



Village of Lawrence
157 N. Paw Paw St.
Lawrence, MI 49064
PH: 269-674-8161 Fax: 269-674-3004
www.lawrencemi.org



Village of Lawrence Regular Common Council Meeting
157 N. Paw Paw St., Lawrence, MI 49064
August 12, 2025

Call to Order: The Regular Common Council Meeting was called to order at 6:25 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance: Led by President Gritter

Roll Call:

- **Present:** John Gritter, President; Alicia Lorenzo, Trustee; Phil Glennie, Trustee; David Deloach, Trustee; Annette Crandall, Trustee; Chuck Rowlee, Trustee
- **Absent:** None
- **Also Present:** Brian Johnson, Amy Cordes, Chief Bianco, Donna Spenner, Mike Chappell, Rich Glista, Tony Goodrich, Zach Morris

Additions to Agenda:

- Move part of DPW Report to Guests portion to address Ox Roast request
- Add Finance Manager Report after Approval of Prior Council Minutes

Conflicts of Interest:

- None

Approval of Agenda Month:

Motion by Crandall, 2nd by Deloach
All Aye. Motions Carried.

Approval of Prior Council Minutes Month Prior:

Motion by Crandall, 2nd by Glennie
All Aye. Motions Carried.

Finance Manager Report-Kim Thompson

- **Status of Bank Reconciliations:** The 2022/23 Bank Reconciliations are (finally) almost complete. Additional duties as Interim Treasurer delayed completion. I met with Joe Mangan (Lauterbach & Amen) and reviewed the status of his reconciliations. There are only 6 bank reconciliations needed before the FYE2023 files can be sent to Ben Walker (SeberTans).
- **Audits:** Kim met with BS&A regarding doing a 'soft close' of the 2024/25 Fiscal Year in the live database to prevent transactions being 'stuck' at 8/31/25 and provided a projected plan on how best to prevent the system being 'stuck' at 8/31/25 and having a repeat of the issues we are still dealing with as a result of the system being set to 8/31/22 for so long. Jeremy Johnson, BS&A lead financial management specialist, reviewed the plan and agreed it will work. Joe Mangan



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has other BS&A clients who also have not been able to close their prior year ends in a timely manner and is VERY interested in my plan and asked if I could share it with him. I see no issues, since there is nothing proprietary stated in the plan.

- **Budget:** The Trend Analysis Budget has been prepared and will be updated as budget amendments occur and/or audited actual balance become available. This third report included budget amendments made at the July 8, 2025 Village Council meeting. A review of the current Year's Budget Performance as compared to the approved budget shows that there are no additional amendments needed at this time.
- **Police Fund Analysis:** The Police checking account has always been very low. A review of the Police Fund since its inception showed that prior allocations from the General Fund were not completed. \$100,000 per year was budgeted from the General Fund to the Police Fund. In 2022/23, only \$25,000 was transferred to the Police Fund for operations. In 2023/24, only \$75,000 was transferred. Leaving a \$100,000 shortfall. This shortfall is the primary reason the Police Fund was still showing Due To General Fund. Once the analysis was completed, and all transfers made, the Police Fund is solvent and the Due To/From with the General Fund has been cleared.
- **Treasurer Duties:** Tax payments are coming in. As of July 31, 2025, 7% of tax payments have been received. Procedures have been documented for the associated tasks. In the past, regular updates were not being sent to the Van Buren County Treasurer. This led to added phone calls to both the County Treasurer as well as our office, since people are not able to confirm that their tax payment has been received. Beginning Friday, 8/8/25, a weekly export and settlement report will be sent to the VBC Treasurer so they can update the County system (and website) to reflect tax payments received throughout the tax season.

Approval of Bills & Review of Bank Balances Month Prior:

Motion by Crandall, 2nd by Deloach
All Aye. Motions Carried.

