



Village of Lawton
VILLAGE COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
125 S. MAIN, LAWTON MI 49065 269.624.6407
Tuesday November 11, 2025
MINUTES

- I. **Call to Order:** President Appleby called the November 11 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 nine guests.
- III. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- IV. **Consent Agenda:** The Consent Agenda included the approval of the November 11 Council Agenda, the October 14, 2025 Council Meeting Minutes, and approval of the October 2025 disbursements in the amount of \$216,752.37. Peterson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda with addition the Agenda under New Business, Item E. A conflict of Interest Waiver from Antwerp Township, supported by Turner. A unanimous roll call vote approved the motion.
- V. **Citizen's Comments:**
 - A. Heather Shannon stated the Summerfest Committee is planning to hold Summerfest on July 11, they currently plan to have it as an all-day event, with the car show returning, and they have Hair Mania slotted for the band to play.
 - B. Donna Dlugie from the Lawton DDA stated she has been working with Kelly Kozik to prepare decorations for downtown Main Street. They are looking for their season's greetings plywood gnome. She also wanted to know whether the Village or DDA would be taking fall DDA decorations down.
 - C. Calvin Ragan from 420 Ewing Road. He wanted to ask why the Village doesn't have a bicycle lane. He wanted to know what the streetscape cost the Village. He would like Council to ask MDOT where the bicyclists are supposed to go. He also wanted to ask about bench placement on Main Street.
- VI. **Communications, Correspondence, and Presentations:**
 - A. Heather Shannon wanted to ask for approval to have the Village Christmas Tree placed in Reid's Corner for the Christmas in the Village Celebration on December 12 at 7:00PM.
 - B. Vicki Mrozek submitted a letter asking that the Village for Permission for the Lions Club to host the annual Christmas in the Village Celebration, with a parade, burn barrels, use of Fire Department for refreshments, use of the community room for Santa Visits, and traffic control on December 12, 2025 to begin at 7:00PM. E. Dudek made a motion to approve the date and time for Christmas in the Village supported by G. Dudek, a voice vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.
- VII. **Old Business:** None.

VIII. New Business:

- A. President Appleby brought Resolution 11-2025 to the floor for discussion. This resolution would establish a contract between the Village of Lawton and Living Waters Dominion LLC in order to have the LLC operate the Wastewater Treatment Plant in Lieu of an employee. E. Dudek made a motion to approve Resolution 11-2025, seconded by Turner. A roll call vote was taken with all in favor, and none opposed. Motion carried.
- B. President Appleby brought Resolution 12-2025 to the floor for discussion. This resolution would Adopt a new Policy to the Village of Lawton Employee Handbook, allowing the Village to be in line with ESTA guidance. Trustee Peterson made a motion to adopt Resolution 12-2025, seconded by Tanis. A roll call vote was taken with all in favor, and none opposed. Motion carried.
- C. President Appleby brought a Letter of Agreement between Teamsters Local 214 and the Village of Lawton to the floor for discussion. This Letter of Agreement shows police department wages raised effective 10/09/2024. These communications were sent to the Union, and union dues were raised with police rates, however, the LOA was missed and this is being fixed now for both Village and Union records. Trustee E. Dudek made a motion to approve the Letter of Agreement, seconded by trustee Turner. A roll call vote was taken with all in favor, and none opposed. Motion carried.
- D. President Appleby brought Ordinance 05 of 2025 to the floor for discussion. This Ordinance has been recommended to the Village Council by the Planning Commission, and would make several minor corrections to the current Zoning Ordinances. Trustee E. Dudek made a motion to adopt Ordinance 05 of 2025, seconded by trustee Turner. A roll call vote was taken with all in favor, and none in opposition. Ordinance adopted.
- E. President Appleby brought a Conflict of Interest Waiver from Antwerp Township to the floor for discussion. This waiver is due to the ongoing issue between the Village of Lawton and Antwerp Township for the Police Department to be allowed to use village-owned property in order to train officers. The township has made the determination that the police may not shoot on this property, stating more than one person may not shoot on their privately-owned property. They will be holding a public hearing to decide whether or not to overturn their decision, and allow the police to train on this property on December 2. The waiver is due to the fact that Antwerp Township utilizes the same attorney as the Village's Blight/Rental Inspection Company: Zoning Solutions. Trustee E. Dudek made a motion to have Village Manager Hackenberg sign the waiver, with a second following from trustee 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 he is awaiting notice from our grant administrator, Patrick Britton for the completed Reid's Corner Project. All proper paperwork has been done on the Village end, we are just waiting to hear back from the grant people. He received an email from Sheila Penn pertaining to the easement on her property. She would like to see the Village consider revoking the easement, and returning those rights to them, so they can utilize the property to widen the drive. Penn stated in her email she would still grant access to Schurr, the property owner behind her. Village Manager Hackenberg stated MDOT is not responding to him about the items with the sidewalk repairs needed on Main Street, so he has put in a request with a higher up. Hackenberg stated he checked into it, and it does not appear a timeline was provided the Washington project rebuild. He is waiting to hear from

