



**CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES  
February 18, 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, Stanton and Peterson. Gardner left meeting at 5:28 p.m. and Muncey left meeting at 6:22 p.m.

Absent: None.

Others Present: City Manager Cummins, Attorney Witte, Engineer Moxey, Planning and Zoning Director Moore, Treasurer Bredeweg, DPW Superintendent Herbert and Clerk Wolters.

**Agenda Changes:** None.

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

**Approval of Minutes:**

Regular City Council Meeting Minutes – February 9, 2026:

*Motion by Peterson, second by Muncey to approve the regular city council meeting minutes as sent for February 9, 2026. Via roll call vote, motion carried unanimously.*

**Discussion Items:**

Updated Capital Improvement Plan and Asset Management Plan Inventory:

DPW Superintendent Scott Herbert and Fleis & VandenBrink engineer Jon Moxey presented the annual update of the City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and introduced its relationship to a longer-term Asset Management Plan (AMP). Staff explained that the CIP provides a short- to mid-term (approximately seven-year) outlook focused on specific capital projects, asset conditions, and order-of-magnitude cost estimates, while the AMP will take a broader 10+ year view of full life-cycle asset management, service levels, and long-term replacement strategies. Costs in the CIP are generally shown in current dollars and are trending upward due to inflation, though not all line items include annual inflation adjustments. Council discussion included estimates for the Park Street project, clarification that its \$1.42 million estimate is preliminary and does not include water main replacement, and comparison to the more extensive Maple Street project. Gravel and unimproved roads such as Newnham Street were also discussed, including historical context, maintenance approaches using asphalt millings, and the need for a systematic, data-driven prioritization strategy. Council emphasized the importance of using Paser road ratings and underground infrastructure data to guide project priorities and improve public communication.

Staff noted that the AMP will expand the City’s asset inventory and help inform long-term budgeting and policy decisions. The CIP remains a living document.

Ordinance No. 260223-A - Zoning Ordinance Amendment to Update Signage Regulations to Regulate Signs in a Content-Neutral Manner:

Council reviewed the draft comprehensive overhaul of the City’s sign regulations presented by Attorney Jake Witte and Zoning Director Grayson Moore, which is primarily intended to ensure First Amendment compliance by creating content-neutral standards. The draft, developed by the Planning Commission with legal review, would require permits for signs placed in the public right-of-way, including sandwich board signs, and would repeal the existing police-power ordinance governing A-frames. Council raised concerns about requiring permits and fees for temporary signs such as garage sale, political, and contractor signs in the right-of-way, noting practical enforcement challenges and potential public backlash. Discussion also focused on distinctions between on-premises and off-premises signs and commercial versus non-commercial speech. Council expressed strong support for protecting free expression, particularly non-commercial speech on private property, and suggested simplifying temporary sign rules. Additional discussion addressed flag regulations and clarification of how murals and artwork—especially in the historic district—are defined and regulated. Council agreed the ordinance is necessary but requires further refinement and directed that it be returned to the Planning Commission with feedback, along with preparation of a clear public summary outlining key changes before bringing a revised draft back for consideration.

Resolution No. 260223-A - Temporary Polling Location Change from City Hall to the Saugatuck Woman’s Club:

Council discussed the proposal to temporarily relocate all 2026 elections from City Hall to the Saugatuck Women’s Club due to the ongoing inoperability of the City Hall elevator. Clerk Wolters confirmed that the Women’s Club is available for all 2026 election dates and meets all election law requirements, including accessibility and proper marking of the 100-foot electioneering boundary. Wolters informed Council that that the location was used successfully in a recent election with positive voter feedback and agreed that maintaining one consistent polling place throughout the year would reduce voter confusion, particularly given the anticipated higher turnout in the August and November elections. It was also clarified that new state requirements regarding ballot box cameras apply to equipment at City Hall and not to the off-site polling location. A prior parking concern was addressed, with the Clerk noting that “No Parking” signs are posted to reserve spaces for voter parking and that any previous issue was likely due to overstaying vehicles rather than insufficient designated parking.

Special Event – Indivisibles No Kings Three:

Council held a discussion regarding the proposed special event, “No Kings III” scheduled for March 28 at Coughlin Park. As a new event, it was brought forward for initial review prior to formal approval. Clerk Wolters reported that a safety meeting had been conducted with the Fire Department, Police Department, and DPW, and that a safety plan addressing traffic control, emergency access, and operational logistics has been reviewed and coordinated with those departments. Event organizers were present virtually to respond to any questions from Council. The application will move to the regular meeting for approval.

Updates to City Council Rules of Procedure:

City Manager Ryan Cummins presented Council proposed changes to its meeting structure aimed at improving efficiency, reducing overall meeting length, and maintaining focus on core City business. Key agenda modifications include moving New Business earlier in meetings so major decisions are addressed while Council is fresh, limiting Board and Commission reports to once per month, and continuing the existing practice of providing staff reports once per month. Council agreed that questions for clarification during the City Manager’s report are appropriate, but broader policy debates or new initiatives should be provided during Council comments or to newly established quarterly strategic priority workshops. The Mayor will help manage repetitive or off-track discussions to keep meetings productive. Council also

agreed to hold quarterly discussion at workshops to review strategic priorities, assess progress, consider reprioritization, and incorporate a financial check-in component.

**Public Comments:** None.

**Closed Session:**

*Motion by Muncey supported by Peterson, to move into a closed session pursuant to MCL 15.268(h) to discuss a confidential written legal opinion from the City Attorney. Via roll call vote, motion carried 6-0. Council entered closed session at 5:44 p.m.*

*Motion by Stanton, second by Peterson to go back into open session. Via roll call vote, motion carried 5-0. Council entered open session at 6:33 p.m.*

**Council Comments:**

Councilmember Stanton saved her comments for the regular meeting.

Councilmember Dean noted the really good conversation and appreciated hearing from other councilmembers. They are not easy, but very complicated topics and appreciate everyone's attention and viewpoints.

Mayor Pro Tem Clark noted the talent in the room, and he learns a lot and appreciates everyone's input and will save other comments for the regular meeting.

Councilmember Peterson saved her comments for the regular meeting.

**Adjournment:**

*Motion by Peterson, second by Dean to adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried 5-0. Mayor Anderson adjourned the meeting at 6:35 p.m.*

Respectfully Submitted

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Jamie Wolters, City Clerk