Presentations & Guests:

Van Buren County Commissioner: Mike Chappell

- **2025 State of the Court Report:** During the July 8, 2025, meeting, Chief Judge Kathleen Brickley presented the 2025 State of the Court Report.
- **Proclamation: Sheriff Abbot-Sheriff of the Year:** The Board presented a proclamation to Sheriff Daniel Abbott for being selected as the 2025 Michigan Sheriffs Association Terrence L. Jungle Sheriff of the Year during the July 22, 2025, meeting.
- **2024 Road Commission Annual Report:** The Board accepted the Road Commission 2024 Annual Report following a presentation by Director Bret Witkowski during the July 22, 2025, meeting.
- **Intergovernmental Agreement-St. Joseph County Digital Information Department:** The Board approved an Intergovernmental Agreement with St. Joseph County for shared Digital



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Information Department Services, including the development of a Digital Communications Coordinator position and website enhancements, during the July 22, 2025, meeting.

- **Address Assignment Protocol-DID:** The Board adopted the updated 2025 VanBuren County Addressing Manual, including implementation of a Rural ID system, new fee schedule, and launch of a public-facing online application portal within the Digital Information Department during the July 22, 2025, meeting.
- **Document Retrieval Fee-ROD:** The Board approved the establishment of a \$35 retrieval fee for Register of Deeds document searches and electronic deliveries from older film records during the July 22, 2025, meeting.

Lawrence Township: Donna Spenner

- 100th Celebration of LTES was well attended
- Finished their audit today
- Matt is working on the MSHDA Grant, Public Hearing is scheduled for 8/21 at 5:45 PM prior to the Township Board meeting. He is also working on a Renewable Ready Grant that will help with several items. He has a goal and a plan written out for the \$350,000 grant to present to the Board.
- Ended their contract with Safebuilt, last day taking permits was August 1st. Michigan Code Inspection began taking over on August 2nd with Mihelich & Associates covering Zoning.
- Joint Township/Village meeting is August 18th at 6 pm at the Township Hall.

Lawrence Township Emergency Services: Steve Richardson

- Not Present; Report included
-

<i>Call Type</i>	<i>Arlington Township</i>	<i>Lawrence Township</i>	<i>Village of Lawrence</i>	<i>Mutual Aid</i>
Structure				
Vehicle		1		
Grass / Brush				
Illegal Burn				
Smoke / CO Alarm		2	1	
Utility Hazard		1		
MVA – PI / PD		3		
Good Intent Call		1		
Disregarded				
TOTAL	0	8	1	0

- Fire Calls – July: 09
- Total Fire Calls YTD 2025: 78



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- **EMS Calls**

-
-

<i>All EMS Call Types</i>	<i>Arlington Township</i>	<i>Lawrence Township</i>	<i>Village of Lawrence</i>	<i>Cancelled Calls</i>
TOTAL	14	12	10	1

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- ☐ EMS Calls – July: **36**
- ☐ EMS Calls YTD 2025: **265**

- **Total Calls for LTES YTD: 343**

Fire Apparatus Mileage/Hours

<u>Unit #</u>	<u>Mileage</u>	<u>Hours</u>
1710	12,875.1	--
1711	75,440	--
1721	9,172.6	604.2
1726	24,820.8	2,172.7
1738	16,705.2	1,287.8
1766	11,828	--
1769	2,219	--
1780	10,659	--
1781	929	--

- Maintenance conducted:
 - Regularly scheduled maintenance.
 - 1721 – new brakes.

Training

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- Training burn of acquired structure with mutual aid departments.
- One member taking Advanced Pump Operations course.
- Two members attending state certified Fire Officer I course.

