



Parks and Public Works Committee

Meeting Minutes

December 23, 2025, at 10:00 A.M.

Saugatuck City Hall, 102 Butler St, Saugatuck, MI 49453

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. by Chair Kimble.

2. Roll Call

Members Present: Hoffman, Kimble, Stanton, Thiel.

Members Absent: Charak & Roche.

Staff Present: DPW Superintendent Herbert, Deputy Clerk Williams, DPW Administrative Assistant/Project Coordinator Gibson, DPW Equipment Operator/Maintenance Worker & Oval Beach Manager Stasewich

Others Present: None.

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion by Stanton, supported by Hoffman, to approve the agenda as presented for December 23, 2025. Via voice vote, motion carried 3-0.

4. Approval of Minutes

Motion by Hoffman, supported by Stanton, to approve the November 25, 2025, regular minutes as presented. Motion carried 3-0.

5. Public Comment on Agenda Items

None.

6. Discussion

A. DPW Administrative Updates

DPW Superintendent Herbert's update covered several major city projects and operational issues:

1. Mount Baldhead Restroom Project:
Substantial progress is being made, with work completed on plumbing fixtures, accessories, HVAC, and mechanical inspection. There is a delay with exterior doors due to tariffs, expecting delivery and installation by mid-January. Final completion, including landscaping and minor work, will be in the spring before Memorial Day.
2. Elizabeth Street Project:
City council approved beginning the planning and conceptual design phase for Elizabeth Street, focusing on gathering community input and technical data. Initial analysis highlighted the challenge of improving sidewalk connectivity while trying to preserve mature oak trees and manage elevation and infrastructure obstacles. The team stressed the need for further community feedback to carefully balance enhancements with existing neighborhood features, noting the project as an important long-term investment.
3. Maple Street Rebuild:
The Maple Street rebuild is one of the city's largest recent projects, with a budget exceeding \$4 million. It includes major repairs such as seawall and concrete work (addressing past high-water damage), resurfacing Mary Street and the DPW driveway, fixing a sunken catch basin at Mary and Butler, and adding a new gate valve for better water leak isolation. The project is currently out for bid, with a bid opening expected January 27, and after detailed stakeholder review, city leaders are enthusiastic about its impact.
4. Chain Ferry:
Approved by council; the project is waiting for follow-up, especially for chain ferry arbors (delayed, hoping for mid-January completion) and installation of cedar shakes with marine-grade coating.
5. Village Square Project:
The city received a \$150,000 Recreation Passport grant, making it one of only 15 projects awarded. The city is also coordinating with a potential donor to finalize full funding, and overall progress is reported as positive.
6. Operational Issues:
Herbert explained that Public Works is addressing complaints of mailbox damage from snowplows, attributing much of the problem to old or poorly constructed mailboxes. The city plans to proactively inspect mailboxes, advise residents on recommended repairs or replacement, and

help prevent future issues. Additionally, he addressed concerns about snowplow trucks speeding, clarifying that while actual speeding is rare, the engines run at higher RPM's when plowing – creating more noise and the dramatic appearance of flying snow, which can make trucks seem faster than they are.

7. Staff Introduction:

DPW hired a new Equipment Operator/Maintenance Worker & Oval Beach Manager, Angela Stasewich. She shared that she previously worked for the Forest Service before relocating her family from Colorado back to Michigan, motivated by family ties, more affordable living, and expecting a baby soon. She is excited about their diverse role and is looking forward to managing Oval Beach.

B. Invasive Species

The committee discussed progress and setbacks with the city's invasive project. The Allegan Conservation District is still willing to help inventory invasive plants on city properties but is limited to providing recommendations and cannot do treatment work. Some mapping has begun, but the fieldwork awaits better weather. The ODC (Outdoor Discovery Center) offers more comprehensive services, including both surveying and treatment, and provided a quote. The Kalamazoo Nature Center was also contacted but requested a narrower project focus. The group agreed to consider seeking input or quotes from additional organizations, such as MSU Extension, to better inform their approach and obtain multiple quotes before moving forward with a management plan.

C. Mount Baldhead Revegetation

The committee reviewed two quotes for the Mount Baldhead revegetation project – one from ODC and one from Kalamazoo Nature Center, with the latter being pricier and offering less deer protection. The group discussed challenges such as deer browsing, human foot traffic, and ensuring plantings survive dry spells. They agreed to seek one more contractors quote (possibly via MSU Extension) and to make sure all quotes are based on the same project specifications before making a recommendation to proceed.

D. Warming Station

The group discussed a proposed warming station project, noting that the CVB prefers a “closed rose” design and is seeking bids. Several members suggested prioritizing local Michigan artists or ironworkers for the sculpture rather than out-of-state options and offered to provide local contacts. Concerns were raised about the warming station's environmental impact due to fossil fuel use, as well as its actual effectiveness for warmth (especially without a windbreak), with

some members seeing it more as an artistic or social feature than a true warming center. The importance of having a clear maintenance plan and defining who will oversee the project was emphasized, as many city projects compete for limited staff resources. Ultimately, most supported the project as a community enhancement, provided ongoing maintenance and responsibilities are clearly addressed and local talent is considered.

E. Priority Recommendations

The Committee reviewed and discussed a comprehensive list of priorities for 2026, focusing on current progress, upcoming priorities, and responsibilities. They confirmed key projects moving forward, such as Village Square (with grant funding and artistic enhancements), Maple Street and Mount Baldhead improvements, invasive species management, park signage, and bench/table inventories. Other ongoing or proposed projects included sidewalk expansions, trail connectivity (like Blue Star Trail), pavilion repairs, native plantings, public art, restroom additions, and park infrastructure maintenance. There was emphasis on securing additional grant funding, using committees to support specialized tasks, and keeping certain issues (like Peterson Preserve and sustainability efforts) visible for future action. Assignments for project leads and next steps were tentatively proposed, with a goal of refining scopes and advancing the city's long-term capital improvement plan.

7. Public Comments

None.

8. Correspondence

None.

9. Member Closing Comments

The Committee members exchanged holiday greetings, with members offering "Merry Christmas" and good wishes to each other and the community. No additional substantive business or discussion was raised during these comments.

10. Adjournment

Motion by Stanton, supported by Hoffman, to adjourn at 11:16 am. Via voice vote, motion carried 3-0.

Submitted by:
Sara Williams
Deputy Clerk
City of Saugatuck