



Village of Lawrence  
157 N. Paw Paw St.  
Lawrence, MI 49064  
PH: 269-674-8161 Fax: 269-674-3004  
[www.lawrencemi.org](http://www.lawrencemi.org)



**Village of Lawrence Regular Common Council Meeting**  
**157 N. Paw Paw St., Lawrence, MI 49064**  
**September 9, 2025**

**Call to Order:** The Regular Common Council Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Led by President Pro-Tem Crandall

**Roll Call:**

- **Present:** Phil Glennie, Trustee; David Deloach, Trustee; Annette Crandall, Trustee/President Pro-Tem; Chuck Rowlee, Trustee
- **Absent:**  
Alicia Lorenzo, Trustee; John Gritter, President (arrived at 7:35 pm)
- **Also Present:**  
Stacy Droski; Rich Glista, Cannabis Administrator; Alan Colgren; Ryan Williamson, LPS Superintendent; Deb Salvano, School Board President; Christopher Mihelich, Ordinance Officer; Jacob Diljak, Van Buren Conservation District

**Additions to Agenda:**

- None

**Conflicts of Interest:**

- None

**Approval of CDBG Public Hearing Minutes:**

Motion by Deloach, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Glennie  
All Aye. Motion Carried.

**Approval of Prior Council Minutes Month Prior as Amended for Misspelling:**

Motion by Glennie, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Deloach  
All Aye. Motion Carried.

**Finance Manager Report-Kim Thompson:**

- Thompson reported that while bank reconciliations are complete, corresponding adjusting entries were not made in the General Ledger for other audits. These corrections must be made for all bank accounts before files can be sent to the auditor. The soft close for the fiscal year has been completed.
- A new, separate fund named the 'Special Permit Fund' will be created to track all revenues and expenditures related to marijuana. This will provide clearer insight into the financial performance of marijuana-related activities. A motion was passed to create the fund and to transfer all historical financial activity since its inception into this new fund.



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Motion to Establish the Special Permit Fund and transfer historical financial activity since inception to that fund.

Motion by Glennie, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rowlee

Roll Call:

Aye: Rowlee, Glennie, Deloach, Crandall

Nay: None

Absent: Gritter, Lorenzo

All Aye. Motion Carried.

Motion to Amend the Budget for General Fund Village Park Cost Center +\$18,500 (Repair Kid's Palance Playground), Major Streets Contract Services Cost Center +\$52,000 (Additional costs for the 2024 Paw Paw St. Project), and Municipal Streets Traffic Services Cost Center +\$3,000 (Additional costs for repairs)

Motion by Deloach, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rowlee

Roll Call:

Aye: Crandall, Deloach, Glennie, Rowlee

Nay: None

Absent: Gritter, Lorenzo

All Aye. Motion carried.

- A reconciliation found that 2024 licenses were not billed for several businesses. This includes 305 Farms (6 licenses, \$30,000), Myndset (2 licenses, \$10,000), and True Leaf (3 licenses, \$15,000). There is a discrepancy in the number of licenses for Myndset between internal and state records.

Motion to Show Consensus to bill for 2024 Special Permit Invoices

Motion by Deloach, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rowlee

All Aye. Motion Carried.

- Approximately \$285,000 from delinquent taxes and building permits has been sitting in the Trust and Agency fund since 2020 without being dispersed to the correct funds (operating, streets, police, building, water, and sewer). The funds have been identified to the penny and will be dispersed this month. New procedures have been documented to prevent this from happening in the future.
- As of the end of August, 17% of property taxes have been paid. The bulk of payments, particularly from mortgage companies, is expected in September. The finance manager is working to streamline the payment process with mortgage companies to have them send a single check and file.
- Thompson suggested sorting financial reports by GL number to better see the impact on each fund. It was noted that the beginning balance for the major street fund didn't carry over from the previous month, but the correct ending balance for July is listed.



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- The council discussed the allocation of \$49,110 from the sale of a building to Crystal Flash in March 2022. The funds are currently in the Trusted Agency account. The options were to create a new DPW building fund or use the existing acquisitions fund.

