



CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES

March 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, Stanton and Peterson. Stanton left meeting at 5:05 p.m.

Absent: Muncey.

Motion by Peterson, Second by Dean to excuse Muncey's absence. Via voice vote, motion carried 6-0.

Others Present: City Manager Cummins, Attorney Witte, Engineer Moxey, Treasurer Bredeweg, DPW Superintendent Herbert, DPW Admin/Project Coordinator Gibson and Clerk Wolters.

Agenda Changes: None.

Public Comment on Agenda Items Only: None.

Approval of Minutes:

Regular City Council Meeting Minutes – March 9, 2026 & Closed City Council Meeting Minutes – March 9, 2026:

Motion by Stanton, second by Peterson to approve the minutes of the regular city council meeting from March 9, 2026, as well as the closed city council meeting minutes from March 9, 2026. Via roll call vote, motion carried 6-0.

Guest Speaker:

Jill Dunham – Allegan County Broadband Project Manager – County Broadband Project Update.:

Jill Dunham presentation provided a comprehensive wrap-up of Allegan County's multi-year broadband expansion effort and how it affects Saugatuck and surrounding communities. She explained that her county role is ending but she will continue similar work as Director of Community Engagement for 123.Net, remaining a resource for local governments and residents. Jill reviewed the original project objectives and timeline, from the 2022 RFP and Robin grant award through roughly two years of construction, which funded service to about 11,098 addresses plus 700 in Lee Township and an estimated 4,000 additional "incidental passing" addresses. She described the shift in the federal BEAD

program: Michigan’s original \$1.6B allocation was cut to roughly \$924M after the program was made “technology-neutral,” opening the door to satellite instead of prioritizing fiber. She noted that 123.Net was the second-largest BEAD awardee statewide and secured most of the Allegan County addresses. Jill emphasized that Allegan County is about 99.8% complete on its county-led fiber build (over 1,038 miles and about 10,840 grant-eligible active addresses). For Saugatuck specifically, she said broadband coverage is now strong: Comcast’s existing network combined with Frontier’s new fiber has created good service and competitive options, with additional alternatives like Starlink and some high-speed Verizon fixed wireless depending on location.

Discussion Items:

Amendment to Interurban Articles of Incorporation:

Council discussed an amendment to the Interurban Transit Authority’s articles of incorporation to add the City of Fennville as a full participating member. City Manager Ryan Cummins explained that a successful pilot with three dedicated stops in Fennville has generated strong ridership and demonstrated clear community benefit. Deputy City Administrator Samuel Jacobs from Fennville clarified that the authority funding by a millage must be approved district-wide, not city-by-city, and that Fennville’s operating costs would be covered through its share of that millage if approved. Council members asked what would happen if the millage increase fails; the response was that Fennville would remain in the authority under the articles, but point-to-point service might be limited and the exact service level would depend on available funding and future board decisions. Overall, council comments were supportive of including Fennville as a full participating member.

Oval Beach Concession Proposals:

DPW Superintendent Herbert reported that two proposals were received for operating the Oval Beach concession stand, with the stronger and more detailed proposal coming from Grow Estate LLC (dba Saga Taco). Alec and Lindsay Payleitner presented a two-part concept: (1) on-site sales of ready-to-eat, prepackaged snacks, drinks, and frozen treats, and (2) a “beachside delivery” service where customers can order hot food from the Saga Taco kitchen and have it delivered to designated locations on the beach. Council members were very positive about bringing a high-quality local brand to a “world-class” beach but probed logistics, including Monday service coverage in peak season, ensuring reliable connectivity for POS and ordering, safe and efficient delivery routes, realistic delivery time windows, and clear public communication about when services are available. There were questions of staging some popular hot items on site and exploring creative delivery ideas. Staff will refine the license agreement, utility cost approach, and operational details and bring back a polished agreement for council approval.

Stanton left meeting at 5:05 p.m.

Selection of an Auction Firm for Surplus Equipment:

The council reviewed options to dispose of six surplus DPW items (including a loader, dump truck, snow equipment, and trailers). DPW Admin/Project Coordinator Michelle Gibson summarized proposals from multiple auction firms, highlighting that Miedema’s RangerBid that specializes in municipal online auctions and offers a 0% commission to the city, with a 10–12% buyer’s premium paid by purchasers. By contrast, other options involved city commissions, advertising costs, or the need to transport equipment off-site. Council members agreed that online auction is now the most practical and effective approach and noted the importance of moving items quickly to avoid further depreciation. Legal counsel explained that the city’s purchasing ordinance requires council approval for

surplus sales over \$2,500, but that council could adopt a motion or resolution authorizing the use of this auction method and firm on a standing basis, with the manager empowered to execute titles.

