



**CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING  
October 27, 2025**

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 Stanton and Councilmembers Clark, Dean, Gardner, and Peterson.

Absent: Muncey.

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

**Mayor's Comments:**

Mayor Anderson enjoyed seeing kids and dogs in costumes at the City of Saugatuck Halloween parade, highlighted the city manager's presence at the Saugatuck Township Halloween cemetery tour, the Halloween parade in Douglas and praised the overall active participation in local fall festivities.

**City Manager Comments:**

City Manager Ryan Cummins attended the Saugatuck Township and History Center Halloween event which brought alive historical figures from the community telling their stories in the cemetery. The Tri-Community Wildlife Committee continues to work on deer management, including formal culling, weapons ordinances, and archery hunting by resolution. There are ongoing discussions with local law enforcement and other townships to learn best practices for community-sensitive deer culls. Construction at the Mt. Baldhead restrooms and the upper platform are progressing, though rain has caused some delays. Engineering surveys are ongoing, and there is continued coordination with tribal nations for design. A Parking Improvements Task Force is kicking off with an ambitious agenda, starting with problem definition and collaboration with a parking consultant. The task force meeting will be open to the public, both in person and via Zoom.

**Agenda Changes:** None.

**Guest Speakers:** None.

**Public Comment on Agenda Item Only:**

Curt Piper  
Jan Cohen

**Consent Agenda:**

- A.** Approval of City Council Workshop Meeting Minutes for October 22, 2025.
- B.** Resolution No. 251027-A Authorizing Split of Fund 592 (Water and Sewer) into Fund 496 (Sewer Capital Projects) and Fund 497 (Water Capital Projects) and Authorizing Related Transfers and Journal Entries.
- C.** Right of Way Signage Request – Turkey Trot (November 10-24) and Ugly Sweater Pub Crawl (November 21 – December 8).
- D.** Authorize Scott Herbert to Act as City Manager if City Manager is Not Reachable While on Vacation.
- E.** Historic District Signage Proposal from Concept A Creative Studio.

*Motion by Peterson, second by Stanton to approve the consent agenda as submitted on October 27<sup>th</sup>. Via roll call vote, motion carried 6-0.*

**Staff Reports, Boards, Commissions & Committees:**

Reports provided by City Manager Cummins and board, commission & committee members.

**Fire District Administration:**

Dan Fox noted the district recently surpassed 1,000 calls for service this year, putting them on track for a record-breaking year. Fox highlighted the impressive progress of the new South Fire Station, which is nearly ready for occupancy and available for tours. He mentioned two recent incidents that resulted in cost recovery payments from responsible parties and noted the receipt of a grant of more than \$9,000 from the estate of Gerald and Jeanette Bekken, with another installment expected next year. Firefighters' health insurance premiums are increasing by 16.7%, and the district chose to stay with the current provider. Annual firefighter physicals, which can cost up to \$15,000, will now be conducted efficiently onsite via a mobile clinic. Fox also announced that the district has joined the statewide Mutual Aid Box Alarm System, allowing for resource sharing and improved response to large-scale regional emergencies. He reviewed September's ambulance call statistics, emphasizing that most calls occurred outside Saugatuck. Finally, the district welcomed three new full-time firefighters, all of whom have prior local experience, bringing the total number of full-time staff to twelve.

**Interurban Board:** None.

**Kalamazoo Lake Sewer & Water Authority:**

Councilmember Clark noted that the board recently accepted the resignation of Abby Bigford and appointed Daniel DeFranco as interim board member. Clark was elected as the new board chair, with DeFranco also elected vice chair. The board voted to hire an interim facility administrator and interviewed a candidate with relevant experience, who may also be considered for the permanent role. Additionally, the board agreed to engage a search firm to help find a long-term administrator,

aiming to fill the position by early next year. There was discussion about whether the search firm might also assist in recruiting for operations and field workforce roles, as the authority is currently understaffed. To keep up with ongoing demands, the board plans to hold additional workshops between regular monthly meetings, typically on Wednesdays.

**Kalamazoo Lake Harbor Authority:**

Councilmember Peterson noted the next meeting on Tuesday night is following the first meeting of the Parking Improvements Task Force.