Motion to approve Finance Manager's Report  
Motion by Glennie, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rowlee  
All Aye. Motion Carried.

**Approval of Bills & Review of Bank Balances Month Prior:**

Motion by Deloach, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rowlee  
All Aye. Motion Carried.

**Presentations & Guests:**

**Van Buren County Commissioner: Mike Chappell**

- Not Present

**Lawrence Township: Donna Spenner**

- No Present

**Lawrence Township Emergency Services: Steve Richardson**

- Not Present; Report included in Council Packet

**Cannabis Administrator: Rich Glista**

- In the process of setting up meetings to introduce himself to the facilities.
- Will work on a process to pro-rate so that all licenses are invoiced for their renewals on the same day.
- Glista stated we can add his contact information to the Village Website.

**Van Buren Conservation District: Jacob Dilijak**

- Saturday, October 18<sup>th</sup> from 9 am-2 pm is the Recycling Round-Up at the Van Buren ISD Conference Center.
- The next Recycling Education meeting will be October 1<sup>st</sup> from 5-7:30 pm at 3 Blondes Brewing in South Haven.
- Water Monitoring Specimen Collection Event is October 5<sup>th</sup> at 1 pm at the Kayak launch park.

**Ordinance Officer: Christopher Mihelich**

- Proposed working with the County Treasurer to require Ordinance compliance before granting tax extensions to property owners who are habitually delinquent and fail to maintain their properties. He cited examples like properties owned by out of state shell companies and the old flower shop/gas station.





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### **Reports:**

#### **President's Report:**

- No Report

#### **Clerk's Report:**

- No Report

#### **Village Manager:**

- The council discussed amending the MERS (Municipal Employees' Retirement System) defined contribution agreement. The matching contribution option was added retroactively, and the official agreement needed to be updated to reflect the correct effective date.

Motion to amend the MERS DC Plan retroactively to date of adoption.

Motion by Deloach, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rowlee

Roll Call:

Aye: Glennie, Rowlee, Crandall, Deloach

Nay: None

Absent: Lorenzo, Gritter

All Aye. Motion Carried.

- Approval to move forward with upgrading Ricoh equipment was given last month up to the amount of \$139.72/month for a 60-month lease option. proposed purchasing new Ricoh office equipment outright for \$6,695.60 instead of leasing. This option is cheaper over the 60-month term, saving about \$2,300, and provides a faster machine with a hole-punch feature.

Motion to approve the Cash Purchase option for the Ricoh equipment.

Motion by Deloach, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Crandall.

Roll Call:

Aye: Rowlee, Crandall, Glennie, Deloach

Nay: None

Absent: Gritter, Lorenzo

All Aye. Motion Carried.

- Contacted several companies regarding our invasive species phragmites at Crandall Parkway. Two responses were received, Agrascope (Sam Tucker) and Native Landscapes (Randy Counterman).
- Counterman offered the following options:



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- Option 1: I can do a more detailed assessment whereas I document patch locations/size/density and write up a report (see attached example). I can do this for \$1,000.00. This report should provide enough information to allow you to bid out the treatment.
- Option 2: I skip the report and just do a one-time herbicide treatment for \$2,600.00. I have had very good success treating Phragmites and would be confident in saying that I could achieve between 75-90% kill, but you most likely would require a follow-up treatment or 2 to get to 100% kill. In this instance, I would provide additional estimates for additional treatments.
- Option 3: I do both the aforementioned report and also do the one-time treatment for a total of \$3,400.00 (In the instance that you go with this option, I would do the report for \$800.00). I still have time in my schedule to get this done this year.
- Option 4: I do the report and as many treatments as necessary to achieve 100% kill of all patches noted in the report. Something like this would be more in the neighborhood of \$5,500.00. I would supply yearly update reports until the problem is eliminated. I have no way to keep out new infestations so we'd have to discuss this option in more detail.
- Tucker stated \$150 to drive over and investigate the site to see exactly what the situation is and quote the job. He would be able to get to it within 14 days if the bid was accepted.
- After reviewing options it was determined that Option 4 from Counterman was the best option to pursue. Kim Thompson will approach DDA at the next meeting about covering the cost of the treatment as Crandall Parkway falls in the DDA jurisdiction.

