



CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING - *proposed*
January 26, 2026

The City Council met to have a Regular Council Meeting at City Hall at 6:30 p.m.
102 Butler St., Saugatuck, MI 49453.

Call to Order:

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

Attendance:

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

Absent: Muncey.

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

Motion by Stanton, second by Gardner to excuse Councilmember Muncey absence from the meeting and to approve Councilmember Dean to participate remotely due to a medical condition that prevents him from using stairs. Via roll call vote, motion carried 6-0.

Mayor's Comments:

Mayor Holly Anderson postponed sharing a congratulatory note for Jamie due to her absence but mentioned her appreciation for city staff. She reflected on the joy she feels watching the Department of Public Works plow her road on snowy mornings, commending the city employees – especially those working from home during a demanding winter – for their dedication and hard work. She concluded by expressing gratitude for all staff efforts.

City Manager Comments:

City Manager Ryan Cummins thanked Mayor Anderson for acknowledging city staff, especially the Public Works team, for their efforts during winter. He reported positive results from recent water lead testing, with no sites above action levels and slight improvement in the 90th percentile values. Cummins updated the council on the new public bathroom project nearing completion, with only a few finishing touches left. He previewed the next city workshop meeting (February 4), which will cover a packed agenda including infrastructure projects, short-term rentals, a potential warming station, branding, and more; he advised council to expect a lengthy meeting covering these important topics.

Agenda Changes: None.

Guest Speakers:

Motion by Gardner, second by Peterson to add Allegan County Drain Commissioner Brad Lubbers and Saugatuck Center for the Arts President Kristen Armstrong to the agenda as guest speakers. Via voice vote, motion carried 6-0.

Allegan County Drain Commissioner Brad Lubbers

Lubbers shared several updates:

- The county elected new chair and vice chair commissioners.

- Casino revenue sharing (mostly benefitting parks and police) increased by 11%.
- The county is starting a new Brownfield remediation plan through EGLE or the Otsego/Plainwell paper mill site, aiming for eventual housing development. The previous agreement was terminated for the purpose of beginning another three-year plan.
- He mentioned a new county Brownfield policy that is under discussion, especially for projects with workforce housing.
- The county renewed its five-year parks plan and is seeking state grant funding for park improvements.
- Educational partnerships with the Outdoor Discover Center at county parks were highlighted, as well as progress on groundwater monitoring wells.
- Lubbers also expressed condolences for recent losses in the community and ended with positive notes about collaboration and recognition for the area's attractions.

Saugatuck Center for the Arts President, Kristen Armstrong

Armstrong provided an overview of the Saugatuck Center for the Arts' plans and anticipated impact for the coming year:

- She highlighted a full calendar of concerts, theater productions, and special events that draw regional audiences and contribute to local economic and cultural vitality.
- She emphasized the SCA's commitment to serving West Michigan residents, not just tourists.
- Armstrong outlined extensive youth outreach, including children's concerts, a free children's film festival, summer camps with scholarships, and school partnership programs.
- She also described upcoming art exhibitions, artist residencies, public art installations, and community collaborations.
- Armstrong concluded by underscoring the SCA's leadership in arts education and its lasting impact on youth and the broader community.

Public Comment on Agenda Item Only: None.

Consent Agenda:

Approval of City Council Special Meeting Minutes from January 12, 2026.

Approval of City Council Closed Session Minutes from January 12, 2026.

Approval of City Council Strategic Work Session Minutes from January 14, 2026.

Right of Way Signage – Saugatuck Second Line Mardi Gras Pub Crawl.

Right of Way Signage – St. Patrick's Day.

Resolution No. 260126-A – Local Governmental Unit Approval For Social District Permit for JW Pizza DBA Scooters Café and Pizzeria.

Motion by Peterson, second by Stanton to pass the consent agenda dated January 26, 2026. Via roll call vote, motion carried 6-0.

Staff Reports, Boards, Commissions & Committees:

Reports provided by the City Staff and the following board, commission and committee members.

Fire District Administration:

City of Saugatuck fire board representative Dan Fox. Fox presented the fire district board's year-end report. He summarized the Wiley station project status, noting the need for construction drawings to support bond funding. Fox detailed annual and December incident statistics, highlighting a record-high call volume, significant overlapping (simultaneous) calls, and prevalent call types such as falls and fire alarms. He shared response and dispatch times, pointing out that response remains prompt despite geography and call volume. Fox also discussed advances in fire data tracking – like mapping incidents – and emphasized that accurate metrics are essential both for management and for improving community services. He concluded by mentioning new equipment arrivals and efforts to communicate statistics and

information transparently to the public and council.

