

# JOINT WATER/SEWER BOARD OF THE CITY OF BUCHANAN AND BUCHANAN TOWNSHIP

WEDNESDAY, MAY 06, 2026 – 7:00 AM

CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI

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## MINUTES

### I. Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 7:00 AM.

### II. Pledge of Allegiance

Gordon led in the pledge of allegiance.

### III. Roll Call

Present: Cole-Crocker, Swem, Money, Gordon, Murphy

City staff present: City Manager Tony McGhee, City Clerk Kalla Langston, Director of Public Services Mike Baker, Water Operator in Charge Craig Miller, Wastewater Operator in Charge Tom Rodgers, Wastewater operator Terry Burns, Rogers, Compliance/Wastewater Operator Zoey Martin

### IV. Approve Agenda

Cole-Crocker moved, seconded by Swem, to approve the agenda as presented. Voice vote passed unanimously.

### V. Public Comment - Agenda Items Only

None.

### VI. Approve Minutes

**A. Minutes:** Consider approving the Regular Meeting Minutes from February 2nd, 2026.

Cole-Crocker moved, seconded by Money, to approve the minutes as presented. Voice vote passed unanimously.

### VII. Unfinished Business

#### **A. Bertrand Crossing Extension Continued Update**

An update was provided regarding funding for the proposed Bertram Crossing utility extension. Approximately \$3 million had been included in the Michigan House budget, with efforts continuing to retain the funding through the state budget process. A separate federal appropriations request for \$2.5 million was unsuccessful; however, Congressman Walberg's office was working to identify approximately \$2.5-\$3 million through another federal agency.

If both funding sources are secured, approximately \$5.5-\$6 million could be available toward construction. Staff anticipated knowing more about the funding by the next meeting. If funding proceeds as anticipated, negotiations with project partners would occur during August and September, engineering would begin in the fall, design would continue through the winter, and construction could begin in spring 2027.

Discussion included the City's available wastewater capacity, water-system capacity, ownership and operation of utilities within Bertram Township, potential transfer of existing Niles-owned infrastructure, a possible emergency interconnection between the Buchanan and Niles water systems, billing responsibilities, future expansion, and the potential for additional utility customers to help stabilize system rates.

**\*\*Swem had to leave at 7:30 AM due to prior commitment\*\***

## **VIII. New Business**

### **A. Water/Sewer Budget Presentation FY 2026-2027**

McGhee presented the Water/Sewer Budget for FY 2026/2027, outlining the revenues and expenses. The rate increase will continue to be 8% to keep up with deferred maintenance and new copper line replacement standards. Upcoming projects include the potential Bertrand Crossing expansion, replacing end of life meters and MXUs, and work on the water and sewer pipes under the parking lot at Dewey and Main St.

Gordon moved, seconded by Money to recommend approval of the 2026-27 Water/Sewer Budget to the Township and City Boards. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

### **B. Water and Wastewater Department Reports**

#### **Water Department Report**

Staff reported that required EGLE reports were substantially complete and that lead and copper sampling will be conducted this year as part of the City's three-year sampling cycle.

Several water-main breaks occurred during the winter. Staff continues to replace and troubleshoot aging MXU units and meters to reduce estimated billing. Galvanized service lines are also being replaced as issues are encountered. Staff is preparing to abandon and properly seal Well No. 3. The well has not operated since approximately 2017, had elevated manganese levels, and is located near the creek. EGLE is working with the City on the required paperwork. Minor improvements are also planned for both the Moccasin and Front Street water towers following inspections, including ladder-security modifications and changes to overflow piping.

The Board discussed fluoridation. Staff advised that the City is not considering discontinuing fluoride treatment at this time. Water-loss figures have improved significantly. Recent levels were approximately 10-12%, compared with historical figures that at times approached 40%. Staff attributed the improvement to more accurate metering, proactive leak detection, and continued infrastructure improvements.

#### **Wastewater Department Report**

Staff reported that wastewater operations remain stable despite wet-weather conditions and routine lift-station maintenance issues. Recent mercury and PFAS testing was discussed. PFAS testing showed approximately 15.2 parts per trillion compared with a referenced water-quality standard of 12 parts per trillion. The landfill was identified as the known contributor currently being evaluated. The State is expected to require establishment of a local PFAS limit through the industrial pretreatment program. New PFAS-treatment equipment was being installed at the landfill, with startup anticipated shortly. Staff will continue coordinating with the landfill and the State and monitoring future sampling results. Staff also reviewed wastewater flows, treatment performance, nutrient levels, and utility consumption. Overall treatment numbers were reported as improving despite seasonal and weather-related fluctuations.

## **IX. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only**

None.

## **X. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 7:58 AM by Chairperson Gordon.