Motion to accept Option 4 bid from Native Landscapes.

Motion by Deloach, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Rowlee

Roll Call:

Aye: Crandall, Glennie, Deloach, Rowlee

Nay: None

Absent: Lorenzo, Gritter

All Aye. Motion Carried.

**Police Department:**

- We wrote 20 LPD incident reports during the period 1 Aug to 31 Aug 2025 which ranged from a Welfare Check, Ordinance Violation, EMS/Fire incident(s), Theft from Building, Intimidation/Stalking, Suspicious Occurrence, Trouble w/ Subject, Assist other Dept, and General Assistance.
  - Ran radar and watched for violations all over town to bring speeding down and make streets safer.
  - Daily vehicle patrol in the business park to keep an on eye on businesses. Stopping in to check w/employees as well.
  - Checking on Marijuana facilities daily and other businesses on Crandall Parkway to ensure all is well.
  - Contact with citizens/kids as opportunities present themselves in the park and around town.





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Continue to keep an eye out for blight issues and parking Violations. Also, educate citizens on the parking ordinances via verbal warnings to correct violations.

- Ofc Vande Voren and Chief Bianco both attended/worked the Ox Roast Festival in Lawrence from 29 Aug through 1 Sep 2025. No significant issues.
- Chief Bianco led the Labor Day Parade in town on 1 Sep 2025 with assistance from the Lawrence Twp Fire Department. During the month of August LPD issued 22 - written traffic citations, took 0 UD10 traffic crash report(s) and made approximately 32 traffic stops for traffic offenses of which 10 resulted in verbal warnings to citizens.
- During the month of Aug 2025 LPD responded to 14 calls for service that originated from the Van Buren County 911 dispatch Center. 10 police calls, 3 medical and 1 fire/rescue call(s). MSP was dispatched to 7 calls (6 -primary & 1 -as back-up to Lawrence PD or VBCS) and the VBCS was dispatched to 9 calls (9-primary and 0-as back-up to Lawrence PD or MSP). Note: all calls that VBCS & MSP were primary are when LPD did not have an officer on duty(nights/weekends).
  - Continue to search for potential part-time officer candidates. Gave application to one candidate 3/26/25
  - Continue to mentor Ofc Vande Voren on various training points...he is making progress.
  - Both Ofc Vande Voren & I continue to work on our Yearly mandatory MCOLES training modules.
  - Radio Encryption update as of 9 Sep 25 from Tim McGee – replaced/upgraded radios ...will have a solution by Jan 2026 with a deadline of 1 Oct 2026 to go live.
  - Chief Bianco continues to respond to medical calls both in the Village and Township when on duty to assist Township with the QR team & Fire support/manning.
  - Attended medical training on Wednesday, 27 Aug 2025 at the Lawrence FD while I was off duty.
  - Ofc Vande Voren re-took National MFR on 12 Aug 2025 and did not pass it for a third time.
  - Opioid Settlement funding – Paw Paw PD and Decatur PD will be submitting request on behalf of most of the departments for AEDs.
  - The citizens police committee meeting that was scheduled for 26 Aug 2025 @ 6:45p was not well attended. Recommend that they only be scheduled as needed.
  - A posting for the police Chiefs position here in Lawrence was sent in on 4 Sep 2025 and posted on the MCOLES Website as of 8 Sep 2025.
- Will be billing the overtime from Ox Roast to the DDA for approximately \$800.
- Vehicle #2 went in for recall work. During that work the mechanic identified the shocks were leaking. Ford initially stated they would not cover the cost to repair as the vehicle was out of the warranty timeframe. After filing a complaint with Ford, they agreed to cover \$300 of the \$647 shock repair cost, leaving the department to pay \$347
- The department needs to consider its staffing options and budget, as Officer Vande Voren is being considered for a position at the Sheriff's Department. Crandall suggested using money from the Special Permit Fund to help shore up the Police Department. This would provide options for filling full-time and part-time positions.



