



CITY COUNCIL WORKSHOP MEETING MINUTES

April 22, 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 and Stanton.

Absent: Muncey and Peterson.

Motion by Gardner, Second by Stanton to excuse Muncey and Peterson from the workshop. Via voice vote, motion carried 5-0.

Others Present: City Manager Cummins, Attorney Witte, 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 – April 13, 2026:

Motion by Stanton, second by Gardner to approve the regular city council meeting minutes from April 13, 2026, as corrected to include Stanton's council comments from that meeting. Via roll call vote, motion carried 5-0.

Proclamation Honoring Scott Herbert:

Motion by Stanton, second by Gardner to approve proclamation honoring Scott Herbert. Via roll call vote, motion carried 5-0.

Mayor Holly Anderson presented a formal proclamation honoring Department of Public Works Superintendent Scott Herbert for his many years of dedicated service to the City of Saugatuck. The proclamation notes that Scott began working for the city in 2007 as a seasonal DPW employee, later becoming a seasonal supervisor and then a full-time equipment operator/maintenance worker in 2014, steadily building extensive knowledge of the city's infrastructure and operations. It recognizes his key role in numerous infrastructure projects, including major street reconstructions, utility repairs, parking lot upgrades, and flood mitigation efforts that improved the city's safety and resilience. The proclamation also highlights his leadership in caring for parks and public spaces, including the Village

Square playground replacement, improvements at Oval Beach, the opening of the Saugatuck Wilds Nature Preserve, and ongoing stewardship of the city's natural and recreational assets. It credits Scott with promoting innovation, safety, and staff development in DPW by introducing new equipment, enhancing safety standards, expanding training, and helping employees obtain CDL licenses and other critical skills. Additionally, it commends his commitment to regional cooperation, working with neighboring communities on mutual aid and shared problem-solving. The City Council, through this proclamation, expresses its sincere gratitude and appreciation for Scott's outstanding service, leadership, and lasting impact on the community, and extends its best wishes as he concludes his service with the city and transitions to a new role with the Kalamazoo Lake Sewer and Water Authority, with confidence that he will continue to positively impact the region.

Guest Speaker: None.

Discussion Items:

Draft of Proposed Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget:

City Manager Ryan Cummins presented the proposed FY 2026–27 budget of roughly \$12.2 million in total expenditures against about \$7.5 million in revenues, drawing intentionally on approximately \$4.7 million in accumulated fund balances— including about \$1.6 million from the general fund—to advance priority capital projects rather than to support basic operations. He reported that the general fund balance stands at about \$7.44 million (with \$6.3 million unassigned and a \$1 million policy commitment to parks), well above the council's \$1 million minimum reserve, and noted strong state financial metrics placing Saugatuck 4th of 239 cities for general fund health and 2nd of 240 for net position, with pensions at 113% funded and road debt of about \$1.3 million supported by a 1.4-mill levy. Cummins highlighted that, due largely to Headlee rollbacks, the city's operating millage has declined about 18% since FY 2016–17, with the total city millage (operating, roads, and debt) down more than 2.5 mills (over 16%), meaning that today the city keeps only \$0.32 of each tax dollar from a PRE property and \$0.23 from a non-PRE property. For FY 26–27, another 0.1892-mill Headlee rollback will reduce potential property tax revenue by about \$50,000, though inflation and new construction will still yield an estimated \$100,000 net increase. The budget channels these resources into projects such as the Blue Star Trail segment (about \$1.7 million with \$1.6 million in grants) a \$630,000 general-fund transfer for Maple Street sidewalks, major work on Maple and Elizabeth streets (including water mains and lead service line replacements), \$120,000 in invasive-species control, and ongoing facility, park, sidewalk, and signage improvements, while continuing modest water capital improvement fee increases (an additional \$3/month proposed) and planning a sewer rate study. Cummins concluded that the proposal fully funds council priorities, maintains core services, avoids new debt, and keeps healthy reserves, but underscored the need for long-term financial forecasting and community dialogue about millage levels and sustainable funding for future large infrastructure projects.

Public Comments: None.

Council Comments:

Councilmember Gardner focused his remarks on honoring Scott Herbert on the occasion of his departure. He recalled first meeting Scott on Election Day 2020 and immediately being impressed by his demeanor and approach. Gardner highlighted numerous examples of Scott quietly helping residents—such as assisting his aunt and others—without seeking recognition, calling those small acts of service “hard to replace.” He placed Scott in the long continuity of the city's DPW leadership,

mentioning previous superintendents, and said that when he sees Herbert Street, he will think of Scott and his family's long record of public service in the community and Allegan County.

Mayor Pro-Tem Clark expressed his deep appreciation for Scott Herbert's long service to the City of Saugatuck, noting that Scott has done an outstanding job for the community. He emphasized that Scott will be greatly missed by the city, but also remarked that the Kalamazoo Lake Sewer and Water Authority is very fortunate to have him. Clark closed by thanking Scott on behalf of everyone for his tremendous work and contributions to the city.

Councilmember Dean joined in congratulating Scott Herbert on his new role and reiterated that he will be missed by the city and council. Dean encouraged Scott to stay connected with the community and the council even as he moves into his new position. He also briefly referenced the upcoming Memorial Day Parade, noting that the American Legion has been in contact and expressing his anticipation for that event.

Councilmember Stanton said she had already shared many of her thoughts about Scott Herbert at the previous meeting but was glad the council formally recognized him with a proclamation. She praised his service, acknowledged that he is doing what he needs to do for his career, and said she is happy he will remain part of the local community. Stanton also noted that she looks forward to beginning interviews for Scott's replacement in the coming days, with interviews scheduled for Thursday and Friday.

Mayor Anderson closed the meeting by again thanking Scott Herbert, extending her gratitude "from the bottom of my heart" for everything he has done for the city. She tied her remarks to the upcoming Arbor Day, using it as a lighthearted way to "stretch out" the appreciation being shown to Scott. Anderson said she is excited that Scott will have the chance to learn new things and expressed confidence that he will thrive in his next chapter. She then moved the meeting to adjournment, which was approved by the council.

Adjournment:

Motion by Stanton, second by Clark to adjourn the meeting. Upon voice vote, motion carried 5-0. Mayor Anderson adjourned the meeting at 5:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted

Jamie Wolters, City Clerk