



**Village of Lawton**  
**VILLAGE COUNCIL**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**125 S. MAIN, LAWTON MI 49065 269.624.6407**  
**Tuesday October 14, 2025**  
**MINUTES**

- I. **Call to Order:** President Pro Tem E. Dudek called the October 14 2025, meeting of the Lawton Village Council to order at 7:00 p.m.
- II. **Roll Call:** *Present:* E. Dudek, Tanis, Peterson, G. Dudek, Raber, Turner *Absent:* Appleby. *Others Present:* Village Manager Hackenberg, Clerk Rathbun, Police Chief Cordes, and seven guests.
- III. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- IV. **Consent Agenda:** The Consent Agenda included the approval of the October 14 Council Agenda, the September 9, 2025 Council Meeting Minutes, the October 7 Special Joint Meeting Minutes with the Planning Commission, and approval of the September 2025 disbursements in the amount of \$286,902.25. Peterson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented supported by G. Dudek. A unanimous roll call vote approved the motion.
- V. **Citizen's Comments:**
  - A. Calvin Regan, a resident of 420 Ewing road asked whether the council was selling the baseball fields. Council stated they are not currently looking at selling the ball fields. Regan wanted to know if we have looked at expanding the Village, and annexing the affluent subdivisions around us. Council stated that unfortunately, that is not really an option at this point as so much goes into it, and both the people that live in them as well as the township have to agree to something like that. He also wanted to state that he is unhappy with last year's construction.
  - B. Mark Chichos, a resident of 432 S Main Street stated he is interested in getting involved in the community where he can. He stated he came to last week's joint meeting and was able to learn about the Redevelopment Readiness Community and wanted to know if there is anywhere he can be of use. He also wanted to state that there has been someone smoking weed at the park, while children are present. He wanted to know if there was a non-emergency number that could be contacted for incidents like this. Chief Cordes provided the non-emergency line 269-657-3101. Smoking of any kind is not allowable on the park premises, per the village ordinance, which is posted at the park.
  - C. Sheila Motycka, a resident on cemetery lane states she would like a final answer as to whether or not Acorn lane can be opened as a Village operated road. Village Manager Hackenberg stated as far as providing access on Acorn Lane, she would need permission from all of the property owners that they are passing, per the Village Attorney. Since that has never been a village road, the established part is only a 25' right of way. E. Dudek stated to open that up all the way through, we would need property owners' permission.
  - D. Steve Cowley owner of 811 Acorn Lane, stated that he is opposed to putting a road through there, unless the village wants to purchase 25 feet of his property. He stated

that other owners have access to property from Cemetery Lane, and he does not want live in the middle of a through street. He stated he walked and looked at the easement, the shed is not in the 25' right of way, however to widen the road, would be cutting down several large trees, and that is one of the appeals to the property for him. E. Dudek stated this is a larger issue than they are going to resolve right now. In order to open this road to the Village, he and the other property owners would have to first agree to open the road, and then have to sell a sliver of the properties to the Village to allow for a road happen. So, unfortunately, this is not going to happen at this time. Cowley also stated that the school has a chain-link fence between his property and the soccer fields, that was damaged by the storm. He wanted to know if the Village could have the school fix that. Council stated that he would need to take that directly to the school and would have to go to a school board meeting, which takes place next Monday to discuss it with them.

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

- A.** Hackenberg presented the 2024 Welch's IFT update to the Village Council. Per the agreement, Welch's in Lawton must maintain a minimum of 139 employees, and for 2024 Welch's had 159 total employees, exceeding their portion of the agreement for 2024.
- B.** Commissioner Tina Leary stated she sits on the 911 authority board. She stated that recently statistics were presented that state you are twice as likely to survive a cardiac arrest in VBC than anywhere else in Michigan. This is due in part to the Van Buren County dispatch the person calling 911 how to perform CPR during the wait. Leary also provided updates on a new program for training from the county prosecutor's office.

