

VILLAGE *of* LAWTON
VILLAGE COUNCIL MEETING
125 S. MAIN STREET, LAWTON, MI 49065
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14, 2025 – 7:00 P.M.

please silence cell phones

AGENDA

- I. CALL TO ORDER**
- II. ROLL CALL**
- III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- IV. CONSENT AGENDA**
 - A. Approval of the October 14, 2025 Council Agenda
 - B. Approval of the September 9, 2025 Council Meeting Minutes
 - C. Approval of the October 7, 2025 Joint PC and Village Council Meeting Minutes
 - D. Approval of September 2025 Disbursements in the amount of \$286,902.25
- V. COMMUNICATIONS / CORRESPONDENCE / PRESENTATIONS**
 - A. Welch’s IFT Update.....Discussion
- VI. CITIZENS’ COMMENTS – (Please keep comments to 3 minutes)**
- VII. PUBLIC HEARINGS/APPOINTMENTS/PROCLAMATIONS**
- VIII. OLD BUSINESS**
- IX. NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. Resolution 10-2025: Set Trick or Treating Hours for October 31, 5:30-7:30PM each year.....Staff Recommends Approval
 - B. Reappoint Planning Commissioners C. Knapp, P. Rathbun, and S. Knudstrup for new terms ending in November, 2028.....Planning Commission Recommends Approval

X. BOARD, COMMITTEE, AND STAFF REPORTS

- A. Village Manager – Todd Hackenberg
- B. Department of Public Works – Todd Hackenberg
- C. Village Clerk – Brittany Rathbun
- D. Police Department – Greg Cordes
- E. Planning Commission – Judy Peterson
- F. Downtown Development Authority – Gail Dudek
- G. Lawton Fire Board – Eric Dudek
- H. Lawton Library Board – Brittany Rathbun

XI. COUNCIL COMMENTS

XII. ADJOURNMENT - NEXT REGULAR MEETING DATE – *October 28, 2025*

The Village of Lawton follows the Americans w/ Disabilities Act of 1990. Individuals with disabilities planning to attend this meeting and require accommodations, or those who have questions regarding the accessibility of this meeting or the facilities, are requested to contact the Village Clerk, at (269) 624-6407 or brathbun@lawtonmi.org to allow the Village to make reasonable accommodations. If you have questions or comments, and you are unable to make the meeting, forward to the Village Manager at thackenberg@lawtonmi.org



Village of Lawton
VILLAGE COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
125 S. MAIN, LAWTON MI 49065 269.624.6407
Tuesday September 9, 2025
MINUTES

- I. **Call to Order:** President Appleby called the September 9 2025, meeting of the Lawton Village Council to order at 7:00 p.m.
- II. **Roll Call:** *Present:* Appleby, E. Dudek, Tanis, Peterson, G. Dudek, Raber, Turner *Absent:* None. *Others Present:* Village Manager Hackenberg, Clerk Rathbun, Police Chief Cordes, and three guests.
- III. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- IV. **Consent Agenda:** The Consent Agenda included the approval of the September 9 Council Agenda, the August 12, 2025 Council Meeting Minutes, and approval of the August 2025 disbursements in the amount of \$515,858.13. Peterson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda as presented supported by E. Dudek. A unanimous roll call vote approved the motion.
- V. **Citizen's Comments:**
 - A. Benny Ledford from 408 N Franklin stated he would like to have his water fixed, as he has no pressure, and the meter isn't working, causing changes in his bill. President Appleby explained that the \$55.60 is what the cost is for zero water, that is the readiness to serve fee. If the meter is not working, you are only charged a readiness to serve fee for water and sewer, you are not charged for usage on either. Once the meter is replaced, or fixed, you are charged for usage. President Appleby stated that his water pressure being low is a concern. Village Manager Hackenberg stated the DPW will be up to look at the water tomorrow.
 - B. Sheila Motycka asked for a progress report. Village Manager Hackenberg stated that he was presented three options from Glen Wilkin from AEP, and they are just trying to find out which is the best solution to take the pole down.
- VI. **Communications, Correspondence, and Presentations:**
 - A. Hackenberg presented information for council being invited to Rural Readiness Community classes. He also provided that the Southwest Michigan Recycling Coalition is looking for volunteers, as well as information on a county parks survey. Hackenberg also presented Market One's Annual Report for anyone interested.
- VII. **Old Business:** None.
- VIII. **New Business:**
 - A. President Appleby brought a quote from MTech for a LeafVac to the floor for discussion. Hackenberg stated that he looked at several trucks, and this one is the one that made

the most sense for what we are trying to do and our budget. This will cut down on our manpower, and allow the DPW to focus on other tasks as well. Instead of having all four DPW employees doing the leaves as the weather allows, this new Leafvac will allow one person to do the leaves, freeing up a lot of overtime, and allowing our DPW to be able to do all of their necessary tasks. However, residents will need to ensure that there is no brush, rocks, or other debris in their leaf piles. This is a reminder that goes out each year, but with lowering the manpower on the leaf vacuum, if there is brush in a leaf pile, the DPW will move on to the next home, and residents with items other than leaves will not be picked up until those objects are removed. There is an option for a five-year lease for this truck, so that we do not need to pay the amount outright, but we will pay for it over a five-year timespan in smaller increments of approximately \$64,000 per year. This is a drastic savings over time, as last year in labor and equipment the Village spent over \$70,000 on leaf pickup. Trustee Turner made a motion to purchase the LeafVac from MTEch in the amount of \$281,625.02, seconded by Tanis. A roll call vote was taken with all in favor, and none opposed. Motion carried.

