Joint Township and Village Meeting
411 N. Paw Paw St., Lawrence, MI 49064
August 13, 2026

Call to Order: The Joint Township and Village Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance: Led by Village President John Gritter

Roll Call:

- **Present:** John Gritter, President; Alicia Lorenzo, Village Trustee; Annette Crandall, Village Trustee; Donna Spenner, Township Supervisor; Mike Carpp, Township Trustee; Kimberly Kiley, Township Treasurer; Amy Cordes, Village Manager

- **Absent:** David Deloach, Village Trustee; Chuck Rowlee, Village Trustee; Phil Glennie, Village Trustee; Tom Reynnells, Township Trustee; Tracie Rindfield, Township Clerk

- **Also Present:** Michael Pavelek, Resident; Missy Alfieri, Resident/LPS; Angela Marsh-Peek, LPS; Kristi Warner, Resident; Rich Glista, Cannabis Administrator; Kim Thompson, Finance Manager; Deb Salvano, Lawrence Public Schools Board of Education President

Additions to Agenda:

- None

Conflicts of Interest:

- None

Approval of Agenda Month:
Motion by Spenner, 2nd by Crandall
All Aye. Motions carried.

Approval of Prior Minutes Month Prior:
Motion by Crandall, 2nd by Lorenzo to approve prior meeting minutes as amended with "Paw Paw" correction.
All Aye. Motions carried.

Village Report

- **Personnel**: Chief Cordes is leaving his position at Lawrence. He will continue as interim Chief for a short time while we search for candidates. The crossing guard position is still available. There were four applicants, four interviews, and narrowed down to two candidates. Both declined. The position will remain posted, and the wage increased from $13.73 to $15.00.

- **Planning:** There is a public hearing regarding Short-Term Rentals scheduled for Monday, August 24th at 6:00 p.m. prior to the Planning Commission meeting. The Village currently operates under exclusionary zoning, which means if it did not specify as an allowed use, it is not allowed. This includes Short-Term Rentals, however, after reviewing the Zoning Ordinance, it makes sense to allow it in the Central Business District only, allowing property owners to potentially utilize space they couldn't before. Council also held a Special Council meeting on July 29th to address data center concerns. Council approved a year-long moratorium on data centers to allow for more research and information to be collected to protect our residents and the stability of the Village. Catherine Kaufman of Michigan Township Law will be attending the September 28th Planning Commission meeting to speak further about this matter. The Village has extended an invitation for the Township to attend as well.
- **Park Playground Project:** Fundraising is just shy of $200,000.00. Lorenzo attended the Van Buren County One Hundred Women Who Care meeting, and though the project didn't get the majority vote, we did receive $1,100.00 in donations. Joint Parks and Rec are moving forward with working with Patronicity, which is a crowdfunding website recommended through their engineering firm. If they could potentially raise $50,000.000 they have the opportunity to potentially be matched $50,000.00 by MEDC. Van Buren County recently approved their park grant application. Joint Parks and Rec will be applying once the application is released.
- **Village Fuel Purchasing:** Council approved moving forward with purchasing fuel from Van Buren Road Commission at the Special Council meeting. This is a short-term arrangement until the Village is ready to install their own.

Township Report

- **Solar Farm Update:** Spenner has been in talks with the management of the solar farm regarding the road conditions. They are in agreement that as soon as they are done with construction out there, they are going to help with reconstructing 50th Street. They've also worked with us on 60th Avenue today. 60th Avenue is a gravel road and becomes dangerous with all of the rain that has come. They partnered with the Road Commission and have it in good shape. The solar farm is participating in the community. They sponsored a day for Veterans and donated a sum of money at the youth auction at the Youth Fair this year. They are planning on participating in Ox Roast in some way and donated to the Park Playground Project.
- **Election Results:** Both the Senior Services millage and the Road millage passed at the August 4th elections. The Senior Services millage brings in roughly $88,000.00 a year and allows for activities such as the Senior Meals and trips. The Road millage brings in roughly $358,000.00 a year that helps supplement the local roads.
- **Zoning:** There will be a public hearing at the Township on Tuesday, August 25th at 5:00 p.m. It is not a mandatory public hearing, but the Township chose to do this because there are a lot of changes. The Planning Commission felt that it was important to hold this public hearing to get feedback from the community so that we can go back to the table and then they will hold another public hearing that will be the final public hearing before it goes to the Board for a vote.
- **Fuel Tank Update:** The fuel tanks at LTES have been installed. The original intent was for this to be a shared opportunity for the Village and the Township. Circumstances prevented an agreement being drafted for an agreement through the Township; however, Manger Cordes and Supervisor Spenner will meet to see if there is not still a way to work it out between them.

- **Taxes:** Taxes have been mailed and are starting to trickle in.
- **Youth Rec Program:** There is a joint partnership with the Township and Lawrence Public Schools to establish a Youth Rec Program. The goal is to have a board of seven, comprised primarily by parent volunteers. A Township Board Member will also sit on that board as the Township will be involved.

Grant Updates

- The Village has received four CDBG applications and starting the inspection process. The hope is once the community starts to see work done for those recipients that they will be enticed to apply as well. The biggest hurdle seems to be potential applicants think they won't qualify and don't apply at all. The Township is at 12 applications and continues to accept them. They have another grant in process that could help those that do not qualify for the first round of the CDBG grant. Van Buren County is also offering the CDBG grant but you cannot apply if you live in a municipality that is already participating.
- The Township also received a Renewable Energy Grant that was for a little over $200,000.00. Part of that grant money will be used for the roads out by the solar farm, another part towards the Tiger's Den, and part will go to upgrading homes and energy systems.

Joint Parks & Recreation

- Covered during Village report portion.

Looking Ahead/Moving Forward

- None

New Business:

- Annette recommended reaching out to Southwest Michigan First to help rebuild the perception of Lawrence that people outside of the community seem to hold. The help sign a different light on the opportunities that Lawrence has to offer, in particular the Business Park and the interchange area. Market One would be the contact for areas such as the Downtown District.

Old Business:

- **West Michigan Rail:** CR 681 and CR 687 intersections are done. They have equipment in and are replacing rail. The plan is to have the rail done down to Clark's by fall.

Next Meeting: Tuesday, November 17th at 6:00 p.m. at the Township Hall.

Public Comment:

- Deb Salvano: Lawrence Public Schools will be hosting an Open House on Tuesday, August 18th at 5:30 p.m. at the High School. There is the opportunity to meet teachers, as well as the beauty pageant queens from the area will be there, a barber, and a dental truck. The school will also be up for renewal of some mills in May during a special election.
- Michael Pavelek: Brought to the attention of Parks and Rec that the basketball nets at the park could use replacements.

- Kristi Warner: Asked for clarification on the CDBG grant opportunity. Manager Cordes explained that the process will start for the four applicants that are qualified. We are still accepting applications, and the grant funds need to be expended by December of 2027. If a homeowner qualifies and sells within five years they will pay back the prorated portion of the amount they received.

Committee Comment:

- None

Motion to Adjourn:

Motion by Crandall, 2nd by Lorenzo
All Aye, Motion Carried.
Meeting Adjourned at 7:28 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted:

Amy Cordes 11/19/2026
Amy Cordes, Village Manager

11-19-2026
John Gritter, Village President