**VII. Old Business: None.**

**VIII. New Business:**

- A.** President Pro-Tem E. Dudek brought Resolution 10-2025 to the floor for discussion. Since the Village Council passes the same trick or treating hours each year, this resolution will set the trick or treating hours for October 31, from 5:30-7:30pm each year, and allows for them to be rescheduled due to weather or other circumstances if needed. Turner made a motion, seconded by Raber to adopt resolution 10-2025: A resolution to establish annual Halloween trick or treating hours. A voice vote was taken, with unanimous approval. Motion carried.
- B.** President Pro-Tem E. Dudek brought the Planning Commissions recommendation to reappoint planning commissioners C. Knapp, P. Rathbun, and S. Knudstrup, with new terms ending in November 2028 to the floor for approval. made a motion to reappoint the above mentioned planning commissioners, seconded by Raber. A roll call vote was taken with all in favor, and none opposed. Motion carried.

**IX. Board, Committee and Staff Reports:**

- A.** Village Manager Hackenberg reported on the progress Reid's Corner progress. Sprinkler system has been winterized. MDOT will continue maintain the right of way through next summer. Hackenberg stated that the new leaf vac truck is here, and DPW employees have been out learning to use it. Hackenberg stated that our water truck has a bad motor, so that is at Tapper being fixed, however, it is under warranty. Hackenberg also stated that he met with Blain Allen and Sara Snoeyink about the Sterns and Stafford property and she provided several options, so he should have more

updates on that next month. Hackenberg stated that the owner of Alternative Fuel Technologies is getting a site plan together to add another building to the property. Hackenberg stated he is just waiting on the fence contractor for the pickleball courts, that has been approved with the DDA, and striping will be done in Spring. Hackenberg stated he has been working on the parks and rec plan, and he will have an updated parks and rec plan for the next meeting to review, this is part of the RRC requirements. Hackenberg also provided attorney hours to the village council to come in and answer questions, as he is going to be on site. November's Second meeting will be the annual joint meeting with the DDA and asked council to reach out to him for input for that meeting.

- B. Village Manager Hackenberg reported for the DPW that 17 million gallons were pumped for the month of September. Hackenberg also reported that all of our yearly samplings came back good. Hackenberg stated that they are marking a few water services for replacement. The DPW employees are also currently trimming brush, and starting to pick up leaves.
- C. Clerk Rathbun reported that dental and vision is going to be taken by three employees who do not take the health insurance. Due to several laws regarding the FSA limited spending accounts that these employees would qualify for, and how much it would cost to enroll for these employees, the village will be providing their \$50 dental deductibles through one-time payment in October paychecks. The health insurance renewal is now available as well, and went up approximately 9% overall. Deductibles were also raised for the 2026 year. The Village will host open enrollment for employees during the first week in November.
- D. Chief Cordes reported that for September cases did not come down, officers were pretty busy between those and traffic. Fair amount of training this month again, and ended up using 68 hours of vacation at the department. Cordes stated the schools have had several calls for monitoring already this year. One of the things he started doing was getting quotes on new body cams and car cameras. Cordes stated that there are two major companies that provide these. He has a quote from Motorola ready and is waiting on a quote from Axon. Biggest problem with cost is the expense of the secured cloud storage. Cordes stated that he was supposed to be in the homicide trial this week, and it was unfortunately postponed because the attorney representing the defendant is on trial in Kalamazoo County, which pushes it out to the next date in March.
- E. Trustee Peterson reported that the Planning Commission met in a joint meeting with the council. Peterson said she thought the attorney was extremely helpful in explaining things and making it clear for the Council and Planning Commission.
- F. Trustee G. Dudek reported that DDA met, and they had their golf cart parade and would like to thank everyone who helped.
- G. Trustee E. Dudek reported that fireboard met and they got a new overhead door.
- H. Clerk Rathbun reported that the library board met

**X. Council Comments:**

- A. Tanis wanted to ask about where the sewer line next to our new business has pumping trucks taking things out and wanted to know if there was a reason. Hackenberg stated that they are not yet hooked up to water and sewer, however, this is generating revenue for the village sewer fund while he waits on having the hookups done. This week they will be getting a meter and lines done.

- B. Char Raber wanted us to consider re-opening the bathrooms at the library. Rathbun stated there is a key for patrons at the front desk, and it is available for them to utilize for patrons.
- C. Tanis asked whether there has been movement for the sale of our property on White Oak. Hackenberg stated the village engineers are currently working on the surveying of the property.
- D. There will be no second meeting in October.

XI. **Adjournment:** Turner made a motion to adjourn the meeting, with support from Tanis. A voice vote was taken, with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:09 PM.

Respectfully Submitted by,

DRAFT

Brittany Rathbun  
Village Clerk