**Zoning Board of Appeals:** None.

**Historic District Commission:**

Councilmember Gardner informed council of the next meeting date of Thursday November 6.

**Planning Commission:** None.

**Parks & Public Works Committee:**

Mayor Pro-Tem Lauren Stanton noted the next meeting on Tuesday October 28 at 10am.

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

**Water Systems Operations Contract Advisory Committee:**

Councilmember Gardner updated council that they met the previous Friday discussed recent changes at Kal-Lake with another meeting scheduled in two weeks.

**Wildlife Management Committee:** None.

**Approval of Accounts Payable:**

*Motion by Stanton, second by Clark to approve the accounts payable in the amount of \$430,309.08. Via roll call vote, motion carried 6-0.*

**Public Hearing:** None.

**Unfinished Business:** None.

**New Business:**

Milfoil Treatment:

*Motion by Stanton, second by Peterson to approve a one-year agreement with Aquatic Doctors to apply for permits and treat milfoil in the areas presented and not to exceed amount of \$69,570 per year. Via roll call vote, motion carried 6-0.*

Park Rules:

*Motion by Dean, second by Gardner to table this item till the November 10<sup>th</sup> meeting. Via roll call vote, motion carried 6-0.*

**Public Comment:**

Jan Cohen  
Kevin Tringali  
Dan Fox  
Curt Piper  
AJ Marineau

**Correspondence:**

Saugatuck Douglas Area Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Mark Tithof  
Tim Straker

**Council Comments:**

Councilmember Chris Peterson expressed optimism about the community's ability to find support and assistance for the homeless veteran discussed earlier in the meeting. She acknowledged that while social services can be fragmented and sometimes challenging to coordinate, resources and support are available. Peterson emphasized the importance of persistence and collaboration in helping those in need.

Councilmember Russ Gardner thanked Erin Wilkinson and volunteers who helped with recent Douglas Halloween parade events and he was honored to be selected as a judge for the costume contest. There were a lot of people in the city for the daytime festivities. He referenced correspondence in the packet and wanted to explain details regarding a recent election-related complaint, stressing that it was not a lawsuit, but a campaign finance matter resolved with necessary filings and fees. Gardner noted his comments made at the July 28, 2025, council meeting were not a misstep. They were in response to the unresolved nature of the legal matters outlined in the letter from the Michigan Department of State dated June 16, 2025. Gardner also addressed concerns about public chalking events, highlighting his commitment to First Amendment rights while also prioritizing public safety.

Mayor Pro-Tem Lauren Stanton expressed appreciation to the volunteers who helped make recent parades and community events possible, emphasizing that their efforts are crucial for safety. She also highlighted the value of in-person and respectful civic engagement, encouraging people to attend meetings and communicate directly rather than relying on social media, which can often lead to misinformation. Stanton praised the community's compassion and involvement, noting how these qualities contribute to Saugatuck's positive atmosphere.

Councilmember Dean thanked everyone for the strong turnout at the council meeting, emphasizing how helpful it is to have community members participate and discuss important issues in person. He expressed appreciation for the open dialogue and community involvement, encouraged everyone to be safe and watch out for children during Halloween festivities, and celebrated the spirit of Saugatuck.

Councilmember Joe Clark thanked everyone who attended the meeting, both in person and online, and expressed pride in serving on a council that prioritizes compassion and builds flexibility into its rules to better help community members. He also highlighted the unique and special sense of community during Halloween, reminding everyone to be mindful and drive safely

with excited children out trick-or-treating.

Mayor Holly Anderson showed excitement for trick or treating in the city. She expressed deep appreciation for the community's compassion, generosity, and willingness to help one another, especially in support of individuals facing hardship. She praised both long-time and newer community members for embodying these values. Anderson also recognized the efforts of event organizers such as April Gundy and council members, highlighting how their dedication and collaboration make Saugatuck a special place. She concluded by reaffirming the importance of staying focused on the bigger picture—helping those in need and fostering a caring, connected community.

**Adjournment:**

*Motion by Peterson second by Dean to adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried 6-0. Mayor Anderson adjourned at 7:50 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted

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Jamie Wolters, City Clerk