Village *of* Lawton
VILLAGE COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
125 S. MAIN, LAWTON MI 49065 269.624.6407
Tuesday, October 13th, 2026
MINUTES

I. **Call to Order:** President Appleby called the October 13, 2026, meeting of the Lawton Village Council to order at 7:00 p.m.

II. **Roll Call:** *Present:* Appleby, Peterson, E. Dudek, G. Dudek, Raber, Tanis, Turner *Absent:* None, *Also Present:* Village Manager Hackenberg, Police Chief Cordes, Clerk Garvison, and ten guests.

III. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

IV. **Consent Agenda:** The Consent Agenda included approval of the October 13, 2026 Council Agenda, the September 22, 2026 Council Meeting Minutes, and disbursements totaling $183,386.17. Motion by Peterson, supported by G. Dudek, to approve the Consent Agenda as amended to include the disbursements. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

V. **Communications, Correspondence, and Presentations:**

VI. **Citizen Comments:**

A. Savannah Small-Fevig, 404 S. Nursery Street, informed Council that she, along with Amy Cordes and Wendy Pursely, will be assuming responsibility for organizing Summerfest. An organizational meeting is scheduled for October 19, 2026, at 6:30 p.m. in the Village Hall Community Room.

B. Doug Lawerence, President of Lawton Youth Baseball/Softball, informed Council that the organization is now chartered with Little League International. He reported on the success of the fall season and presented the Council with ideas for the future development of the program.

C. Pam Stermer at 1130 E Third Street, expressed opposition to the proposed communications tower, citing concerns regarding its potential impact on surrounding residential property values.

D. Van Buren County Commissioner Tina Leary introduced herself and provided several county updates. She reminded attendees that early voting begins Saturday, October 24, at the HSW building in Hartford. She announced that MSU Extension will host a renewable energy event on October 27, 2026, from 1:00 to 4:30 p.m. at the Van Buren ISD. Commissioner Leary also discussed the County's use of artificial intelligence in collaboration with St. Joseph County, upcoming ADA compliance requirements for municipalities, and the County's efforts to assist local governments. She further reported that another round of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding opportunities is anticipated in partnership with Market One.

VII. **Public Hearings/Appointments:** None.

VIII. **Old Business:**

A. Village Manager Hackenberg presented the Village's credit card policy, as requested at the September 22, 2026, Council meeting, and discussed the importance of following the clear guidelines set forth in said policy for Village credit card use.

IX. **New Business:**

A. President Appleby presented a special use permit request for a proposed communications tower on Parcel 80-45-700-149-30. The Planning Commission forwarded the request to Village Council following its review of the applicable zoning ordinance requirements. Village Manager Hackenberg provided additional information from Vertical Bridge, indicating that the proposed site plan meets the necessary requirements. The proposed tower would be located approximately 616 feet from the property line and surrounded by a perimeter fence measuring 75 feet. A representative from Vertical Bridge addressed Council, confirming that electrical service would be supplied from an existing utility pole south of the barn. The representative also presented case studies regarding the potential impact on surrounding property values and noted that the tower could accommodate additional wireless carriers through future co-location. Motion by G. Dudek, supported by Raber, to recommend the special use permit and present the updated site plan to the Planning Commission at its November meeting. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried, 6-1.

B. President Appleby brought Resolution 20-2026 to the floor for discussion regarding establishing a site plan submittal fee of $250.00. Motion by Peterson, supported by Turner, to adopt Resolution 20-2026, establishing a site plan submittal fee of $250.00. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

C. President Appleby brought Resolution 21-2026 to the floor for discussion regarding establishing a timeline for demolition permit of 180 days. Motion by E. Dudek, supported by Tanis, to adopt Resolution 21-2026, establishing a timeline for demolition permit of 180 days. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

D. President Appleby brought Resolution 22-2026 to the floor for discussion regarding establishing a permit fee of $75.00 for a demolition permit. Motion by E. Dudek, supported by Turner, to adopt Resolution 22-2026, establishing a permit fee of $75.00 for a demolition permit. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

E. Motion by Peterson, supported by G. Dudek, to enter into Closed Session pursuant to MCL 15.268 (1)(d) to consider the purchase of real property for a proposed Department of Public Works facility. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously, 7-0. Council entered closed session at 7:55 p.m. and returned to open session at 8:09 p.m.

F. President Appleby presented a letter of agreement regarding the purchase of property located at 625 North Street. Motion by Peterson, supported by Turner, to enter into a purchase agreement with HS Fleet Services for the property located at 625 North Street in the amount of $450,000. Upon roll call vote, the motion carried unanimously, 7-0.

X. Board, Committee, and Staff Reports:

A. Village Manager Hackenberg reported that the Michigan Municipal League (MML) issued a partial payment for the siding damage and that Dave Peters will begin repairs to the rear exterior wall this week. He also informed Council that he will be out of the office during the week of October 19, 2026.

B. Clerk Garvison reported that third-quarter unemployment and Form 941 payroll tax filings have been completed. She also reported that Village staff have begun transitioning records to electronic storage in accordance with applicable records retention requirements.

C. Police Chief Cordes discussed the possibility of establishing a school resource officer position in partnership with Lawton Public Schools. With Council's support, Chief Cordes will meet with the Lawton Public Schools Board of Education to discuss the proposal. He also reported that bids for replacement body-worn cameras and in-car camera systems will be presented at the November Council meeting.

D. Peterson had no updates.

E. G. Dudek had no updates.

F. E. Dudek had no updates.

XI. Council Comments:

A. President Appleby reported that Lou Bender will come in on Thursday, April 8th to meet with the village council. More details to come.

XII. Adjournment: E. Dudek made a motion, with support from Turner, to adjourn the Village Council Meeting at 8:47PM. Motion carried. The next regular council meeting will take place on October 27, 2026 at 7:00PM.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Rebekka Garvison
Village Clerk