Interurban Board: None.

Kalamazoo Lake Sewer & Water Authority:

Mayor Pro Tem Clark reported that the Kalamazoo Lake Sewer & Water Authority successfully approved updated bylaws after many years, marking an important step forward for the organization. He also shared progress on hiring a new administrator and addressing prior administrative challenges. Clark discussed the board's recent vote and denial regarding the City of Saugatuck's first right of refusal for sewer capacity, noting differing perspectives during the process and the legal guidance provided to the board. He outlined the potential implications for future capacity planning and the authority's decision-making framework, as well as the broader inter-municipal dynamics involved. Clark concluded by reaffirming the City of Saugatuck's commitment to cooperation and continued engagement, expressing hope for improved collaboration moving forward.

Kalamazoo Lake Harbor Authority:

Councilmember Peterson discussed the need for an economic impact study of the harbor, noting past funding efforts and the importance of showing the harbor's value to secure future dredging resources. She mentioned rumors about Douglas possibly wanting to dissolve the authority due to lack of perceived lack of progress but expressed a preference to first complete the impact study. Peterson emphasized the importance of working with neighboring communities, coordinating with staff and consultants, and ensuring there is a clear plan to advance these discussions and secure funding for critical harbor needs.

Zoning Board of Appeals: None.

Historic District Commission:

Councilmember Dean noted that the next meeting is Thursday, February 6th, at 6pm.

Planning Commission:

Councilmember Gardner reported approval of a short-term rental application and a commercial addition, noted that a public hearing on the sign ordinance was held with no comments, and announced an upcoming council hearing on it. He also listed the election of commission officers for the year. Steve Manns was re-elected as Chair, CJ Bagierek re-elected as Vice-Chair, and Mark LaChey was elected as the Secretary of the commission.

Parks & Public Works Committee:

Councilmember Stanton noted that the February meeting was cancelled and the next meeting is scheduled for February 24th.

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

Water Systems Operations Contract Advisory Committee:

Councilmember Gardner noted the next meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 12.

Parking Improvements Task Force Committee: None.

Approval of Accounts Payable:

Motion by Stanton, second by Gardner, to approve the accounts payable in the amount of \$367,684.36. Via roll call, motion carried 6-0.

Public Hearing: None.

Unfinished Business: None.

New Business:

Street End Fees and Agreements for 2026:

Motion by Stanton, second by Gardner to approve the 2026 municipal license agreement rates as presented and authorize the Mayor and City Clerk to sign such agreements for 2026 as presented. Via roll call vote, motion carried 6-0.

Wicks Park Boat Slips:

Motion by Stanton, second by Peterson to approve the proposed 2026 Wicks Park boat slip lease agreement as presented. Via roll call vote, motion carried 6-0.

Public Comment: None.

Correspondence:

Betsy Muir

Board of Review and ZBA Alternate Vacancy

Council Comments:

Councilmember Peterson praised Dan Fox's emphasis on using data for decision making in the fire district and suggested applying the same approach to the police department. She volunteered to help form a group to meet with Allegan officials to clearly define and request more comprehensive police statistics to address ongoing concerns about police coverage and service.

Councilmember Gardner expressed support for Chris Peterson's suggestion to improve police statistics and community-oriented policing. He noted ongoing community concerns about police coverage since the departments division, referenced a well-attended past meeting with the Sheriff's Department, and proposed revisiting collaborative efforts to make contracted police services feel more integrated and supportive in the community. Gardner volunteered to help with these efforts, citing his connections with the sheriff's office.

Mayor Pro Tem Clark expressed his condolences to Chief Janik for the loss of his daughter-in-law Ashley. He recalled Ashley's long-time participation in the local club, her community involvement with safety programs at schools (often bringing her dog), and noted that she was well-liked and will be missed by many.

Councilmember Dean echoed what was expressed by the other council members in terms of condolences and the ongoing issue with getting better data from some of their partners.

Councilmember Stanton reflected on the community's grief over losing a young, highly involved member of the community who was deeply connected through the Yacht Club, Douglas police department, and Chief Janik's family. She also appreciated the recent Strategic Planning session, valuing the teamwork, camaraderie, and meaningful conversations with staff.

Mayor Anderson expressed deep sympathy for Chief Janik's profound losses – his best friend and daughter-in-law – occurring so close together, calling it heartbreaking. She also remarked on the value of the Strategic Planning Session, appreciating the camaraderie, lighthearted moments, and sense of gratitude for the group.

Adjournment:

Motion by Peterson, second by Dean to adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried 6-0. Mayor Anderson adjourned at 7:51 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Sara Williams, Deputy Clerk