B. President Appleby brought a proposal from Wightman for a Water Reliability Study to the floor for discussion. The water reliability study is mandated by EGLE every five years, and the Village is now due for an updated study. This will analyze the reliability of our water system for peak flow. E. Dudek made a motion to accept the proposal from Wightman in the amount not to exceed \$23,800.00, seconded by G. Dudek. A roll call vote with all in favor, and none opposed approved the motion. Motion carried.

C. President Appleby brought Resolution 08-2025 to the floor for discussion. This resolution would change the Village's Long-Term Disability Insurance, Short Term Disability Insurance, Life Insurance, Dental, and Vision from Kansas City Life to Colonial Life Insurance Company. E. Dudek made a motion to adopt Resolution 08-2025: A Resolution to accept a proposal from Colonial Life Insurance, seconded by Peterson. 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 that he and the treasurer met with Consumers and reviewed our accounts. They reviewed accounts, and locked in a higher yield rate before interest rates go down. Hackenberg also reported that the contractor will be in the village at the end of the month to blow out the sprinkler system on Main Street. Additionally, he reported that an electrician will be in town next week to replace the pole by Welch's, and a new globe for the pole has been ordered. The Village is also going to have the poles switched to face the sidewalks where they are problematic for higher vehicles. Hackenberg reported that the finalized paperwork for the water extension project has been sent in, and the contractor will be in next week in order to do the water services on White Oak Road. Hackenberg provided an update on the Reid's Corner Grant. Hackenberg also stated that he is going to begin reviewing and updating our parks and recreation plan, as we are due to have an update this year in order to qualify for eligibility for park grants. The MML loss control specialist came in for our annual review. Hackenberg stated overall it went well, he gave some updates on some trainings that can be done, as well as policies that can be updated. Finally, Hackenberg stated the office will have low staffing for the week of September 21 due to multiple staff trainings.

B. Village Manager Hackenberg reported that he and a DPW employee are going to pick the dump truck up at the end of the week. He also reported the Public works has been out doing hot mix patching, and trimming trees here and there. They have been picking up

brush as needed. Pumped 18.1 million gallons for the Month of August, which is up a million gallons from last year. Yearly required sampling has been done, and they are awaiting results from the lab. The Discharge monitoring report for August has been electronically submitted to the MDEQ. Routine maintenance was done on the DPW vehicles. Monthly inspections were performed on playground equipment, and they are getting ready to put the fence up around the pickleball court. New cemetery sections have been laid out, we are adding some additional markers ourselves to make it easier to find location.

- C. Clerk Rathbun reported that the Village retirement switchover is finalized, and the Colonial Life Insurance is in the process of being set up for employees as well.
- D. Chief Cordes reported that for the month of August, the police department had 49 reports and made three arrests. The Police Department had a lot of training hours. Cordes began putting the hours that we had coverage on his report. No major reports this month, just common ones. Homicide trial is scheduled for October 16. They are serving subpoenas right now.
- E. Trustee Peterson reported that the Planning Commission met, and they had a public hearing on changes provided by the attorney. They have also set two public hearings for next month's meeting, in which the attorney will be in attendance. Peterson suggests that all council members who can attend, will attend that meeting.
- F. Trustee G. Dudek reported that DDA met and they got a few quotes for painting the pickleball courts. The DDA is having a golf cart parade Sunday, October 5.
- G. Trustee E. Dudek reported that fireboard met and Antwerp Township is most likely going to raise their portion of the millage for fire. They did not increase quick enough, so they are going to have to increase to get caught up.
- H. Clerk Rathbun reported that the library board met and the door is going to be replaced to be ADA accessible.

X. Council Comments:

- A. Tanis asked if there are any updates for the house that was demolished. Hackenberg will follow up with the county tomorrow.
- B. Tanis asked about selling our chunk of property by White Oak. Hackenberg is having them squared up as two parcels rather than one.
- C. Raber wanted to know about the noon whistle. It is broken, and he is working on having it fixed. They are running into issues finding someone to fix it.
- D. Raber asked whether we are putting the no bikes on sidewalks back up on Main Street.
- E. Raber stated north and south bound on M40 we have pedestrian signs for crossing that are not visible due to tree limbs.
- F. Raber stated the stripe painting is starting to fade and it has been less than a year.
- G. Appleby stated that since Hackenberg will not be here for the second meeting in September. Council agreed that they will not have a second meeting in September. The Planning Commission/Village Council joint meeting will take place on October 7.
- H. On November 25, they will have the DDA joint meeting.
- I. Appleby stated that it is time as a council to have the annual planning meeting with a facilitator. He would like to know when, and he would like to look into MML or MSU extension. Hackenberg will look into his leadership summit and see if there are local facilitators available.

- XI. Adjournment:** E. Dudek made a motion to adjourn the meeting, with support from a voice vote was taken, with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:02 PM.

