



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

- I. **Call to Order:** President Appleby called the December 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 two guests.
- III. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- IV. **Consent Agenda:** The Consent Agenda included the approval of the December 9 Council Agenda, the November 11, 2025 Council Meeting Minutes, November 25 Village Council and DDA Joint meeting minutes, approval of the November 2025 disbursements in the amount of \$165,912.83, and approval of a renewed employment contract between Village Manager Hackenberg and the Village of Lawton. Peterson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda with addition the Agenda under Old Business, Item A. Discussion on an Easement behind the Village Cemetery, supported by G. Dudek. A unanimous roll call vote approved the motion.
- V. **Citizen's Comments:**
 - A. Kalli Marshall from Van Buren Conservation District. There is currently a public material management survey happening, available on the Van Buren Conservation District website. They are looking for input from the region to help with goal setting. Monthly meetings will be held the first Wednesday of the month beginning in January. Marshall also provided inserts with programs that can be found on the Village Council Front desk.
- VI. **Communications, Correspondence, and Presentations:**
- VII. **Old Business:**
 - A. E. Dudek made a motion to ask Village Manager Hackenberg to review the Village rescinding their easement behind the cemetery on Sheila Motycka's property so they can improve their property, seconded by Turner. A roll call vote followed with unanimous consent. Motion carried.
- VIII. **New Business:**
 - A. President Appleby brought Ordinance 06-2025 to the floor for discussion. This ordinance was recommended by the Planning Commission, and would Rezone Pin High Golf Course from a residential zone to commercial, and allow the golf course to proceed with their site plan that would include a club house and a restaurant with a liquor license. E. Dudek made a motion to approve Ordinance 06-2025 to rezone the golf course, seconded by Raber, a roll call vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

- B. President Appleby mentioned that the second meeting in December is scheduled to take place the 23rd of the month. Turner made a motion to cancel the second meeting in December due to the proximity to Christmas, seconded by E. Dudek. A voice vote was taken with unanimous agreement. Motion carried.
- C. President Appleby brought Resolution 13-2025 to the floor for discussion. E. Dudek made a motion, seconded by Turner to adopt Resolution 13-2025, a resolution to approve and post the 2026 public meeting dates. A voice vote was taken with all in favor, and none opposed. Motion carried.
- D. Village Manager Hackenberg stated that the Village will be closed December 25-26 in observance of Christmas, and January 1-2 in observance of the New Year. Due to Christmas and the New Year falling on a Thursday. Peterson recommended closing early the Christmas eve and New Year's Eve, granting employees a few hours of personal time. Peterson motioned to allow the holiday trade, seconded by Turner. A voice 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 now sending out weekly reports to the Village council. Hackenberg stated he is still waiting on MEDC for the grant funds. The tree is up at Reid's Corner. Partial reimbursement has been submitted for the park grant. It cannot be closed out fully until the pickleball courts are completed. Hackenberg provided an update with Kalin Construction on the Main Street trees, and they have a meeting scheduled in March to review things that need to be repaired in the spring. Hackenberg provided an update with the current fiscal year budget. He also stated that he is working on the short four-month budget to change the fiscal year in order to be in line with the county, as they have discussed prior.
- B. Village Manager Hackenberg reported for the DPW Christmas decorations are being placed, for the month of November, the Village pumped 16.9 million gallons of water. The treatment plant did about 1.97 million gallons of wastewater discharge. The yellow dump truck is getting a new exhaust system on it. Hackenberg stated all state reports the water sampling has been good.
- C. Clerk Rathbun reported that final rental registration notices just went out. Owners of rental homes have until January 1 to register their rental units in order to avoid the potential \$1,000 fine.
- D. Chief Cordes reported that for October, the Police Department calls for service are maintaining. They are still working on training, assists have gone up, as they need to due to multiple departments being down. Cordes reported crimes are staying similar. Cordes stated Van Buren County is having a police audit, Cordes is also working on the Village of Lawton's audit. Cordes answered questions on the audit, and what it entails for the police department. Cordes reported he has been looking into grants for officer body cams. Cordes stated he is looking into companies that help police departments write grants because it is so time consuming. Cordes also stated the police radios are set for encryption. There is now a hard-set date due to federal law by October 2026, and the Village is ahead of this mandate. Cordes stated Van Buren County will no longer package our warrants for us. He stated he believes that our PD will need to start doing their own warrants now. The courts are entering them now.
- E. Trustee Peterson reported that the Planning Commission met, and they determined to recommend the Ordinance to the Council to rezone the golf course.
- F. G. Dudek reported the DDA met, and they have nothing new to report.

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 give Kudos to Todd because of the deal he got on the dump truck. He stated that they are about to have some brush strippers go up for bid he would like the village to look into as well.

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 8:36 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brittany Rathbun".

Brittany Rathbun
Village Clerk