Fire Chief Report

- Chief participated in Palisades/Holtec emergency drill / evaluation at Van Buren County Emergency Operations Center.
 - Final public hearing is scheduled to consider reopening of the nuclear plant.
- Chief participated in Van Buren County 911 Advisory Committee meeting.
 - State 911 Certification audit in progress for Van Buren County.
 - 911 Subcommittee to conduct site visit in September.
- Assistant Chief Fein meeting with Ox Roast Committee to coordinate LTES involvement with the Ox Roast activities.
- Chief met with LTES Auxiliary.
 - Discussion on moving forward with the organization and assistance with the Centennial Open House and Ox Roast weekend events.
- Quotes provided for repair of cracks, sealant application, and restriping of parking lot and driveway around the emergency services building.
- Community events:
 - Lawrence Community Care Health Fair
 - LTES Centennial Open House celebration
- LTES members have a limited supply of smoke alarms and are out of carbon monoxide alarms for area residents. We have requested more from the State and are on a waiting list to receive more.
-

Lawrence Ox Roast- Tony Goodrich:

- Tony Goodrich requested an extension of road closure for the Lawrence Ox Roast event from Friday, August 29th at 3 PM to Monday, September 1st at 3 PM, to accommodate additional activities. Discussion on necessary permissions and alternate plans if closure is not approved.



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- Village Departments will ask if the EAP would have any conflicts with this prior to full approval.
Motion to approve extension of road closure for Ox Roast
Motion by Deloach, 2nd by Rowlee.
All Aye. Motions carried.

Reports:

President's Report:

- Acknowledged a Facebook post criticizing emergency equipment placement on James Street, acknowledged the exhausting nature of such work, and appreciation for Brian and Tommy's efforts.

Clerk's Report:

- No Report

Village Manager:

- **Water Tower Loan Payment Status:** Review of the water tower loan, clarification on whether the loan to the county or for the paint job has been paid off, and discussion about payment responsibilities and figures.
- Approval of MSHDA Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Letter of Intent for Village of Lawrence Home Rehab Project.
- Resolution to approve the MSHDA Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Request for the Village of Lawrence Home Rehab Project
Motion by Lorenzo, 2nd by Crandall
Roll-Call:
Aye: Gritter, Deloach, Glennie, Rowlee, Lorenzo, Crandall
Nay: None
Absent: None
- Resolution for Authorization of Village Authorized Signers: Resolution to authorize specific individuals as signers on the village bank account, revoking previous signers, and clarification on the requirement for two signatures.
Motion to approve Resolution for Village of Lawrence Authorized Signers
Motion by Lorenzo, 2nd by Deloach
Roll-call:
Aye: Rowlee, Crandall, Deloach, Lorenzo, Glennie, Gritter
Nay: None
Absent: None
- Authorized Contacts for Village Accounts: Resolution to designate primary and secondary authorized contacts for financial and non-financial business accounts, specifying roles for the village manager and finance manager.
Motion to approve Resolution for Village of Lawrence Authorized Contacts



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Motion by Crandall, 2nd by Deloach

Roll-call:

Aye: Gritter, Crandall, Lorenzo, Glennie, Rowlee, Deloach

Nay: None

Absent: None

- Resolution to appoint the Village Manager as the Street Administrator for MDOT purposes

Motion to approve the resolution to appoint the Village Manager as Street Administrator

Motion by Lorenzo, 2nd by Deloach

Roll-call:

Aye: Lorenzo, Glennie, Gritter, Deloach, Crandall, Rowlee

Nay: None

Absent: None

- BS&A requires Administrative Change Request forms to be signed by all Council members in order to complete authorization changes.

Motion to approve Administrative Change Request to allow Village Manager Amy Cordes to have Administrative Access in BS&A.

Motion by Lorenzo, 2nd by Deloach

Roll-call:

Aye: Lorenzo, Glennie, Gritter, Deloach, Crandall, Rowlee

Absent: None

- RICOH Printer Lease Proposal: Discussion of the RICO printer lease proposal, comparing current and new models, costs, and features. The current model prints 45 pages per minute at \$139/month, while the proposed model prints 30 pages per minute at \$121/month. Service calls and toner are included in the lease. RICOH proposal good through August 29, 2025. Supervisor Spenner said they recently went through the same process and switched to Applied Innovation, which provided a cost savings. Manager Cordes will reach out to see if they want to put together a proposal for the Village.

