:20 p.m.

Correspondence: None.

Council Comments:

- Councilmember Joe Clark welcomed everyone and noted that although it's summer, it doesn't feel like it. He expressed interest in reading and digesting the fire budget provided, anticipating a good discussion at an upcoming council meeting or workshop. He concluded by wishing everyone a happy weekend.
- Councilmember Muncey thanked the city staff for securing funds to restore the city's annual donation to the Garden Club, which helps beautify various areas around Saugatuck. He shared that the club's planting day was moved from Wednesday to Friday, and he will be joining students that morning to plant pots for Memorial Day weekend. He also reminded everyone about the Saugatuck-Douglas History Center's season kickoff event at Mount Baldhead Park, taking place Friday from 5–7 PM, featuring hot dogs, a new art display by the Saugatuck Art Club, and free admission. He wished everyone a happy Memorial Day and noted that volunteers are still needed to serve as marshals for the parade on Monday.
- Councilmember Dean thanked Councilmember Muncey for mentioning Memorial Day and noted that they may be short-staffed for the event. He expressed deep appreciation for Ryan and the DPW team, especially for their swift and professional response to a major storm—reportedly one of the worst the town has seen in years. He praised their quick action in reopening streets and highlighted DPW Superintendent Herbert's preparedness in having a professional tree service ready to respond. Dean was especially impressed with how efficiently the city recovered within a day and said he would likely reiterate his gratitude at the next meeting.
- Mayor Pro Tem Stanton echoed Councilmember Dean's comments and added congratulations to the Saugatuck Class of 2025, who are graduating tomorrow. She noted that many families will be in town for the occasion and offered her congratulations to the graduates.
- Councilmember Gardner shared that he will be serving breakfast with the seniors in the morning alongside Mayor Pro-Tem Stanton and his wife Jennifer, who has been helping plan the event with other parents. He also gave a personal note about Memorial Day, expressing pride in his 86-year-old father, Bob, a Coast Guard veteran, who will serve as Sergeant at Arms and place flowers at the memorial. Gardner noted it will be an emotional moment for him and emphasized his deep gratitude for the service and sacrifice of veterans, encouraging the community to give them a round of applause on Monday.
- Councilmember Peterson echoed praise for the city's response to the recent storm, commending both the city and fire department for their excellent work during what she described as a frightening event. She shared a personal moment when the storm sirens went off, saying she didn't hear them until her dog jumped on the bed. She also acknowledged Memorial Day, mentioning that her husband, an 81-year-old Vietnam veteran who served in an armed helicopter unit, will be attending the parade with her. She expressed pride in standing

along the street in support of the event.

- Mayor Anderson added her thanks for the city's storm response efforts and extended congratulations to Cass, Charlotte, and their parents, noting it's a significant milestone. She concluded by saying it was a good meeting and wished everyone safety.

Adjournment:

Motion by Stanton, second by Peterson to adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously. Mayor Anderson adjourned the meeting at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Jamie Wolters, City Clerk