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#### **Community Development:**

- Halloween: Both Trunk or Treat in the Park and Trick or Treat in the Village will be Friday, October 31<sup>st</sup> from 5-7:30 PM. There had been talk of a hayride during this time but after more discussion it was determined to be too much of a liability.
- Christmas in the Village will be December 6, 2025 to coincide with the Lighted Truck Parade. Plans for Santa at the Library, parade, lighting the Christmas tree in the park and hot chocolate and cookies at the Legion will be on the schedule.
- Next meeting October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 6 PM.

#### **DDA:**

- Two quotes were received to update the old pavilion with steel to replicate the new pavilion. Motion by Thompson supported by Gritter to approve the quote submitted by Bontrager Construction LLC to install green steel roof, white siding, white ceiling and white beam wrap for a cost of \$18,750. Discussion, Petersen would like to leave the ceiling open. Glennie mentioned the acoustics may be an issue with the metal ceiling. Members felt the ceiling update was needed. Members present voted yes with Petersen voting no. (Account# 956.001)
- The village electrician, Alpha Pro Electric, provided a quote to rewire, install new ceiling lights, reinstall cameras, remove all old wiring and conduit for \$6,450. Motion by Glinnie supported by Gritter to authorize Alpha Pro Electric to rewire and install new lights, outlets and camera in the old pavilion for \$6,450. Members voted yes with Petersen voting no. Carried. (Account# 930.000)
- The flag pole in the park was destroyed, it is estimated the cost of replacing the 40' pole is \$4,000. The person who hit the pole has insurance that will be billed. Motion by Glinnie supported by Gritter to authorize the expenditure of up to \$4,000 for a new flag pole for the park by the DPW Supervisor. Carried.
- Next meeting Wednesday, September 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM.

#### **Joint Parks & Recreation:**

- No report but did receive their preliminary score report for their DNR grant and scored 340 of 380 possible points.

#### **LDFA:**

- No Report

#### **Personnel:**

- No Report
- Next meeting is Thursday, September 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 AM.

#### **Planning Commission:**

- Site Plan Review
  - Reviewed Zoning Administrator Review 1.4 – driveway will be on CR 365N
  - Site Plan:





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Building will be prefabricated, with siding applied to make it look like the Tru-Leaf building exterior

- 3.4 Fence will be chain link without privacy mesh
- Gate to be 12' for Fire Dept access.
- Motion by Closson to approve the site plan with the above noted modifications/clarifications and completion of Outstanding and Conditional Items. Second by Carpp. Motion carried. Crandall Abstained from vote.
- Next meeting September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 6 PM.

#### **Public Services/DPW:**

- The property owners at 232 Blackman, Abrams, contacted Roto-Rooter to determine the cause of an issue they were having. A boring machine damaged a sewer lateral and was causing the issues. Abrams have requested to have the amount of their Roto-Rooter bill issued as a utility bill credit vs reimbursement.

Motion to credit the Abrams utility bill in lieu of reimbursement.

Motion by Deloach, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Glennie.

Roll Call:

Aye: Glennie, Rowlee, Deloach, Crandall

Nay: None

Absent: Lorenzo, Gritter

All Aye. Motion Carried.