Respectfully Submitted by,

Brittany Rathbun
Village Clerk

DRAFT

Village of Lawton
SPECIAL MEETING
JOINT MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION & VILLAGE COUNCIL
125 S. MAIN, LAWTON MI 49065 269.624.6407
Tuesday, October 07, 2025 - 7:00 PM

MINUTES

- 1. Call to Order:** J. Peterson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.
- 2. Roll Call:** Present: J. Peterson, P. Rathbun, B. Allen, P. Chmiel, M. Dudek, C. Knapp, S. Knudstrup, J. Appleby, G. Dudek, C. Raber, R. Turner, and R. Tanis. Absent: E. Dudek. Also Present: T. Hackenberg, M. Leonard, Mark Cichos, and Attorney David Eberle with Bloom & Slugget.
- 3. Approval of Minutes:** P. Chmiel, supported by M. Dudek, made a motion to approve the Planning Commission Minutes of August 05, 2025, with the correction of a name error. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote.
- 4. Approval of Agenda:** P. Rathbun, supported by S. Knudstrup, made a motion to approve the Planning Commission Agenda for October 10, 2025, with the addition of 6.d.: Recommendation to reappoint Three (3) Planning Commission members whose term end in November. Motion approved by unanimous voice vote.
- 5. Public Comment / Communications:** None.
- 6. New Business:**

A. Ordinance Review with Attorney:

The proposed amendments update the Village's zoning ordinance to align with current state and federal regulations regarding wind, solar, and wireless communication facilities. The revisions clearly define allowable uses by district and establish new sections (5.26–5.28) outlining detailed standards for small-scale wind and solar installations, large-scale energy systems, and wireless communication structures, including small cell facilities.

Small-scale wind and solar energy systems are now permitted in all zoning districts with administrative approval, provided they meet setback, height, and safety requirements. Commercial-scale energy generation is prohibited within the Village limits.

For wireless communications, the amendments distinguish between large support structures and small cell installations, setting timelines, approval processes, and design standards to ensure safety and minimize visual impact. The ordinance also introduces compliance procedures for collocation, FCC certification, and reasonable height limits, ensuring Village regulations conform to federal law.

Additional administrative updates include provisions for abandonment of projects, violations, and a declaration that ordinance violations constitute a public nuisance.

J. Peterson proposed to hold a Public Hearing at the next Planning Commission Meeting on November 04, 2025. M. Dudek, supported by B. Allen, made a motion to set a Public Hearing for Cell Tower Zoning Amendment Ordinance. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

B. Planning Commission Annual Report:

Discussion of the Planning Commission Annual Report was tabled until the next meeting.

C. Planning Commission Goals and Objectives for the year:

Discussion of the Planning Commission goals and objectives for the year was tabled until the next meeting.

D. Recommendation to Reappoint Planning Commission Members:

The terms of three (3) Planning Commission members will expire in November 2025. P. Chmiel, supported by M. Dudek, made a motion to approve the recommendation to reappoint C. Knapp, P. Rathbun, and S. Knudstrup, whose terms are ending in November. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

7. Council Business: At 8:15pm J. Appleby took over the joint meeting:

A. Resolution 09-2025: A resolution to honor Norm & Karen Carlson

The Bronson Fundraising Foundation has asked the Village to honor Carlson Farms for their contribution of over \$1 million to the Bronson Children's Hospital. A charity event in their honor will be held on Sunday, October 12. J. Peterson, supported by R. Tanis, made a motion to approve Resolution 09-2025 to honor Norm and Karen Carlson. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

B. Lawton Evangelical Burn Request

The Lawton EMC requested permission to conduct a controlled burn for their Fall Harvest event at the church on Saturday, October 11, 2025. R. Tanis, supported by R. Turner, made a motion to approve the burn request. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote.

8. Commissioner/Council Comments: B. Allen asked if the Village is RRC ready. It was noted that the Village is on its way to becoming ready. There are several levels to complete before full certification, and the Village is nearing the final set of requirements. J. Appleby noted that one of the RRC requirements is to hold an annual joint meeting between the Council and the Planning Commission. He stated that this has led to much better communication between the two bodies and has been a very positive experience.

9. Adjournment: R. Turner, supported by R. Tanis, made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:19pm. Motion approved.

