



**Village of Lawton
VILLAGE COUNCIL
REGULAR MEETING
125 S. MAIN, LAWTON MI 49065 269.624.6407
Tuesday March 10, 2026
MINUTES**

- I. **Call to Order:** President Appleby called the March 10 2026, meeting of the Lawton Village Council to order at 7:00 p.m.
- II. **Roll Call:** *Present:* Appleby, Tanis, E. Dudek, Peterson, Turner, G. Dudek, Raber *Absent:* none. *Others Present:* Village Manager Hackenberg, Clerk Rathbun, and seven guests.
- III. **Pledge of Allegiance:** The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
- IV. **Consent Agenda:** The Consent Agenda included the approval of the March 10 Council Agenda, the February 24, 2026 Council Meeting Minutes, and disbursements in the amount of \$228,273.70. Peterson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda with one correction to the February 24 minutes New Business Item D. to reflect the motion was made by Trustee Peterson and seconded by Trustee G. Dudek. Approval of Consent Agenda with above mentioned correction, supported by G. Dudek. A unanimous roll call vote approved the motion.
- V. **Communications, Correspondence, and Presentations:**
 - A. President Appleby wanted to thank Al Lueder and his late wife Nancy Lueder for twenty-five years of service to the village through the Lawton Free Reader. In honor of the services provided to the Village, Peterson made a motion to adopt Resolution 08-2026: A Resolution to declare March 10, 2026 as Al and Nancy Lueder Day in the Village of Lawton, followed by unanimous consent. Resolution adopted by acclamation.
- VI. **Citizen Comments:**
 - A. County Commissioner Tina Leary stated the county had their audit today, and the audit was good. Leary then reviewed county finances, new construction and CIP plans, and the County Master Plan. Leary wanted to provide an update from the Public Health Subcommittee stating going forward, the county health department will have new hours, hours Monday through Thursday 8am-5pm and Fridays 8am-12pm. Dental services are still full time. She also wanted to remind that the county offers dental benefits for veterans. Leary also provided an update on the county Public defender's office, going over staffing, and an update on the new appointment to replace Randy Peat on the

county board. Mike Toth, who previously held the seat, will fulfill the remainder of Peat's term, and the county will hold a special election in August to fill the seat going forward.

VII. Public Hearings/Appointments:

VIII. Old Business:

- A. President Appleby brought the consideration of who should consider the Village's blight and rental inspections to the floor between Zoning Solutions and Beth Pompey. This was previously considered by the Village in February and tabled. Pompey stated she has been the point of contact for the Village of Lawton, and due to personal issues, there has been some chaos within the company, and she has since resigned. She stated she has worked very hard to facilitate and help with writing the rental ordinance, and she would like to come on as a W-2 employee to continue facilitating for the blight and rental inspections for the village. Appleby recommended tabling this until the second meeting in March, to allow council time to review presented documents, and council agreed.

IX. New Business:

- A. President Appleby brought proposed ZBA bylaws to the floor for discussion. These bylaws will bring us in line with the RRC program, and provide written streamlined guidelines for our council to work off of. E. Dudek made a motion to adopt Resolution 07-2026: A Resolution to adopt ZBA bylaws, seconded by Turner. A unanimous roll call vote approved this motion.
- B. President Appleby brought the proposed Public Participation plan to the floor for discussion. This is another thing that the village needs to have done in order to have the RRC designation. Peterson made a motion to adopt Resolution 06-2026: A Resolution to adopt a Public Participation Plan, seconded by E. Dudek. A roll voice vote was taken with unanimous consent. Motion carried.
- C. President Appleby brought a discussion of a new sergeant position for the police department to the floor for discussion. This new position would allow for another officer to take over while the Police Chief is out. Currently this is not something the village has. It will help with the transition period while we hire a new chief as well. Hackenberg will also get LEIN and CJIS certifications so that he may go into the office if something does happen. This will allow someone capable of maintaining the department when the chief is out of the office, as well as helping to maintain integrity for things that the chief does not have time to do. Turner made a motion to have police Chief Cordes move forward with implementation of the Lawton Sergeant description, seconded by Raber. A roll call vote was taken with all in favor and none opposed. Motion carried.

- D. President Appleby brought several new DPW policies written by Village Manager Hackenberg to the floor for discussion. These policies cover a variety of topics. Turner made a motion to adopt DPW Policies 001-013, seconded by G. Dudek. A rollcall vote took place with unanimous consent. Motion carried.

X. Board, Committee, and Staff Reports:

- A. Village Manager Hackenberg reported that the fencing company has begun to fence in the pickleball courts. Hackenberg also provided updates on current state grants. Spring Cleanup is Scheduled for May 11-16, and that update went out to the community in this month's newsletter. Hours for spring cleanup will be 8am-8pm M-F and 8am-12pm on Saturday. He is trying to coordinate hydrant flushing with Welch's. Hackenberg stated he has one quote for the parcel reconfiguration at White Oak. He also provided updates for where we are at on RRC designation, as well as updates with on the lead line replacement planning with Wightman.
- B. Village Manager Hackenberg reported for the DPW they have been out working on general maintenance that needs to be done for after snow melts. The Village also just had some new cemetery block markers come in that the DPW will be placing as time allows. In other reports, the downtown banners have been changed out from winter banners to spring banners. He stated the new street signs should be here soon to be replaced at cross streets. Hackenberg stated he has also started looking into the new way finder signs. Finally, Hackenberg reported for the water and sewer, 11,380,000 gallons of water were pumped this month, up from last year, and the wastewater plant treated 2.5 million gallons of sewage.
- C. Clerk Rathbun reported nothing new to report.
- D. Chief Cordes reported 58 cases in the past month, and hours are pretty much the same. The homicide case is still pending. Cordes reported that they were due to go to trial for the murder case on the 31st of March, however, the trial has been postponed again. He also reviewed an assault case that happened in the month of February. Cordes stated Redwatch productions approached him to do "The Shift" he rode with officer Edwards two different nights, and our episode will be earmarked for March 26 on the ET channel, as well as Youtube. Cordes stated for the month of February, the police have attended several school events. He also stated the Police department has moved forward with purchasing more body cameras, and the dashcams will be next on the list to be replaced. He stated the copier has been replaced and it is running well. The police department would also like to purchase a second taser for the department that has been rebuilt. Finally, Cordes stated February 10, he turned in his resignation. He still has a few goals here, and he proposed he would like to use his vacation time and stay on as an interim Chief to keep things running, and will stay on working two days per week. The hiring process for the new chief has been quite an ordeal. Cordes stated he wanted to take the time thank everyone for his time here over the past two and a half years. He just hopes he left the police in a better place than what he came.
- E. Peterson reported that the Planning Commission did not meet.

- F. G. Dudek reported that the DDA met, they formed some subcommittees, lots of discussion about the farmers market, and a new manager has been installed and is already hard at work. The DDA is doing the food trucks this year there will be two per month on Tuesdays. They will try to have entertainment at one, and games at the next each month. They also discussed Summerfest updates, and that is in good shape.
- G. E. Dudek reported that the fireboard met nothing new to report.
- H. Rathbun reported that the Library Board met, and they are reviewing several projects.

XI. Council Comments:

XII: Adjournment: Turner moved, with support from E. Dudek to adjourn the Village Council Meeting at 8:28p.m. Next regular council meeting to take place on March 24th, 2025.

Respectfully Submitted by,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brittany Rathbun". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name and title.

Brittany Rathbun
Village Clerk