- Brian and Dave applied hot mix to North Paw Paw Street, and the results were good. However, the street still requires more work.
- Working through the attorney on the contract with Dixon for the water tower inspection. Contract went back as it was initially determined to be very one sided by the Village attorney. No update on where that stands at this time.
- DPW is now looking for two employees. Tommy has given notice that he will be done roughly the end of October-beginning of November. Further discussion about these positions will be addressed at the Personnel meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup>.
- The No Parking signs are up on the south side of W. St. Joseph Street near the school.
- DPW would like to extend their appreciation and thanks to President Gritter and LTES for their assistance during Ox Roast to get the roads downtown washed. Do need to address better road closures next year to prevent traffic from slipping onto the roads. Had an incident off Elizabeth where a resident made it to the roadway through the closure.
- The flag pole replacement for the park was ordered, however, it was decided to go with a 30' vs a 40' due to concerns about the height of the surrounding trees.
- Three problematic trees were removed. Quotes are being sought for the remaining tree work.

#### **Citizen Police Committee:**





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- Next meeting will be based upon request.

**ZBA:**

- No Meeting Held.

**New Business:**

- None

**Old Business:**

- None

**Public Comment:**

- Ryan Williamson-LPS Superintendent:
- School Updates:
  - Congratulations on the community participation during Ox Roast this year. Attendance and involvement were up from prior years. It was good to see the 3 v 3 basketball tournament get established with 5 teams, the Alumni Dinner where band teacher Mrs. Richmond was honored, and head of maintenance Doornhaag won an award during the car show.
  - Walks through the building are going well. Seeing great teacher and student engagement. Enrollment shows a current gain of 19 students, marking a positive trend after 11 years of flat numbers. The official count day is October 1st. Mr. Thumm, new K-12 principal, is meeting expectations with his energy and commitment. The Board will continue to re-evaluate and follow-up with staff.
- Alan Colgren:
  - Inquired as to the status of the Safe Routes to School plan. Informed Mr. Colgren that there had been a delay some time back regarding authorizing work across the railroad. Another set back was the resignation of our current SRTS contact and who will be covering in the interim until another point of contact is assigned. Brian and Amy will be attending the Safe Routes to School training in Kalamazoo on the 16<sup>th</sup> and hope to come back with more information and further understanding of the program and implementing it.
  - Inquired as to the status of the desired secondary crosswalk from the maintenance building parking lot to the elementary building. We educated Mr. Colgren that there are multiple stages and steps to the process including both a traffic and engineering study. The costs that have been estimated to the Village range from \$10,000-\$30,000. We also stated that even if both are conducted, they may not yield the results desired by the school and parents. We reiterated that the Village's position is that the safest manner for students to enter their respective buildings is from the same side of the road, eliminating the need to cross St. Joseph/Red Arrow. Also reminded him that Red Arrow is the emergency route for 1-94 in the event of a shut-down. The Village would also



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need to pass an ordinance regarding crossing at a crosswalk that is not at an intersection as this crosswalk would be considered mid-block.

- A discussion around parking behind the building for pick-up and drop-off opened discussion as to the logistics of why the school feels that would not work. Alan estimated it would increase the process from 7 minutes to over an hour. He also expressed security concerns about parents lining up near classrooms for over an hour before school ends. There was also a discussion about the back parking lot potentially overflowing with teachers and parents if south-side parking is eliminated.
  - Crandall suggested creating a new parking lot on the west end, possibly by acquiring or trading land with A&B Packaging. However, Alan pointed out the high cost, estimating \$400,000 for a paved lot, which the school does not have and won't for several years. Even a land trade would involve the cost of replacing the current maintenance building.
- Stacy Droski:
    - She reiterated the same concerns about not having a secondary crosswalk. She inquired as to why the police department couldn't cross students at the desired designated crossing area. We explained that that presents multiple problems, including the hinderance of traffic as there would now be two points to cross at within a short distance with traffic coming from either direction. Chief Bianco also stated that since we are a part-time department, there will be instances where they are not available in the morning, and it is not ideal to get people used to having someone there to cover crossing at that junction. Assigning an officer to crossing duty would prevent them from addressing other issues like speeding and could create traffic congestion

**Council Comment:**

- None

**Motion to Adjourn:**

Motion by Deloach, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Glennie  
All Aye, Motion Carried.  
Meeting Adjourned at 8:07 PM

**Respectfully Submitted:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Amy Cordes, Village Manager

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
John Gritter, Village President