



Date: 4/8/2026  
To: City Commission  
From: Kalla Langston-Weiss, City Clerk  
Subject: Summary of Minutes for Board/Commission - March 2026

### **One Buchanan**

One Buchanan continues advancing inclusive community programming, with primary focus on final preparations for the upcoming Mental Health Forum and planning for the fall “One Book, One Buchanan” initiative. The Board reported successful promotion efforts and anticipated strong community participation.

Fundraising remains steady, with the recent popcorn sales generating approximately \$1,028.50. Additional efforts are underway to improve fundraising logistics and expand community engagement through social events and increased presence at local activities.

The Board is evaluating long-term organizational structure, including the potential transition to nonprofit status, and will continue discussions in the coming months. Additional work includes the development of a values-based community statement for future consideration.

### **Downtown Development Authority (DDA)**

The DDA continues advancing downtown development initiatives, with primary focus on finalizing the TIF & Development Plan and initiating a marketing/branding RFP to better define project costs prior to adoption.

The Board supported upcoming community events, including the Farmers Market season and SIP Buchanan, approving an initial \$2,500 contribution with potential additional funding based on sponsorship progress.

The Board also addressed financial and operational matters, including restructuring a defaulted Buchanan Equity loan to a two-year repayment term at 2% interest, and discussed future downtown beautification and promotional efforts.

### **Planning Commission**

The Buchanan Planning Commission met on March 10, 2026, at City Hall with all members present except one. A public hearing was held regarding proposed amendments to the Unified Development Code, including the creation of a short-term rental overlay district; the proposal was presented by the Planning and Zoning Director and received no public opposition before the hearing closed shortly after opening. During the regular meeting, the Commission accepted the resignation of Chair Ralph McDonald and appointed new officers, naming Houser as Chair, Garry as Vice Chair, and Pleasant as Secretary. The agenda and prior meeting minutes were approved

without issue. Under old business, the Commission reviewed ongoing updates to the sign ordinance, continued discussion on the Master Plan—tentatively titled “*One Herd, One Future: Building a Better Buchanan*”—and unanimously recommended approval of a Vacant and Underutilized Building Ordinance to the City Commission. Under new business, the Commission voted to recommend approval of the short-term rental overlay district text amendment, with dissent based on opposition to the overlay approach, and also discussed potential updates to buffering, tree preservation, landscaping, fencing, and lighting standards within the UDC, and commissioners closed by recognizing McDonald’s service before adjourning.

## **BARB**

The Buchanan Area Recreation Board (BARB) continues work on planning and park system updates, including input toward the Recreation Master Plan and coordination of the Annual Spring Park Clean-Up.

The Board is also exploring fundraising opportunities, with a subcommittee developing potential events such as a run and a wiffle ball tournament.

Action items included approval of tree planting locations in Veteran’s Memorial Park in coordination with Buchanan Tree Friends, removal of Harger Park and the Tot Lot from the official park system, and selection of a preferred play structure option for Kathryn Park.

## **Buchanan Tree Friends**

Buchanan Tree Friends continues advancing urban forestry efforts, with a focus on planning for Spring 2026 tree plantings, including approximately 33 locations at key sites such as Veterans Memorial Park, Dewey Street, and the dog park.

The group is also working on board development and volunteer recruitment, including the creation of updated promotional materials and the relaunch of the Jr. Tree Friends program in coordination with Arbor Day activities.

Ongoing efforts include grant research, procurement policy development, and coordination with City staff on planting logistics and future tree inventory initiatives.

## **Friends of McCoy Creek Trail**

The Friends of McCoy Creek Trail continue advancing trail development and maintenance efforts, including coordination on the trail extension project and addressing design and cost issues with engineering specifications.

The Board is actively planning upcoming events and volunteer activities, including a trail cleanup in April, inmate workdays, and annual fundraising events such as the Salmon Scramble and Trek-or-Treat.

Additional priorities include signage inventory and improvements, coordination with regional trail systems, and progress toward formal 501(c)(3) nonprofit status.

## **Friends of Oakridge Cemetery**

Spring cemetery cleanup dates were discussed in preparation for seasonal maintenance and ensuring the grounds are properly cleared. The Board also discussed the need for expansion of the columbarium, with Langston planning to attend a cemetery conference in August to speak with vendors and obtain quotes for potential expansion options. Additionally, it was noted that the current Veterans Circle is nearing capacity, prompting discussion about future expansion and the possibility of establishing a new, separate location for a veterans section rather than expanding the existing area.

### **Southeast Berrien County Landfill Authority**

Date: February 18 & 23, 2026

The Landfill Authority conducted regular and special meetings focused primarily on routine governance and financial approvals, including acceptance of financial statements and check registers.

No significant unfinished or new business was identified during either meeting, with operations and committee reports indicating no major updates.

Staff reported a minor landfill fire caused by a discarded lithium battery, which was quickly contained without further incident.

**Buchanan Area Fine Arts Council & SMCAS** Not provided.  
**DRC, JWSB, ZBA did not meet for March**