Respectfully Submitted,
Melina Leonard

10/03/2025

CHECK REGISTER FOR VILLAGE OF LAWTON
CHECK DATE FROM 09/01/2025 - 09/30/2025

Check Date	Bank	Check	App Vendor	Vendor Name	Description	Amount
Bank GEN GENERAL CHECKING						
09/03/2025	GEN	8022	AP 294	ANTWERP TOWNSHIP TREASURER	ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS	500.00
09/06/2025	GEN	8023	PR 111	ALLEN, BLAINE	*INCLUDED IN PAYROLL	
09/18/2025	GEN	8024	AP MISC	LEASE SERVICING CENTER, INC	ONE TIME DOCUMENTATION & PROCESSING FEE	500.00
09/19/2025	GEN	8025	AP 1099	AMAZON CAPITAL SERVICES, INC	CONSOLIDATED INVOICES	3,611.36
09/19/2025	GEN	8026	AP 104	BAKER & TAYLOR, INC.	BOOKS	898.16
09/19/2025	GEN	8027	AP 056	BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNICATIONS	PHONE LIBRARY - ACCT NO 00032003-0	157.96
09/19/2025	GEN	8028	AP 101	CENGAGE LEARNING.	WESTERN 3 PLAN - AUG	74.22
09/19/2025	GEN	8029	AP 964	CLARK TECHNICAL SERVICES	LPL 2025 SUPPORT - AUG	502.68
09/19/2025	GEN	8030	AP 153	DEMCO, INC.	BOOK COVERS, BOOKMARKS	553.06
09/19/2025	GEN	8031	AP MISC	LOCK MASTER SECURITY LLC	IP CAMERA 4 MP FIXED LENS WITH IR, SERVI	340.00
09/19/2025	GEN	8032	AP MISC	MANISTEE COUNTY LIBRARY	REPLACEMENT: THE LONELY-AINSLIE HOGARTH	9.99
09/19/2025	GEN	8033	AP 264	PETTY CASH LAWTON PUBLIC LIBRARY	FAMILY DOLLAR, DOLLAR GENERAL, DOLLAR TR	196.83
09/19/2025	GEN	8034	AP 1108	PIXELVINE	ANNUAL CUSTOMER CARE RENEWAL	1,020.00
09/19/2025	GEN	8035	AP 030	ADAMS HARDWARE	CONSOLIDATED BILL	863.08
09/19/2025	GEN	8036	AP MISC	ANDY J EGAN COMPANY, INC	TESTED BACKFLOW PREVENTERS - WWTP	4,917.31
09/19/2025	GEN	8037	AP 155	APPLIED INNOVATION	POLICE COPIER ACCT NO KZ1828 CONTRACT CN	336.53
09/19/2025	GEN	8038	AP 756	BADGER METER, INC	ORION CELLULAR LTE SERV UNIT	77.28
09/19/2025	GEN	8039	AP 1124	BIOTECH AGRONOMICS	LOAD, TRANSPORT AND LAND APPLICATION OF	44,583.69
09/19/2025	GEN	8040	AP 1116	BLOOM SLUGGETT, PC	PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	3,250.00
09/19/2025	GEN	8041	AP 056	BLOOMINGDALE COMMUNICATIONS	TELEPHONE FOR ACCT NO 0032515-9	401.59
09/19/2025	GEN	8042	AP 312	BRONSON HEALTHCARE GROUP	PHYSICAL FOR ROBERT WILLIAMSON	88.00
09/19/2025	GEN	8043	AP 026	CONSUMERS ENERGY	HEAT FOR ADDRESS 125 MAIN ST ACCT NO 100	67.90
09/19/2025	GEN	8044	AP 1072	COURIER-LEADER & FLASHES	ORDINANCE AMENDMENTS - WIND/SOLAR COLUMN	180.00
09/19/2025	GEN	8045	AP MISC	HYDROCORP	CROSS CONNECTION CONTROL AND INSPECTION	740.93
09/19/2025	GEN	8046	AP 017	INDIANA MICHIGAN POWER CO.	ACCT NO: 045-308-857-0-8 ELECTRIC - STRE	9,118.28
09/19/2025	GEN	8047	AP 1103	KONICA MINOLTA BUSINESS SOLUTIONS	COPIER - MONTHLY INVOICE PER CONTRACT #	382.55
09/19/2025	GEN	8048	AP 009	REPUBLIC SERVICES OF	WASTE REMOVAL	999.95
09/19/2025	GEN	8049	AP MISC	STATE OF MICHIGAN	CUSTOMER ACCT NO: MDOT00494 - M-40 MILL	91,200.13
09/19/2025	GEN	8050	AP 126	STEENSMA LAWN & POWER EQUIP.	COI IGNITION	78.09
09/19/2025	GEN	8051	AP 685	VERIZON WIRELESS	MOBILE PHONE TABLETS	386.86
09/19/2025	GEN	8052	AP 083	VILLAGE OF PAW PAW	WATER LAB ANALYSIS	180.00
09/19/2025	GEN	8053	AP 1118	WEST MICHIGAN INTERNATIONAL, LLC	PARTS	1,306.28
09/19/2025	GEN	8054	AP 047	WIGHTMAN	PROJECT 214328: LAWTON CEMETERY SITE PLA	23,048.21
09/19/2025	GEN	8055	AP 1101	ZONING SOLUTIONS, LLC	BLIGHT ENFORCEMENT	2,110.50
09/26/2025	GEN	8056	PR GARNISHMEI	CITIBANK C/O BRIAN L. GROEN STENGER & STENGER		552.07
09/26/2025	GEN	8057	PR TEAMSTERS	TEAMSTERS LOCAL #214	*INCLUDED IN PAYROLL	219.00
09/29/2025	GEN	8058	AP MISC	JUSTICE FENCE COMPANY	HALF DOWN FOR FENCING - PICKLE BALL COUR	5,998.00
09/29/2025	GEN	8059	AP MISC	A & A'S LITTLE RED SHED	CIDER AND DONUTS FOR FALL PARADE	100.00
09/12/2025	GEN		PR		PAYROLL TOTAL	42,718.52
09/26/2025	GEN		PR		PAYROLL TOTAL	44,852.24

Total of 103 Disbursements:

286,902.25



**Welch Foods Inc.,
A Cooperative**
1601 Trapelo Road
Suite 100 & 200
Waltham, MA 02451

September 30, 2025

BY EMAIL

Ms. Brittany Rathbun
Village Clerk
Village of Lawton
PO Box 367
Lawton, MI 49065
Email: brathbun@lawtonmi.org

Re: Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate Letter of Agreement –
Certified Status Report – Calendar Year 2024

Dear Ms. Rathbun:

Pursuant to Section 7 of the Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate Letter of Agreement dated April 11, 2022, between the Village of Lawton and Welch Foods Inc., A Cooperative (“Welch’s”), Welch’s hereby reports that for the year ended December 31, 2024, the number of full-time employees (“FTEs”) at the Property was 159. This figure exceeds the 139 required total (82 retained jobs plus 57 additional jobs).

Please let me know if you have any questions or wish to discuss this Status Report.

CERTIFICATION

I certify, to the best of my knowledge, that the above information is true and accurate.

WELCH FOODS INC., A COOPERATIVE

By: /s/ Matthew A. Aufman
Name: Matthew A. Aufman
Title: General Counsel
Date: September 30, 2025



Van Buren Conservation District September 2025 Program Update

Submitted by *Emily Hickmott, Executive Director*

It's hard to believe it's Fall already! We're still in the field quite a bit this time of year, so please invite us to your events, properties, and meetings if we can provide support for your water, land, farming, recycling, and invasive species concerns. We're staying active treating high priority invasive species in the road right-of-ways in conjunction with the Van Buren County Road Commission, organizing free native tree plantings for residents on six inland lakes, offering recycling opportunities, and more! See below for some other updates on each of our programs.