owners. Hackenberg provided council with an update on Zoning Solutions for blight cleanup and rental inspections. Hackenberg stated he has been working on the Parks and Rec plan, and he would like to do another public survey to get the public's opinion on future park use. He stated he did meet with the owners of the Golf Course about rezoning in order to allow them to get a liquor license. On another note, Hackenberg stated that with the state's new budget, they have decreased the revenue sharing for cities, villages, townships, etc. The state is reducing the Constitutional Revenues by approximately 6%. The gas tax is being phased out. Hackenberg stated this means approximately a \$5,000-\$6,000% cut for village general funding. The state has started a new public safety revenue sharing for the next five years, however, we will probably not qualify as it is for larger populations, populations with high crime rates, or populations with inverted property values. Hackenberg stated we are going to see an increase in our road funding, however those are restricted funds, as to where the constitutional revenues are unrestricted funds. Hackenberg stated he would like to look at the Village budget year to July 1-June 30th because it would put us more in line with the state and the township's fiscal year, simplify our budgeting process, and help immensely with projections. With Council's agreement, Hackenberg agreed to look further into how this can be accomplished for the Village.

- B. Village Manager Hackenberg reported for the DPW that for the month of October they focused on leaf pickup once leaves started to fall, however leaves really started coming down right before the early snow, so they will be following up again with that after. Hackenberg stated that the new leaf truck is working well. The DPW pumped a daily average of 1.4 million gallons per day, October tends to be our highest month due to grape harvest. Hackenberg stated all of the materials are finally in to do the water services, and Hydrocorp has 24 inspections currently scheduled in the village. They will check outdoor water spickets for backflow, they will come in to look for cross connections, these are state mandated inspections. Hackenberg stated for wastewater we pumped a total of 2.1 million gallons, and reports were done and submitted. 2500 gallons of sludge were pumped over to the storage tank. The contractors have pushed back placing the Pickleball fences, and striping will be done in the Spring. Sidewalk work was put off because of the Consumers job happening through town, sidewalk repairs will be done once this is complete because they are tearing out and repairing sidewalks as part of the project. Hackenberg stated the motor has been replaced in the truck and the Village has it back. Salt is being delivered tomorrow, there were two internments in the cemetery.
- C. Clerk Rathbun had nothing new to report.
- D. Chief Cordes reported that for October, the Police Department written complaints dropped a bit. He stated that there were several special events within the month of October. Cordes went over covered hours for the month of October, and an assault that happened on White Oak Road. Cordes also reviewed a notable scam incident that happened in the Village in October. Cordes stated officer Hitchcock attended SWAT school in Alpena which was paid for by the county. Cordes stated one of the things he is working on is getting the police department new up to date equipment, and he is working on grants to attain those items.
- E. Trustee Peterson reported that the Planning Commission met, and they have elected new officers for the planning commission. Paul Rathbun is the new chair, Sue Knudstrup is the Vice Chair, and Phillip Chmiel is the secretary, Trustee Peterson will remain the

council liaison. They have a very busy few months coming up with public hearings and site plans.

- F. G. Dudek reported the DDA met, they did review the current park plan, and discuss some items they would like to see updated. The DDA joint meeting with Council will be November 25, 2025. The Christmas Tree for this year was donated by the Stermer Family, and the DDA would like to thank them for this generous donation. The DDA would like to review the sign for Reid's corner. This is being gotten together. The Village has the plaque, and has a stone picked out, so just waiting on details. The Farmer's Market was discussed, and changes that need to be made for next season, which will be reviewed at next week's meeting.
- G. Trustee E. Dudek reported that the Fireboard met and nothing new to report.
- H. Rathbun reported the Library board met and has nothing new to report.

X. **Council Comments:**

- A. Tanis wanted to ask for an update on the Rental Inspection process, and how that is going thus far which was provided by staff.
- B. President Appleby state that council wants to get together in the near future and discuss the future of the Council. Hackenberg reached out to MSU extension and Lou Bender who focus on municipalities. Appleby stated we can look at saving funds and trying to hold this meeting on their own, or whether anyone has any suggestions on other local facilitators. Peterson suggested reaching out to Western Michigan University's Public Service program for more options. Appleby stated that he would like to see Council schedule a Saturday workshop in the winter.
- C. E. Dudek stated that he would like to see a meeting set up with LYSBBB to have an update as promised, there is a committee set up for that, and Eric will reach out to the Youth Baseball/Softball organization and try to get a good time for them.

- XI. **Adjournment:** Turner made a motion to adjourn the meeting, with support from E. Dudek. A voice vote was taken, with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,



Brittany Rathbun
Village Clerk