



REGULAR MEETING OF THE BUCHANAN CITY COMMISSION
MONDAY, JANUARY 26, 2026 – 7:00 PM
CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN, MI

MINUTES

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM

II. Recognition

Chief of Police Harvey Burnett presented the following awards:

A. Buchanan Police Department Recognition

Officer Duncan Gast - Meritorious Service Medal
Officer Corey Reed- Meritorious Service Medal
Officer Angela Baggett- Lifesaving Award
Officer Dominick Klein- Letter of Commendation
Officer Katelyn Cooke- Letter of Commendation
Buchanan City DPW - Letter of Appreciation

III. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

IV. Invocation

Invocation was given.

V. Roll Call

Present: Mayor Mark Weedon, Mayor Pro Tem Patrick Swem, Commissioner Larry Money, Commissioner Raquell George, Commissioner Dan Vigansky

Absent: None

City Staff Present: City Manager Tony McGhee, City Clerk, Kalla Langston, Director of Public Works Mike Baker, Chief of Police Harvey Burnett, Director of Community Development and Zoning Kristen Gundersen

VI. Approve Agenda

Motion made by George, seconded by Vigansky, to approve the agenda as presented. Voice votes carry unanimously.

VII. Public Comment - Agenda Items Only (3-minute limit)

None.

VIII. Consent Agenda (can be approved all in one motion, for general housekeeping items)

A. Minutes- Consider approving the Regular Meeting Minutes from January 12th, 2026.

B. DDA Resignation- Consider accepting the resignation of Fran Terry from the DDA.

C. Annual Planning Commission Report- Consider accepting the 2025 Annual Planning Commission Report.

Motion made by Money, seconded by Swem, to approve the consent agenda, as presented. Voice votes carry unanimously.

IX. Scheduled Matters from the Floor (if any)

A. Audit Presentation- Presented by Brian Hake, CPA from Kruggle Lawton.

Audit Summary

The auditors issued an unmodified opinion on the City's financial statements, indicating a clean audit. A federal Single Audit was completed due to applicable funding thresholds and resulted in no findings. The Downtown Infrastructure Project was identified as the sole major program and also received an unmodified opinion. The audit was more complex than in prior years due to multiple active projects and grants, as well as delays associated with the release of the federal compliance supplement.

Financial Highlights

General Fund expenditures showed public safety as the largest functional area, with general government comprising approximately 30 percent. Actual expenditures were below budget, revenues exceeded projections, and the General Fund balance was higher than budgeted. The fund balance declined in fiscal year 2023 but improved in fiscal years 2024 and 2025. Months of operations increased to approximately 9.9 months in fiscal year 2025, reflecting a strong financial position.

Pension Overview

The City reported a net pension liability, which is common among public entities. The pension plan was approximately 96 percent funded, indicating a strong funding position relative to many municipalities.

Motion made by Money, seconded by Swem, to accept the financial report dated June 30th, 2025, as presented. Roll call votes are carried unanimously.

X. Reports by: Departments, Committees, Boards

XI. Unfinished Business

XII. New Business

A. Wood Chipper Purchase- Consider approving the purchase of a Bandit Intimidator 12XPC wood chipper from Bandit Industries, Inc., reflecting MiDEAL contract pricing.

The Commission considered approval of the purchase of a Bandit Intimidator 12 XPC woodchipper through the State of Michigan MI-DEAL program in the amount of \$37,890, representing a savings of approximately \$9,410 from standard pricing. The purchase was identified as a budgeted capital expenditure. Staff noted the existing chipper has exceeded its useful life and is unsafe to operate, and will likely be declared surplus and sold at auction.

Motion made by Viganksy, seconded by George, to approve the purchase of the Bandit Intimidator 12XPC woodchipper for \$37,890.00, as presented. Roll call votes are carried unanimously.

B. Water Reliability Study Update- Consider approving the proposal from Prein & Newhof to update the Water Reliability Study.

The Commission considered approval of a professional services agreement with Prein & Newhof to conduct a water reliability study in the amount of \$14,500. Staff indicated the proposal was competitively priced and favorable compared to market rates. Discussion included the possibility of engaging multiple firms for future professional services.

Motion made by Swem, seconded by Swem, seconded by Money to approve the Reliability Study update proposal from Prien & Newhof for \$14,500, as presented. Roll call votes are carried unanimously.

C. Victory Park Fund- Consider the establishment of the Victory Park Fund with the Berrien Community Foundation and authorize the Mayor and City Manager to execute the Letter of Agreement

The Commission considered the establishment of the Victory Park Fund with the Berrien Community Foundation to receive and manage donations for park improvements. A private benefactor pledged \$50,000 as a challenge grant, to be matched through additional fundraising or grant awards. Recognition was given to James Busby for his leadership and assistance in securing the funding.

Motion made by Money, seconded by George, to approve the establishment of the Victory Park Fund with the Berrien County Community Foundation to receive and manage funds, as presented. Roll call votes carried unanimously.

D. eCitation Access Annual Contract- Police Department- Consider approving the purchase of an annual eCitation access contract with LexisNexis for three in-car printers for the Police Department.

The Commission considered approval of an annual e-citation access contract with LexisNexis in the amount of \$2,814.30 to support the Police Department's electronic citation system. Although the expenditure was below the administrative approval threshold, it was presented for transparency.

Motion made by Money, seconded by Vigansky to approve the purchase of eCitation contract with LexisNexis for \$2,814.30, as presented. Roll call votes carried unanimously.