Motion to approve a contract with vendor for up to the 30-page printer model

Motion by Deloach, 2nd by Lorenzo

Roll-call:

Aye: Glennie, Gritter, Rowlee, Crandall, Deloach, Lorenzo

Nay: None

Absent: None

- Blight and Ordinance Update: Update on blighted property ordinance enforcement led by Chris Mihelich. Currently, 14 cases are logged, with 2 resolved. Specific properties discussed include 120 Blackman (porch issue), 139 Main (dangerous building), and 115 East St. Joe (chimney complaint). Reporting system allows residents to submit complaints and photos via the village website. Discussion of specific properties: 120 Blackman (porch issue), 125 and 127 (duplex, in process of being sold and cleaned by new owners), and a blue apartment near the barbershop with parking concerns. Residents are encouraged to report blight and provide addresses for investigation.



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Police Department:

- Key Activities:
 - Chief recovered a stolen motorcycle, Officer Vande Voren recovered a stolen car from Calhoun County, ran radar and watched for violations all over town, assisted with EMS/Fire calls, Officer Vande Voren attended the re-grand opening of Dollar General in July.
 - LPD issued 28 written traffic citations and made approximately 40 traffic stops for traffic offenses of which 12 resulted in verbal warnings to citizens; Responded to 19 calls for service that originated from the Van Buren County 911 dispatch center (14 police calls, 4 medical, and 1 fire/rescue call). MSP was dispatched to 4 calls (3 primary and 1 as back up to Lawrence PD or VBCS). Note: all calls that VBCS and MSP were primary are when LPD did not have an officer on duty (nights/weekends).
 - Both Chief and Officer Vande Voren continue to work on their yearly mandatory MCOLES training modules
 - Opioid Settlement Funding-Paw Paw PD and Decatur PD will be submitting request on behalf of most of the departments for AEDs.
 - Next Citizen's Police Committee meeting is scheduled for August 26, 2025 at 6:45 PM
 - Chief Bianco announced his retirement effective October 1, 2025. The Village will begin the process of filling his position.
Motion to accept Chief Bianco's resignation
Motion by Glennie, 2nd by Crandall.
All Aye. Motions carried.

Community Development:

- No Meeting, Next meeting scheduled for September 4, 2025 at 6 PM.

DDA:

- Next meeting Wednesday, August 27, 2025 at 5:30 PM.

Joint Parks & Recreation:

- Review Nathan Carpps's eagle scout project. He would like to build and replace the benches and picnic table at the North River Park.
 - Motion made by Lorenzo to accept and approve Nate's eagle scout project
 - Motioned by Reynells. Second by Gribler. Motion carried
- Review grant progress and any updates:
 - Dale and Alicia met with Kelly, from the DNR.
 - Deed issue seems to be okay, haven't found the exact deed but have researched and found evidence of the Village Park being designated as only recreational use forever.



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- Budget:
 - Mike C. reported that the township approved a resolution that a parks and recreation committee representative can submit invoices from the committee to the township clerk. Township paid for the ORBIS funds for the grant.
- Tiger Den:
 - Township decided to now just make an annual payment to the LPS for the maintenance on the Tiger Den.

LDFA:

- No Report; Next Meeting August 24, 2025 at 6:30 PM.

Personnel:

- No Report

Planning Commission:

- Approval of May 19th, 2025 meeting minutes (Motion Gritter \ 2nd Closson) Approved Motion Carries Unanimously
 - Municode question related to Marijuana ordinance numbers and codification
 - Municode didn't know where the Marijuana ordinance should fit into our numbering system.
- Planning Commission has never been responsible for numbering the ordinances it writes and submits.
 - Amy will check with Rich Glista to see how to handle it; Rich stated it should have its own Chapter
- Brush Creek apartments sign and issues related to R3 and signs.
 - New sign is same footprint.
 - Amy approved it as the Zoning Administrator
- Fix for Zoning to allow signs is to duplicate the PUD Residential and commercial requirements.
- 139 Main Street is actually zoned R-2
 - Amy updated PC about the potential ownership and uses of that property
- 301 Main Street
 - There are permit applications for power and gas
- Next meetings – August 25th 6:00 PM



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Public Services/DPW:

Ongoing projects

- The sewer main on the East side of DPW building is cleaned once a month and checked weekly.
- Working with Andrew on several things. Still on hold till the audit is completed but working on Studies and updating EGLE documents.
- Equipment Planning. Salt truck, Backhoe, Dump truck, Generator and Kubota tractor. On hold till Kim is ready with audits and new budgets.

