



**CITY COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING  
December 22, 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 Clark and Councilmembers Dean, Gardner, Muncey, Peterson and Stanton.

Absent: None.

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

**Mayor's Comments:**

Mayor Holly Anderson opened the meeting by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. She reflected on how year-end is bittersweet, with both farewells and new beginnings, and highlighted the council's appreciation for Lisa Mize, recognizing her years of service and leadership. Mayor Anderson acknowledged that while council members sometimes disagree, she is proud of their ability to work together, appreciates what each member contributes, and is grateful for all of them. She concluded with well wishes for everyone's holidays and their families.

**City Manager Comments:**

City Manager Ryan Cummins opened his remarks by thanking the mayor and council and announcing that the annual audit is complete—council members received a PDF, hard copies are on the way, and a formal presentation is scheduled for January 12. He updated the council on strategic planning, confirming the meeting is set for January 14, with the location to be finalized soon and facilitator arrangements underway. Cummins emphasized the progress being made, expressed appreciation for the council's dedication and support, and wished everyone a happy and safe holiday season and new year.

**Agenda Changes:** None.

**Guest Speakers:** None.

**Public Comment on Agenda Item Only:** None.

**Consent Agenda:**

Approval of City Council Special Meeting Minutes from December 18, 2025.

Proclamation Honoring Lisa Mize for Her Years of Distinguished Service to the Saugatuck-Douglas Area Convention & Visitors Bureau.

Request for Letter of Support – Allegan Conservation District MCMP Grant Application.

*Motion by Muncey, second by Clark to approve the consent agenda for the meeting on December 22, 2025. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.*

Mayor Holly Anderson presented a proclamation honoring Lisa Mize for her years of distinguished service to the Saugatuck Douglas Area Convention and Visitors Bureau. The mayor highlighted Lisa's steady leadership from interim director to executive director, her success in guiding the organization through the COVID-19 pandemic, and her key achievements—including website redesigns, uniting area communities under one tourism voice, launching new marketing initiatives, improving governance, and fostering creative community projects. She praised Lisa's professionalism, optimism, and dedication, commending her positive impact on residents, businesses, and visitors. The presentation concluded with official recognition of Lisa's legacy and heartfelt wishes for her retirement.

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

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

#### **Fire District Administration:**

City of Saugatuck fire board representative Dan Fox, noted the December 15 board meeting reviewed next steps for the second fire station project, with a total bonding estimate of \$5 million. Last year, the district added a one mill tax (for one year) to hire three new full-time personnel; the projected ongoing tax impact for the new station project is expected to be no greater than 1.5 mills (net impact 0.5 mills since the temporary millage expires). Legal costs for the master deed to separate the new facility's property are about \$35,000, with the fire district covering half. The 2026 meeting schedule was set for the third Monday of each month with workshops two weeks ahead of each regular meeting. On December 11, a significant fire required mutual aid from at least three departments—Saugatuck, Fennville, and Hamilton. EMS reviewed ambulance call data for October and November; November had fewer transports, including about a dozen responses in Saugatuck and one high-priority river incident.

#### **Interurban Board:**

Councilmember Gregory Muncey Interurban received a \$1,500 donation from the Cow Hill Yacht Club to support rides for those in need. November ridership reached 4,390 passengers, representing an increase of 321 riders compared to the previous November. Fourteen rides for the Center for Aging program were completed in the last two weeks of November. Interurban will offer free New Year's Eve rides between 6:00 pm and 1:00 am (weather permitting). The service to Laketown Township was extended after a 2-1 board vote, continuing through January 11. Ridership in Laketown Township averages 600–700 riders per month, sometimes higher. Interurban secured a grant of \$111,830 for a new bus, which will expand the fleet to a total of nine vehicles. The next Interurban meeting is scheduled for the third Tuesday in January at 4:30 pm and will be held at the new Douglas municipal facilities.

#### **Kalamazoo Lake Sewer & Water Authority:**

Mayor Pro Tem Clark reported on staffing and administrative updates for Kalamazoo Lake Sewer and Water. He noted that the interim administrator has submitted a resignation but will remain to assist through the first week of January while a permanent replacement is sought. Two candidates were recently interviewed for the full-time administrator position, with the board beginning negotiations with a preferred candidate. The union has initiated contract negotiations, and legal counsel is involved. There are also ongoing efforts to hire additional operators for water and sewer infrastructure, with two candidates currently being considered. Clark emphasized that operationally, Kal Lake continues to run smoothly.

