

**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

