



CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES

August 5, 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 4:06 p.m.*), Dean, Peterson, Stanton.

Absent: Clark, Muncey.

Motion by Stanton, second by Peterson to excuse councilmembers Gardner, Clark and Muncey. Via voice vote, motion carried 4-0.

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

Agenda Changes: None.

Public Comment on Agenda Items Only:

Motion by Stanton, second by Peterson to table the short-term rental discussion for next workshop. Via roll call vote, motion carried 4-0.

Approval of Minutes:

Regular City Council Meeting Minutes – July 27, 2026:

Motion by Dean, second by Stanton to approve the regular city council meeting minutes from July 27, 2026. Via roll call vote, motion carried 4-0.

Guest Speaker: None.

Discussion Items:

Kalamazoo River Greenway – Annual Report and Request for Further Financial Investment:

The Kalamazoo River Greenway discussion focused on an update from the Outdoor Discovery Center Greenway Manager Dan Callam about the regional effort to improve river access, connect green spaces, and enhance watershed health. He reviewed progress since the 2018 plan, including invasive species management at about 20 sites, installation of roughly 10 rain and native plant gardens, volunteer cleanup events, and ongoing restoration work at places like Mount Baldy and Potawatomi Marsh, along with conversations with local landowners about conservation easements and potential acquisitions. A key initiative is the Lower Kalamazoo Water Trail from Lake Michigan to New Richmond, with seven access sites identified and Rotary-funded floating kayak launches—one for Douglas and one offered to Saugatuck, potentially at the Spear Street launch or Coughlin Park, pending review by Parks & Public Works and the DNR. Dan also outlined citizen science monitoring for stream health, coordination with federal and watershed partners on long-term PCB cleanup, and priorities around grants, agricultural best practices, sediment and dredging issues, and sustainable funding.

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Based on clear returns in programming and outside grant dollars (about \$14,000 so far, with larger requests pending), he requested that the City renew its \$5,000 contribution for another year.

Proposal for Design Engineering Services for Elizabeth Street Improvements:

The council discussed a request from the annual chili cookoff organizers to stake the event tent into the newly paved Wicks Park parking lot, as they have done for many years. City Manager Ryan Cummins relayed Public Works' and the city engineer's recommendation against staking into the fresh pavement due to the risk of moisture intrusion, cracking, and potholes, emphasizing the need to treat this as a broader policy question about protecting public infrastructure. The event's tent company quoted about \$1,100+ extra to secure the tent with concrete blocks instead of stakes, a cost that would cut meaningfully into the event's net proceeds. Council members expressed strong support for keeping the event in Saugatuck but also agreed the city should avoid damaging new pavement and avoid setting a precedent for staking into asphalt. Ideas discussed included seeking sponsorship from the Convention & Visitors Bureau (CVB) to cover the additional cost, exploring whether DPW had suitable blocks and evaluating long-term solutions such as a permanent anchoring system or possibly a different site configuration in future years. Legal constraints on using municipal funds directly to subsidize the event were noted, so the near-term path identified was for the organizers to approach the CVB at its August 20 meeting for financial support, while staff consult legal counsel on what the city can and cannot fund, and continue exploring a more permanent, compliant solution so the cookoff can remain in Saugatuck without harming city infrastructure.

Public Comments: None.

Council Comments:

Councilmember Peterson thanked everyone for working with the Chili Cookoff.

Councilmember Gardner thanked council for allowing him to be late and apologized for his tardiness.

Councilmember Dean is looking forward to the Chili Cookoff and hopes it remains in Saugatuck. He appreciated the presentation from the ODC which has made a lot of progress and is an asset to the tri-community.

Councilmember Stanton did not have comment.

Mayor Anderson thanked the clerks and all election inspectors for another great, well-run election. Saugatuck had just under 50% voter turnout, highest in Allegan County.

Adjournment:

Motion by Gardner, second by Peterson to adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion unanimously. Mayor Anderson adjourned the meeting at 4:57 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Jamie Wolters, City Clerk