Additionally, if the federal budget is not passed tonight, we will be working exclusively from home and the field until otherwise notified because our office is in the USDA Service Center. We won't be available in our office, but we will continue to work and be available to meet you and residents. Contact information is available at VanBurenCD.org/about to find out how our team can best help you.

Upcoming Events (Details available on [our website](#) or by calling our office):

- [Sustainable Samplers](#) | Wednesday, October 1, 2025 | 5:00 PM - 7:30 PM | Three Blondes Brewing | 1875 Phoenix St., South Haven, MI 49090
- Indigenous Peoples Day | Monday, October 13, 2025 | office closed
- [Lawrence Recycle Roundup](#) | Saturday, October 18, 2025 | 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM | Van Buren ISD Tech Center | 250 South St., Lawrence, MI 49064
 - Tires (pre-register required, [click here](#) or call 269-633-9314)
 - Electronics
 - Foam
 - Household Hazardous Waste (HHW): oil-based paint, batteries, lightbulbs, and more
- Van Buren Conservation District Board Meeting | Wednesday, October 22, 2025 | 9:00 AM | VBCD Office / USDA Service Center | 1035 E Michigan Ave., Paw Paw, MI 49079
- [Van Buren Together: Resource Sharing Event](#) | Wednesday, October 22, 2025 | 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM | virtual - on Zoom

Program Updates:

- **Ag Conservation/Water Quality Projects** (*Erin Fuller and Colleen Forestieri*) - Erin Fuller presented about lake and river conservation at a session of the Michigan Naturalist Program on August 16. This program teaches attendees about Michigan's natural ecosystems, as well as skills to share what they have learned with others.
- **SWxSW Corner CISMA (Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area) Team** (*Abbie Bristol, Alex Florian, Jena Johnson*) - We got to get in front of and talk to ornamental pond installation contractors from across the state. We were joined by EGLE to pull yellow floating heart from Sarett Nature Center and discovered a new site with a yellow floating heart. The Strike Team wrapped up the Hydrilla survey season and shifted to spraying Japanese knotweed and Phragmites along Van Buren County Road Rights of Way.
- **Michigan Agriculture Environmental Assurance Program (MAEAP) and Regen Ag Program** (*Kyle Mead*) - The specialist has been trying to sprint to the fiscal year (FY) finish with more assessments

1035 E. Michigan Avenue, Paw Paw, Michigan 49079

269.657.4030 x5 ♦ www.VanBurenCD.org ♦ info@vanburencd.org



Van Buren Conservation District September 2025 Program Update

Submitted by Emily Hickmott, Executive Director

and verifications. September assessments will largely see verifications in early fall of FY 26.

Envirothon held 3 webinars on different days of the week at different times of the day and evening in the hopes new teachers, parents, youth leaders would login to see what Envirothon was about. The hope is to gather up a team for next year's competitions. The District's rental equipment saw a small spike in usage for cover crops and late pasture seedings, but it is predicted to quickly drop off so that techs can get equipment set for winter storage.

- **National Association of Conservation Districts (NRCS) Technical Assistance** (*Lucas Hartman, Gabriel Francisco*) - The District held their annual field day as a Grazing Field Day at Thunderfoot Farms on September 10, and August was spent preparing for this alongside working on routine Farm Bill conservation programs for landowners.
- **Outreach** (*Jacob Diljak*) - August was filled with events and projects - Recycle Roundup, Maple Lake Cleanup, paddling Fish Lake, farmers' market, and more! The VBCD continues to support our community through events, services, education, and projects. From community cleanups to educational events, the VBCD is a must-watch for incredible work. Keep up by following our social media, website, or email or call to chat!
- **Resource Recovery & Recycling** (*Kalli Marshall, Jacob Diljak*) - August started off with a bang! We held the South Haven Recycle Roundup on Saturday August 2 and were able to serve about 200 households in Van Buren County for Hazardous Waste, Foam, Tires, and Electronics. Later in the month, we hosted the first Sustainable Samplers at Paw Paw Brewing Company for folks to drop in for free appetizers, check out informational displays, and chat with our team about what Van Buren County needs for recycling and landfill diversion. In between, we have been focused on finishing up the 2023 EGLE Recycling Infrastructure Grant and our Nextcycle Project.

HYDRILLA



Key Characteristics

- Serrated edges
- 4-8 leaves per segment
- Root Tubers

If you see Hydrilla, take one or more photos, note the location, date and time of the observation, and report to:

Email: EGLE-WRD-AIP@Michigan.gov

MISIN online reporting tool: MISIN.MSU.edu

Illustration by Bruce Kerr

Species Spotlight: *Hydrilla*

Have you ever heard of the plant known as *Hydrilla*? It's an invasive plant found in the water. The spread of *Hydrilla* in the American South has taken a real toll on the environment, economy, and recreation in the areas it has been found. *Hydrilla* was found in Berrien County two years ago by our very own CISMA Coordinator Alex Florian. That was the first time *Hydrilla* has ever been found in the State of Michigan, and a lot of ongoing work has been done in response in the following years.

This summer our team has been conducting surveys of local drains, ponds, lakes, and rivers to search for *Hydrilla* within 10 miles of where it was originally found. We have been working with local landowners and the Berrien County Drain Commission to conduct these surveys, and these collaborations have been a wonderful success so far.