July

- Thomsen Construction started the repair of the playground. This is now complete.
- Working with attorney and Dixon on the quote/contract for the Water Tower. Attorneys would like to see changes made to the contract. Not sure how long this will take or how Dixon will reply.
- I have not been able to get in touch with Stotler's Tree Service who we hired last year to remove trees. The job is still not finished. I am working on getting another quote to finish the job. I would like PSC/Council to determine how to proceed with what Stotler's has already done and what needs to be completed still. I also have a few more that need to be added to the list. The old trees are starting to die out faster and faster.
- DPW is still looking for another person.
- James Street lift station went down again as I'm sure you seen. Air relieve pipe broke and flooded the station with roughly 4 inches of water. We ran the station off our bypass pump until we fixed the problems. The 6-inch hose blew apart (all over me) and we had the 4-inch bypass connection blow apart. We will need to buy more hose. The company thinks we have too much pressure when the pump is running full bore in auto. The bypass connection bolts are rated for 150 PSI and they completely blew apart and the pipe came out. We might have to start running this in manual so we do not spray sewer all over the road and the storm drains.
- I have summited all requirements from our Deficiency Violation Notice. The last part of the notice is the Water Tower inspections later this year and the Water Reliability Study/General Plan is due August 26th. Andrew and I are finishing that up now.
- 232 Sewer break was completed by Kalamazoo Excavating. This did have to be dewatered. We found that the fiber did bore right through the sewer line. Due to the dirt in the main I had the vac truck come in and clean the main, so we do not have any problems at the lift station. The resident informed me he would like to submit the bill he paid to have his line inspected. I told him to turn it all in, and I will bring it to council. Currently 8/6/25 he has not brought us anything. Kim will talk about budget amendments for this project. \$21,161.00
- We did not receive the Category B Funding Grant for local streets. This was how we would reconstruct and pave North Exchange St at the park. We will try again next year. This is something that must be done for the water to flow correctly and our new drains do not plug up with gravel. Right now, I have bags in them to hold back as much gravel as possible.

Beginning of August:



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- Ox Roast would also like to use the power on our light poles for vendors that will be set up on Elizabeth. I have to check the poles, but this might mean the lights and all with must be on the whole time they are using power.
 - It was determined this shouldn't be an issue for the type of usage that is anticipated.
- Would like to Thank Bob Brandel for donating a metal grate for a drain that needed a larger cover than what we have.
- I would like to change DPWs holiday weekend around. As it is right now, we are off that Friday and Monday. I would like to change that to Monday and Tuesday so that we are here for that Friday. Sometimes that extra time before Ox Roast is needed.
 - Request approved to allow for DPW to use Monday 9/1 and Tuesday 9/2 as their Labor Day holiday days off; they will still be available for emergencies.

Looking ahead:

- We will be working on filling the asphalt in the back parking lot more. Some have already been done.
- August 23rd will be the Benefit Poker Run for Side by Sides. This has been a very successful event in past years and continues to grow.

Citizen Police Committee:

- Next meeting is Tuesday, August 26, 2025 at 6:45 PM.

ZBA:

- No Meeting Held.

New Business:

- Items here

Old Business:

- None

Public Comment:

- None

Council Comment:

- None

Motion to Adjourn:

Motion by Deloach, 2nd by Crandall
All Aye, Motion Carried.
Meeting Adjourned at 8:27 p.m.



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Respectfully Submitted:



Amy Cordes, Village Manager



John Gritter, Village President