#### **Kalamazoo Lake Harbor Authority:**

Councilmember Chris Peterson report highlighted concerns about potentially historic low lake levels in the coming spring, which could seriously impact the local economy and recreational activities. She relayed Greg Weikamp's emphasis on the need for a study to demonstrate the harbor's value and help secure funding for sediment management and dredging projects. Peterson described challenges including a lengthy permitting process, lack of regular financial support for dredging, and difficulties with disposing of dredged materials. Partnerships—with local agencies and upstream farmers to reduce soil erosion—were

recommended, and the Coastal Alliance was mentioned as a possible resource for grant writing.

**Zoning Board of Appeals:**

City Manager Cummins noted that a request for a variance to allow an accessory dwelling unit to be located closer to the road than the main house on a Frederick property was considered and denied.

**Historic District Commission:** None.

**Planning Commission:**

The Planning Commission report covered several updates: A planned unit development for 640 Water Street was discussed and approved by the commission in a 6-1 vote and will be presented to the city council in January. The commission is working on administrative bylaw updates, finalized its 2026 meeting schedule, and accepted revisions to the sign ordinance, with a public hearing on these changes anticipated in January.

**Parks & Public Works Committee:**

Stanton noted the next meeting is Tuesday, December 23 at 10 a.m.

**Tri-Community Non-Motorized Trail Study Committee:**

Councilmember Dean updated that the next meeting is January 7<sup>th</sup> and they are also getting ready to put an RFP together for archeological work.

**Water Systems Operations Contract Advisory Committee:**

Next meeting is in January per Councilmember Clark and City Manager Cummins.

**Parking Improvements Task Force Committee:** None.

Gregory Muncey revealed the city has 1,563 on-street parking spaces, including 13–14 designated handicap spots and 136 spaces within the three-hour parking zone. There are 303 off-street spaces in city-owned lots (including the high school), bringing the total city-controlled parking inventory to about 1,866 spaces—nearly 2,000. The task force is finalizing a parking survey for broader distribution and planning community engagement at a future Music in the Park event (date to be determined). The next task force meeting is scheduled for February 9

**Approval of Accounts Payable:**

*Motion by Peterson, second by Dean, to approve the accounts payable in the amount of \$476,866.89. Via roll call, motion carried unanimously.*

**Public Hearing:** None.

**Unfinished Business:** None.

**New Business:**

Special Event – Saugatuck Douglas Art Club Art Fairs:

*Motion by Muncey, second by Dean to approve the special event as listed in the packet for the Saugatuck Douglas Art club fairs for 2026. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.*

**Public Comment:** None.

**Correspondence:** None.

**Council Comments:**

Councilmember Stanton wished everyone a safe and Merry Christmas, safe travels during the holidays,

and a Happy New Year, whether they are staying in town or traveling.

Councilmember Muncey highlighted the recent completion of the Christmas Carol performance, noting that all proceeds support the local charity Christian Neighbors. He expressed gratitude to the Women's Club for use of their facilities, recognized Councilman Russ Gardner and his wife Jen for their involvement in the play's opening, and closed by wishing everyone a Merry Christmas.

Councilmember Dean wished Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all the council and attendees.

Mayor Pro Tem Clark expressed appreciation for the opportunity to serve and work with his fellow council members. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, encouraging all to enjoy family time and re-energize during the holidays.

Councilmember Gardner reflected on the community's 39th annual Christmas Carol performance, celebrating its legacy and the contributions of long-time participants. He then offered a heartfelt tribute to Pete Curtis, a beloved and influential community member who recently passed away, praising Pete's character, lasting friendships, and deep involvement in downtown Saugatuck. Gardner expressed that Pete's presence will be missed and shared condolences with his family and friends.

Councilmember Peterson included a heartfelt remembrance of Pete Curtis, acknowledging his positive impact on the community and expressing condolences for his passing. Peterson wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

**Adjournment:**

*Motion by Muncey, second by Peterson to adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously. Mayor Anderson adjourned at 7:25 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted

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Jamie Wolters, City Clerk