Hydrilla has a distinct look if you know what to look for. The biggest identifiers are its serrated leaves, with 4-8 leaves at each segment, and its tubers, which are distinct root structures found a few inches below the sediment. While our team is doing good work, the more people who are on the lookout for this distinct plant, the better. Please contact us if you think you may have found *Hydrilla*. Thank you!

For local invasive species support, contact the [SWxSW Corner CISMA Team](mailto:SWxSW_Corner_CISMA_Team@VanBurenCD.org)
InvasivesEd@VanBurenCD.org
269-633-9044

Suspicious aquatic plants should be reported to EGLE-WRD-AIP@Michigan.gov. Include close-up photos and provide the location of the detection in your report.



RESOLUTION NO. 10-2025

A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH ANNUAL HALLOWEEN TRICK-OR-TREATING HOURS

WHEREAS, the Village Council of the Village of Lawton recognizes Halloween as a long-standing community tradition that provides enjoyment for residents and families; and

WHEREAS, the Village Council desires to promote the safety and welfare of children and families participating in trick-or-treating activities; and

WHEREAS, the Village Council finds it in the best interest of the community to establish uniform trick-or-treating hours for the annual Halloween holiday;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Village Council of the Village of Lawton hereby establishes the annual official hours for Halloween trick-or-treating within the Village of Lawton for **October 31**, to be held from **5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. each year going forward, unless otherwise indicated for certain circumstances by the Village Council.**

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that residents are encouraged to leave their exterior lights on if they wish to participate in trick-or-treating and to exercise caution to ensure a safe and enjoyable evening for all.

YEAS:

NAYS:

ABSTAIN:

ABSENT:

CERTIFICATION

I, the undersigned, being the duly appointed **Village Clerk** of the Village of Lawton, Van Buren County, Michigan, do hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted at a regular/special meeting of the Village Council held on the ___ day of October, 2025, at which a quorum was present and acting.

Brittany Rathbun, Village Clerk
Village of Lawton



Lawton Police Department
 P.O. Box 117
 125 S. Main St.
 Lawton MI, 49065
 (269) 624-2382
 Fax (269) 624-1911



LAWTON POLICE DEPARTMENT – COUNCIL REPORT

September 2025

Prepared by Chief Greg Cordes

Complaints/reports written by LPD.....	66
Calls for service by Lawton PD.....	66
Assist other department calls	2
Ordinance complaints.....	1
Blight.....	1
Traffic stops citations issued.....	7
Traffic stops verbal warning.....	10
Arrests.....	2
Court.....	6

Parking Complaints.....	1
Special events/school/etc.....	320 mins
Business contacts.....	21
Citizen contacts.....	200
Officer Foot Patrol time.....	130 mins
Officer training.....	870 mins
Follow-up investigations.....	9
Vehicle accidents.....	2
Assist Lawton Fire/Ems.....	3

LPD HOURS WORKED: Police:

Scheduled (Full-time).....	604 hrs.
Scheduled (Part-time).....	29 hrs.
Overtime hours.....	0 hrs.
Comp earned.....	0 hrs.
Vacation/Comp/Emergency leave hours.....	68.5 hrs.

Holiday OT/holiday pay.....20.5 hrs.

Sick leave hours..... 36 hrs.

School cross guard hours..... 82 hrs.

Sept. total hrs: 720 (30 days) Patrol hrs. covered in Sept: 544.5

Uncovered hours: 175.5hrs. or 14.61 shifts

CALLS FOR SERVICE BY LAWTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

The following are a list of reports that have been generated by the Lawton Police Department for this month. This is only the police reports that have been generated and does not include most traffic enforcement/stops or calls that did not require a police report to be written. The addresses are rounded to the block number for confidentiality.

- 9/1 300 Bitely/Assault
- 9/4 100 N. Main/False Alarm
- 9/4 28000 CR 354/Assist other Department
- 9/4 300 E. Third/Obstructing Justice
- 9/5 125 S. Main/General Assist
- 9/6 500 E. 4th/Animal Complaint
- 9/6 300 N. Main/Obstructing Justice
- 9/7 100 Durkee St./Blight Violation
- 9/8 24000 East Point Drive/Mattawan/Assist other Department

9/9 Lawton Village/Trespassing
9/9 100 S. Main/General Assist
9/10 200 N. Main/Suspicious Occurrence
9/10 600 S. Main/Obstructing Justice
9/11 100 Morrill/General Assist
9/11 400 Walker/Assist other Agency
9/11 100 S. Main/General Assist
9/12 E. 2nd/N. Adams/Health and Safety
9/12 700 N. Main/Property Damage Accident
9/13 400 Durkee/Suspicious Occurrence
9/13 900 E. Main/Paw Paw/Assist other Agency
9/14 31000 66th/Assist other Agency
9/14 CR 358/CR 657/Suspicious Occurrence
9/14 66000 CR 652/Assist other Agency
9/16 300 E. Bitley/General Assist
9/16 100 E. 3rd/Trespassing Notice
9/18 22000 Wynsmythe/Mattawan/Assist other Department
9/18 100 S. Main/Suspicious Occurrence
9/18 100 S. Fremont/Assist EMS
9/18 N. Nursery/E. Second/Zoning Ordinance
9/18 E. 3rd/Nursery/Zoning Ordinance
9/18 200 W. Fourth/Assist EMS
9/18 300 W. Fourth/Suspicious Occurrence
9/19 W. Fourth/S. Main/Larceny
9/19 300 S. Railroad/Assist EMS
9/19 32nd/66th/General Assist
9/19 200 E. 1st/Combustible Burning
9/19 200 E. 1st/Suspicious Occurrence
9/19 31000 66th/Assist other Department
9/19 N. Main/E. 1st/Zoning Ordinance
9/20 100 Blue Pride/General Assist
9/21 700 N. Main/Destruction of Property
9/22 100 Morrill/Welfare Check
9/22 700 N. Main/General Assist
9/22 100 Primary Way/Embezzlement