E. Early Voting Agreement- Approve the Draft Early Voting Agreement with Berrien County for the 2026 Election Cycle and authorize City Clerk Langston-Weiss to execute the document on behalf of the City of Buchanan.

Langston provided context regarding upcoming election equipment replacement requirements, county consolidation of early voting locations, and associated notification costs. Discussion also included potential precinct consolidation after 2026 to reduce costs.

Motion made by Money, seconded by Vigansky, authorizing Clerk Langston to execute the early voting agreement with Berrien County, as presented. Roll call votes carried unanimously.

F. Resolution 2026.01/01- Consider Resolution 2026.01/01, a Resolution placing the McCoy Creek Trail Committee under the supervision of BARB (Buchanan Area Recreation Board).

Resolution 2026.01/01

WHEREAS, the City of Buchanan ("City") has established or recognized a committee commonly known as the McCoys Creek Trail Committee ("Committee") for the purpose of supporting, planning, advising, developing, and/or promoting trail-related projects and improvements associated with the McCoys Creek Trail; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission desires to ensure clear accountability, consistent oversight, and efficient coordination of trail-related planning, operations, fundraising, grant activity, and communications; and

WHEREAS, the City Commission finds it in the best interests of the City to place the Committee under the supervisory authority of BARB to better align the Committee's activities with City goals, procedures, reporting requirements, and budgeting practices; and

WHEREAS, BARB is an appropriate body to provide oversight, coordination, and administrative direction for the Committee's work while allowing the Committee to continue supporting trail-related initiatives and advising the City.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the City Commission of the City of Buchanan, Berrien County, Michigan, as follows:

1. Placement Under BARB

The McCoys Creek Trail Committee is hereby placed under the supervision, direction, and control of BARB, effective February 1, 2026.

2. Advisory Status

The Committee shall serve in an advisory and supportive capacity and shall make recommendations to BARB and/or the City Commission as appropriate. The Committee shall not take independent action on behalf of the City unless expressly authorized by BARB or the City Commission.

3. Reporting

The Committee shall provide reports to BARB [monthly/quarterly/as requested], and BARB may provide updates and recommendations to the City Commission as necessary.

4. Financial and Grant Activity

Any funds raised, donated, or granted for trail-related purposes shall be handled in compliance with City financial policies and procedures, and any grant applications or fiscal sponsorship activity must be coordinated with the City's designated staff/officials.

5. Committee Membership and Meetings. The Committee may continue to operate with its current membership unless and until modified by BARB or the City Commission. Meetings shall be conducted consistently with applicable public meeting requirements.

Motion made by Swem, seconded by Vigansky to approve Resolution 2026.01/01, as presented. Roll call votes are carried unanimously.

G. Expenditures- Consider approving the expenditures for January 26th, 2026.

Motion made by Vigansky, seconded by George to approve the expenditures in the amount of \$124,386.58. Roll call votes are carried unanimously.

XIII. Communications *(informational only, formal board action is not necessary for these items, unless so desired)*

XIV. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only *(3-minute limit)*

None.

XV. Executive Comments

A. City Manager Comments

The City Manager reminded the Commission and public that beginning the first week of February, City Hall hours will change to improve accessibility for residents. New hours will be Monday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and Fridays from 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

The City Manager expressed appreciation for the Finance Department and staff for the successful audit results and noted the strong overall performance of City staff. Special recognition was given to the Police Department leadership for improvements in staffing, overtime management, and departmental capacity over the past year. The City Manager also commended the Department of Public Works for their response to multiple snow events, noting that Buchanan's streets were maintained at a higher level than many surrounding communities despite challenging weather conditions.

B. Commissioner Comments

George- congratulated the Police Department and officers recognized during the meeting, noting that the number and quality of awards reflect positively on the department and its role within the community. Also commented favorably on the audit presentation, emphasizing the importance of having knowledgeable staff and clear financial reporting. Support was expressed for the Victory Park initiative, and appreciation given to the Department of Public Works for snow removal efforts, acknowledging both the challenges faced and the work performed in difficult conditions.

Vigansky- echoed appreciation for the audit results, stating that financial documents have become more understandable and accessible in recent years.

Money- Thanked City staff across all departments, noting that positive feedback is often overshadowed by criticism and that staff efforts deserve recognition. Particular appreciation was expressed for DPW crews working early hours and in extreme cold, including cemetery operations.

Swem- recognized long-time community volunteer Fran Terry, thanking her for more than 50 years of service to the City through the Downtown Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce, and other civic efforts. Expressed gratitude for her dedication and lasting impact on the community and wished her well in her continued volunteer roles.

The Commissioner highlighted the strong audit performance and praised the Finance Department for its preparedness, knowledge of accounting standards, and ability to clearly communicate complex financial information. Appreciation was also expressed for the Police Department's

community engagement efforts and the Department of Public Works for maintaining city infrastructure during winter weather. Additional comments included a brief update on the landfill, noting the completion of its annual audit, continued positive operations, and ongoing work related to gas service infrastructure.

C. Mayor Comments

Weedon thanked City staff, department heads, and commissioners for their collective efforts, emphasizing pride in the City's financial health, operational performance, and community-oriented policing approach. Weedon recognized the professionalism of the Police Department, the responsiveness of the DPW, and the competence of the Finance Department. Weedon concluded by expressing appreciation for the collaborative spirit of the Commission and the continued progress of the City.

XVI. Adjourn

Motion made by Vigansky, seconded by Money, to adjourn the meeting at 8:10 PM. Roll call votes carried unanimously.

Kalla Langston-Weiss, City Clerk

Mayor Mark Weedon