Updated Capital Improvement Plan:

DPW Superintendent Herbert presented the updated Capital Improvement Plan for formal adoption, following the detailed workshop discussion held in February. He explained that the revisions reflect updated project costs, revised timing of several projects, and a more explicit description of the criteria used to prioritize investments, including Paser ratings, utility condition, traffic volume and type, non-motorized needs, drainage issues, maintenance costs, funding opportunities, and resident/council feedback. F&V's engineer, Jon Moxey, noted that the roadway condition survey is on a roughly 3–5-year cycle and is scheduled to be updated in the 2026–27 fiscal year, likely with field work this summer or fall. The plan positions the city to manage major street, utility, and facility needs in a more transparent and data-driven way.

Resolution No.260323-A - Adopting Early Voting Site and Municipal Agreement for Election Services Between the City of the Village of Douglas, Saugatuck Township, and City of Saugatuck:

Extension of Township Cemetery Agreement:

Clerk Jamie Wolters presented a new tri-community agreement for nine days of early voting. Under the proposal, all early voting for Saugatuck city, City of Douglas, and the Saugatuck Township will occur at Douglas's new municipal facility, which offers ample space and better logistical capacity. The agreement reduces Saugatuck's staffing obligation from four days of coverage to three. Wolters explained that voters will be formally notified about the change in early voting location, and that the three clerks will coordinate consistent public messaging. Council questions focused on communication and voter clarity, and members expressed support for the shared model as a more efficient and voter-friendly approach. The resolution authorizes execution of the municipal agreement and designates the Douglas facility as the early voting site.

Extension of Township Cemetery Agreement:

Council reviewed an extension of the long-standing agreement with Saugatuck Township covering cemetery mowing costs and burial pricing for city residents. Under the agreement, the city contributes a fixed annual amount toward cemetery maintenance, and in return, city residents receive "in-district" rates for burial plots and cremation rather than higher out-of-district pricing. The township provided data on recent resident use and the associated savings compared to non-resident rates, confirming the continued value of the arrangement. City Manager Cummins clarified the timing of the most recent \$6,000 payment and how it aligns to the contract year (July–June). While the specific fee schedule has increased modestly since the last renewal, council viewed the terms as reasonable and beneficial to residents and was supportive of extending the agreement for another two-year term.

Budget Amendments for Fiscal Year 2025/2026:

Treasurer Bredeweg presented a comprehensive set of mid-year budget amendments, which she organized into three main categories: (1) timing shifts in CIP projects (e.g., Blue Star Trail – south, Maple Street DPW lot, Village Square water/sewer work) where expenditures are moving between the current and next fiscal year; (2) adjustments to reflect actual activity, such as interest earnings and insurance, which posts fully in July; and (3) forward-looking adjustments where staff expects activity before year-end (e.g., additional FOIA-related legal costs). Special notes included creating a stand-alone elections department (moving election costs out of the clerk's general line and increasing the total due to unplanned elections), adding items like the City Hall elevator repair and holiday

lighting installation, adding Mary Street and Elizabeth Street utility work, and fully recognizing the Maple Street grant and related cost shares with the township and fund transfers. City Manager Cummins explained that, net of these changes, the general fund is projected to use about \$424,000 less fund balance than originally budgeted this year, largely because some capital costs are sliding into next year, though those costs are not gone and will still have to be funded.

Public Comments: None.

Council Comments:

Councilmember Peterson shared that she will be away for a period and said she would miss everyone, offering warm well-wishes and a lighthearted reference to taking a “field trip,” to Florida.

Councilmember Gardner stated he had no additional comments.

Councilmember Clark also indicated he had no additional comments.

Councilmember Dean wished everyone a happy St. Patrick’s Day.

Mayor Anderson thanked Councilmembers Peterson, Clark, and Gregory for agreeing to meet with Community Action of Allegan County to learn more about the recent change in providers for senior meals. She noted that Saugatuck Township plans to meet on Friday to consider a resolution asking the county to reconsider that provider change, and added that the Allegan County administrator has offered to meet with city representatives as well.

Adjournment:

Motion by ~~Muncey~~Dean, second by Garnder to adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried unanimously. Mayor Anderson adjourned the meeting at 5:04 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Jamie Wolters, City Clerk