9/22 500 White Oak/Suspicious Occurrence
9/23 100 Walker/Suspicious Occurrence
9/23 350 W. Fourth/Assist Other Department
9/23 100 Blue Pride Drive/General Noncriminal
9/23 100 Blue Pride Drive/Non Aggravated Assault
9/23 Burgess Rd./Harrison/Decatur/Assist Other Department
9/24 100 Blue Pride/General Noncriminal
9/25 25000 96th Ave./Marcellus/Assist Other Agency
9/26 M40/Shaw Rd./Assist Other Agency
9/26 S. Main/5th St./Traffic Accident
9/27 83000 M40/Obstructing Police
9/28 400 Durkee St./General Noncriminal
9/28 60000 CR652/911 Hang-up
9/28 300 S. Nursery/Animal Complaint
9/28 Cole Ave./N. Main/Mattawan/Assist other Agency
9/28 800 S. Kalamazoo/Paw Paw/Assist other Agency
9/28 10 Williams Way/Paw Paw/Assist other Agency
9/28 89000 Cr668/Decatur/Assist other Agency
9/28 25000 Eisenhower Drive/Mattawan/Assist other Agency
9/28 400 S. Durkee/Obstructing Justice
9/28 55000 N. Main/Mattawan/Assist other Agency
9/29 100 Walker/Assist EMS

NOTABLE INCIDENTS:

Nothing to report in September.

Homicide:

Lawton police department continues to work with all agencies involved in a continued investigation into the homicide that occurred in Lawton on November 12th, 2024. We are continuing to work with the prosecutor's office preparing for up and coming court proceedings.

The main suspect in the case has been bound over to Circuit Court to stand trial for Open Murder and the trial date is set for October 14, 2025.. A second suspect has been charged and a pre-liminary examination was held on September 16, 2025 and that person was bound over to Circuit Court.

The Lawton Police Department encourages anyone with information pertaining to this on-going investigation to contact the Lawton Police Department. Lawton PD continues to follow-up on tips and calls from citizens involving this homicide.

SCHOOLS:

Lawton PD continues to monitor the schools at the beginning of the day and at the end of the day when students are being let out.

BLIGHT:

Lawton PD continues to work with Zoning Solutions on problematic houses in the village that have blight, junk and are dangerous structures. I have been forwarding complaint to them in reference to these issues in the Village.

TRAFFIC ENFORCMENT:

For the month of September, Lawton officers again spent hours on directed traffic patrol, specifically targeting speed violations and aggressive driving throughout the Village. The following is the total number of hours spend on speeding violations both moving and

stationary patrol. We are hoping the continued police presence on problem streets will deter aggressive driving and speeding.

Total radar time hours..... 1100 mins

TRAINING:

Officers are continuing to do the state mandated training on line for 2025 that is due at the end of the year.

SPECIAL EVENTS:

Officers have attended the football games in the evenings at the school and other school events.

THE PD MOVING FORWARD:

We are asking citizens to make their first non-emergency calls for service to the Van Buren County Dispatch 269-657-3101. All emergency calls should go directly to 911. This way an officer can be dispatched immediately or when one is available, no matter where they are at. To often we find complaints from citizens on the voice mail at Lawton PD and the officer on duty does not always learn about this until they get back to the office from patrol. This often results in a delay which can be critical, depending on the type of call.

PERSONAL NOTE:

Officers at Lawton PD are attempting to catch up investigations from the summer month and get cases submitted to the Van Buren County Prosecutor's Office. Lawton PD has numerous cases that are pending on investigations and in different stages of prosecution.

Lawton PD is in the process of getting quotes for new body cameras and car cameras. Our body cameras are very out dated and not good quality. Our cameras in the cars are hand me downs from a neighboring agency when they upgraded and we have had them in service for many years. I have contacted 2 different companies for quotes on 2 new car cameras and 6 body cameras along with the proper data storage. Good quality reliable cameras both in the patrol car and body cameras are a must in today's policing.

Respectfully,

Chief Greg Cordes
Lawton PD

"You can't silence an opinion by ending a life. You only prove its weight"

Village of Lawton Downtown Development Authority
September 17, 2025
Regular Meeting

Tom Osborne called the September 17, 2025 meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Present: Dluge, Drew, G Dudek, L Dudek, Kozik, Lawson, Osborne, Shannon, and Shinabargar

Absent: McComis

Agenda: Motion Shannon; Support G Dudek to approve the September agenda. Motion carried.

Minutes: Motion Dluge; Support Drew to approve the August 20, 2025 minutes. Motion carried.

Treasurers Report:

Unfinished Business: a. Shannon moved to approve painting of Pickleball Courts for a price not to exceed \$35,000.00. The Motion was seconded by Lawson. Motion passed unanimously with a roll call vote.

b. Shinabargar moved to approve the purchase of fencing for Pickleball Courts for a price not to exceed \$35,000.00. Motion was seconded by Drew. Motion unanimously approved with roll call vote.

c. golf cart parade- Kozik gave progress report on parade and handed out parade route maps. She will contact Fire Chief Hackenberg for traffic control.

Osborne made a motion to purchase 3 Gift Certificates \$25.00 each from local businesses for prizes. Support Lawson- Motion unanimously approved with roll call vote.

