



**CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES- *proposed***  
**January 7, 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, Mayor Pro Tem Clark and Councilmembers Dean, Gardner, Muncey, Peterson and Stanton.

Others Present: City Manager Cummins, Attorney Witte, Planning and Zoning Director Moore, Treasurer Bredeweg, DPW Superintendent Herbert, DPW Project Coordinator/Admin Gibson and Clerk Wolters.

**Agenda Changes:** None.

**Public Comment on Agenda Items Only:**

Dick Waskin  
Larry Wardzala  
Chad Dupont  
David IsIjamovski  
Kevin Tringali  
Mark Tithof  
Mark Boucher  
Nick Agnew  
Renee Mulcrone  
Andrea Stormer  
Anne Gudith

Councilmember Muncey left the meeting at 4:45 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes:**

Regular City Council Meeting Minutes – December 22, 2025:

*Motion by Muncey, second by Stanton to approve the regular city council meeting minutes from December 22, 2025. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.*

## **Discussion Items:**

### Short Term Rentals – 2025 Report:

Planning and Zoning Director Grayson Moore presented the 2025 short term rental report. The City Council discussion on short term rentals centered on ongoing challenges, resident and property manager concerns, and potential refinements to city policy and administration.

Residents, property owners and managers raised issues about:

- Confusing deadline notifications.
- The impact of the ordinance on generational/family-owned homes.
- Calls for clearer processes, fairer penalties (like fines or warnings instead of immediate forfeiture), and administrative grace periods, especially for exceptional circumstances (e.g., medical emergencies or “acts of God”).

Council Discussed:

- The short-term rental market remains stable; a small percentage of licenses were lost.
- Most people manage to stay in compliance, but confusion caused some unintended license losses.
- Instituting a “one-time amnesty” for the 9 properties that lost licenses due to deadline or paperwork confusion, with strong consensus but specific caution not to repeatedly extend amnesty or weaken ordinance enforcement.
- Requiring staff to send individualized written notices (email/mail) making renewal dates, windows, and penalties unmistakable.
- Moving to a fixed “anniversary date” model of license renewal but retaining individualized dates to avoid overwhelming city and fire department capacity.
- Maintaining a five-day grace period for late renewal applications, but generally not supporting ongoing or open-ended cure periods.
- Considering creation of a narrowly defined appeal for “acts of God” or unforeseeable emergencies (like sudden hospitalization), but not broad discretionary leniency for missed deadlines.
- Discussing but not supporting broader generational/family license transfers or systemic softening of licensing caps.
- Exploring automation (via Granicus or other solutions) to streamline reminders and license management and reduce manual city staff workload.

The council offered a one-time license reinstatement/amnesty for those affected by recent administrative lapses, to address the possible inclusion of an “act of God” hardship exemption and to clarify and codify the renewal process and notification standards. Legal will prepare an Ordinance amendment for a future council meeting.

### Public Works Pickup Truck Purchase:

Public Works Project Coordinator Michelle Gibson presented a proposal to acquire a 2026 GMC 3500 at a quoted price of \$55,318 through the MiDeal program, well within the \$60,000 budgeted for this purchase in the current fiscal year. This will replace the current 2014 GMC 2500. An additional \$12,000 was budgeted for a new snowplow, with the quote for the plow still pending. Staff confirmed the old truck would be sent to auction. Council inquired about the vehicle’s lead time and was assured the new truck should arrive in time for the next season. There were no issues raised.

### Mt. Baldhead Restroom – Change Orders:

Public Works Project Coordinator Michelle presented change orders for the Mt. Baldhead bathroom project. They included: an increase of \$115 for electrical supply; a \$3,074 increase for aluminum (due to tariff price changes); \$9,090.11 for new water service installation; and \$1,000 credit from the demolition of the old restroom by a local business. The net increase was \$11,279, but the project remains within the original \$328,000 budget. Staff reported the project is nearly complete, with only the delivery and installation of aluminum doors and final site restoration/landscaping remaining. No significant issues or further expected change orders were raised.

### Revenue/Expenses through 2nd Quarter:

Treasurer Nicole Bredeweg presented a financial update on city revenues and expenses at the halfway point in the fiscal year. She noted that revenues and expenses are generally on track with expectations. Some specific project-related costs (Mt. Baldhead restroom, elevator, holiday/Christmas lighting, Greenway, and Maple Street improvements) were noted as outliers, but these were anticipated. Holiday lighting was slightly over budget, but this was offset by higher-than-expected interest earnings from city investments. Overall, council members expressed satisfaction with the healthy financial outlook and effective staff management, with thanks extended to Nikki and the finance team for their continued diligence.

### Investment Update:

Treasurer Nicole Bredeweg presented an update on the city's investment strategy and status. She reported ongoing efforts to maximize both safety and returns by moving all certificates of deposit (CDs) under the \$250,000 FDIC insurance limit and planning to use CDARS for broader insurance and simplified management. They are also considering "cash sweep" products to optimize interest on excess funds. Excess summer tax collections were promptly invested. Council thanked Nikki for her continued financial excellence.

### **Public Comments:**

Ethan Barde  
AJ Marineau  
Renne Mulcrone

### **Correspondence:**

Chad Dupont, Kevin Tringali, Anne Gudith.

### **Council Comments:**

Councilmember Stanton expressed appreciation for the productive and thorough discussion on short-term rentals, noting that despite affecting only a small percentage of people, potential confusion could continue in the future. She thanked everyone for their patience as the council and staff worked to compile the necessary data to have an informed conversation and address these complex issues.

Councilmember Dean echoed Stanton's sentiments, praising the collaborative and thoughtful nature of the meeting. He highlighted the value of respectful listening and open-minded dialogue among council and community members, expressing pride in the staff for managing complicated tasks and commending their stewardship of taxpayer dollars. Dean also encouraged everyone to review the city's audit as evidence of strong fiscal management.

Mayor Pro Tem Clark remarked on how difficult the issue was but found it encouraging that council members worked closely to reach consensus. He emphasized the council's effort to balance fairness to property owners with the practical realities faced by city staff. Clark expressed pride in the collaborative accomplishments of the group and conveyed gratitude to both the staff and his fellow council members for their dedication.

Councilmember Gardner voiced his satisfaction with the discussion, characterizing the meeting as overdue and essential for improving city processes. He stressed his ongoing commitment to enhancing city services for all stakeholders and advocated for a culture of efficiency, effectiveness, and customer service in all aspects of municipal work. Gardner specifically recognized the public works department for their outstanding snow and ice management, highlighting the positive feedback he'd received from the community.

Councilmember Peterson thanked the mayor for including the topic on the agenda and the staff for their work. She expressed appreciation for the respectful conduct of all participants, especially the property owners affected by the ordinance changes. Peterson acknowledged the emotional and financial impacts at stake and noted that, although this would remain an ongoing discussion, the council and staff handled the issue admirably and with appropriate compassion.

Mayor Anderson concluded the meeting by expressing appreciation for both the attendees and those unable to be present, noting the council's responsibility to protect neighborhoods and act in the best interests of all residents. She was pleased with the productive discussion and the good solutions developed during the session. Anderson thanked everyone for their contributions and then moved the meeting toward adjournment.

**Adjournment:**

*Motion by Stanton, second by Peterson to adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried 6-0. Mayor Anderson adjourned the meeting at 6:26 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted

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Jamie Wolters, City Clerk