New Business: a. The DDA was asked to update the Park Plan. Osborne will bring a copy of the current Park Plan to next months meeting. We may start a committee to review.

b. Fall Decorations- Kozik and Dluge state they have the mums, getting pumpkins from Nick Marcelletti, straw from Buster. Decorating Saturday September 20 @ 9:00am, starting at Canon Park.

c. Halloween contest is work in progress. 8 businesses are willing to decorate. Possibly a theme of skeletons.

DDA Board Comments: a. The date for joint DDA/Council meeting is November 25, 2025 @ 7:00 p.m.

b. Some Banners are obstructing parking places. It was agreed to just remove them.

c. Farmers Market have not turned in any paperwork or money for the vendors. Shannon and G Dudek will speak with them.

There being no further business Motion Lawson; Support L Dudek to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned @ 8:30 pm.

Our next scheduled meeting is October 15, 2025

Respectfully Submitted,
Deborah Lawson, Secretary

LAWTON VILLAGE LIBRARY BOARD

Regularly scheduled monthly meeting

Date: 9/29/25

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Reid at: 6:26

Members present: Cornish, Reid, Rathbun, McArthur, Troxell, Munson

Members excused: None

Staff Present: Tone

Public Comment (3 minutes per speaker): None

II. Secretary's Report: The 8/25/25 minutes were accepted as presented.

Rathbun Moved to accept the 8/25/25 meeting minutes. Second by - Reid. Motion carried

III. Library Director's Report – Usage Statistics

- A. Visitors: 906
- B. Materials checked out: 2139
- C. Adult Fiction: 467
- D. Adult non-fiction: 48
- E. Audio Books: 17
- F. Children Easy Books: 725
- G. Junior Fiction: 497
- H. Large Print: 247
- I. Periodicals: 20
- J. Videos: 54
- K. Young Adult fiction: 48
- L. VOX books: 16

Total: 2139

- M. Computer usage: 34
- N. Michigan Overdrive total checkouts: 32254
- O. Michigan Overdrive total holds: 12219
- P. Michigan Overdrive total users: 7757
- Q. New Items Processed: 146
- R. Total items in Library: 27147
- S. Our MEL items received: 142

Rathbun moved to purchase a Door Auto Operator for the rear entry door (even tho the quote says "front entry door") for \$7759.00. Second by Munson. Cornish – yes; Reid – yes; Munson – yes; Troxell – yes; Rathbun – yes; McArthur - yes. Motion carried.

2. Inventory completed
3. Sharon's 6-year increase

McArthur moved to increase Sharon O'Connor's wages from \$14.25 to \$14.75 starting: 9/29/25. Second by: Troxell. Cornish – yes; Reid – yes; Munson – yes; Troxell – yes; Rathbun – yes; McArthur - yes. Motion carried.

4. Adding policy for part timers to receive insurance benefits (dental, vision, life only). \$42.00 per employee per month. The staff can choose to add on. This starts October 1, 2025. They can also opt out. See attached for additional information.

Rathbun moved to add a policy for part timers to receive insurance benefits (Vision, Dental, Life insurance, AD&D, STD and LTD). Second by Reid. Cornish – yes; Reid – yes; Munson – yes; Troxell – yes; Rathbun – yes; McArthur - yes. Motion carried.

5. Financial management cohort begins October 15th with State of Michigan. See attached.
6. Baker and Taylor have been bought by another company, reasons for past months problems, so Tone found a new book vendor, received training on how to order and will be switching to them. They are stopping all back orders. We will be using Ingram for future books.
7. Pass out candy for Halloween on October 31. McArthur will get prices from Sams Club.
8. Children's Coordinator update. Leah Munson is doing a good job.
9. Gestsetup program for Michigan older adults; working on partnering. Seniors would be able to log into the system. For Technology Skills; Health and Wellness, Personal Finances, Lifelong Learning, and Community and Social engagement. Target audience is Adults 55 and older.
10. Self-directed vacuum. Tone will purchase
11. The policy manual will be sent to board members via e-mail.

X. Adjournment – The meeting adjourned at 7:17

Cornish Moved to adjourn the meeting; second by McArthur

Next Meeting:10/27/25 at 6:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Marianne McArthur, Board Secretary

Circulation Report for August 2025

We had 906 visitors and checked out a total of **2,139** materials.

Adult Fiction	467
Adult Non-Fiction	48
Audio Books	17
Children's Easy Books	725
Junior Fiction	497
Large Print	247
Periodicals	20
Videos	54
Young Adult Fiction	48
VOX Books	<u>16</u>
Total	2,139
Computer Usage	34 uses
Michigan Overdrive Total Checkouts	32,254
Michigan Overdrive Total Holds	12,219
Michigan Overdrive Total Users	7,757
New Items Processed	146
Total Items in Library	27,147
Our Mel Items Received	142
Our Mel Items Sent	134
Lawton Overdrive Downloads	292
Lawton Overdrive Holds	215
Lawton Overdrive Users	1,529
New Library Members	15
Total Library Members	1,402
Hoopla checkouts	135
Hoopla Cost for Month	\$316.65(credit bal. \$895.34
Hoopla Patrons	118 (32 Porter, 87 Village)
	2024 checkouts - 293
	2025 checkouts -815

Facebook visited 6,483 in the last 30 days

Book club: 11
Craft night: 0
Knitters: 33
Mystery Club: 6
Storytime: 0
White Oaks: 15
Summer reading programs
 August 6th - Sarret Nature Center - 46
 August 13th - Kalamazoo Nature Center - 46
 August 19th - Tim Muxlow - 56

GOOGLE-Library Profile Visits

185 Interactions in August

23 Calls, 82 People asked for Directions,
80 website visits, 322 Profile views, 135
Searches.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lyn Tone, Director