



MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING OF THE VILLAGE COUNCIL

Monday, October 13, 2025

6:30 PM

Village Hall – 21 East Church Street, Lake Orion, MI 48362

(248) 693-8391 ext. 102

1. Call to Order

The October 13, 2025, Village Council Regular Meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM by President Rutt.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Roll Call and Determination of Quorum

PRESENT

President Teresa Rutt

President Pro Tem Stan Ford

Council Member Nancy Moshier

Council Member Michael Lamb

Council Member George Dandalides

Council Member Alex Comparoni Jr

Council Member Eric Papacek

STAFF PRESENT

Village Manager Darwin McClary

DPW Director Wes Sanchez

Police Chief Mark Amundson

Clerk/Treasurer Sonja Stout

4. Presentations

None.

5. Call to the Public

Matt Gibb, DDA Executive Director, addressed the temporary closure of the fire station restrooms due to the transition to a new cleaning company. In the interim, a portable restroom will be placed near the horseshoe area for public use. Mr. Gibb also mentioned that two businesses have been

selected to receive grants, discussed the upcoming Downtown Halloween Extravaganza, and proposed adding an agenda item to the City Council meeting to allow for open dialogue regarding the Lumberyard Project.

Donald Kindred inquired about the timeline for the parking lot inspection and asked whether the Police Chief has provided improved training to officers on handling medical marijuana devices.

Lee Marriott expressed concern over her most recent water bill, stating she was shocked by the amount and requested an explanation.

6. Approval of Agenda

MOTION made by President Rutt, Seconded by Council Member Lamb to approve the Agenda for October 13, 2025, Village Council Regular meeting as presented.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Carried

7. Consent Agenda

All items on the Consent Agenda are approved by one vote.

MOTION made by President Rutt, Seconded by President Pro Tem Ford to approve the amended October 13, 2025, Village Council Regular Consent Agenda, with the following changes:

- Removal of item K. (*Downtown Development Authority Board Re-appointments*)
- Removal of Item L. (*Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee FY 2026-27 Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) request*)
- Removal of item M. (*Request from Council Member Lamb for Revision to Council Rules of Procedure*)
- Removal of item N. (*Request from Council Member Lamb to Provide for Payment of DDA Bonds from General Obligation Pledge and to Terminate DDA Tax Increment Financing Plan*)

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr, Papacek

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Carried

A. Approval of Village Council Special Meeting Minutes of September 22, 2025

MOTION made by President Rutt, Seconded by President Pro Tem Ford to approve the September 22, 2025 Village Council Special Meeting Minutes, as presented.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr, Papacek

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Carried

B. Approval of Village Council Regular Meeting Minutes of September 22, 2025

MOTION made by President Rutt, Seconded by President Pro Tem Ford to approve the September 22, 2025 Village Council Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr, Papacek

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Carried

C. Receive and File Board of Zoning Regular Meeting minutes June 5, 2025

MOTION made by President Rutt, Seconded by President Pro Tem Ford to receive and file the June 5, 2025 Board of Zoning Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr, Papacek

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Carried

D. Receive and File of Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee Regular Meeting Minutes of August 26, 2025

MOTION made by President Rutt, Seconded by President Pro Tem Ford To receive and file the August 26, 2025 Parks & Recreation Advisory Committee Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr, Papacek

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Carried

E. Receive and File of Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes of September 2, 2025

MOTION made by President Rutt, Seconded by President Pro Tem Ford to receive and file the September 2, 2025 Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes, as presented.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr, Papacek

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Carried

F. Receive and File of Financial Statements - September 2025

MOTION made by President Rutt, Seconded by President Pro Tem Ford To receive and file the financial reports for September 2025.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr, Papacek

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Carried

G. Receive and File Investment Report- August 2025

MOTION made by President Rutt, Seconded by President Pro Tem Ford to receive and file the Investment report for August 2025.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr, Papacek
VOTING NAY: None
ABSENT: None
MOTION: Carried

H. Receive and file Invoice Distribution Report for October 14, 2025

MOTION made by President Rutt, Seconded by President Pro Tem Ford to Receive and file the Invoice Distribution Report in the amount of \$289,871.15 of which \$83,238.97 are DDA bills for a net total of \$206,632.18.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr, Papacek
VOTING NAY: None
ABSENT: None
MOTION: Carried

I. Receive and File September 2025 Police Department Activity Report

MOTION made by President Rutt, Seconded by President Pro Tem Ford To receive and file the September 2025 Police Department Activity Report.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr, Papacek
VOTING NAY: None
ABSENT: None
MOTION: Carried

J. Approval of Special Event: Orion Lighted Christmas Parade

MOTION made by President Rutt, Seconded by President Pro Tem Ford To adopt Resolution No. 2025-038 approving the "Orion Lighted Christmas Parade" Special Event Permit and the License Agreement between the Village of Lake Orion and the Orion Area Parade Group represented by Bill Kokenos, for the event to be held on December 6, 2025, and to authorize the Village Council President and Village Clerk to execute the agreement on behalf of the Village.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr, Papacek
VOTING NAY: None
ABSENT: None
MOTION: Carried

K. Downtown Development Authority Board Re-appointments

Pulled for further discussion

L. Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee FY 2026-27 Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Request

Pulled for further discussion.

M. Request from Council Member Lamb for Revision to Council Rules of Procedure

Pulled for further discussion.

N. Request from Council Member Lamb to Provide for Payment of DDA Bonds from General Obligation Pledge and to Terminate DDA Tax Increment Financing Plan

Pulled for further discussion.

8. Items Removed from the Consent Agenda

K. Downtown Development Authority Board Re-appointments

Council Member Lamb discussed the process for appointing board members, noting that recent Village and Ethics Board vacancies were filled through open advertising and interviews. He questioned why this approach isn't used for other boards such as the DDA, Planning Commission, and BZA. Council Member Lamb suggested adopting a policy to advertise all board vacancies but acknowledged, per Clerk Stout, that state law requires the executive officer to recommend appointments for those boards. He proposed the Village consider an informal process to solicit applications and seek Council input before recommendations are made. Council Member George Dandalides supported the idea.

President Rutt asked administration to formally advertise in the Lake Orion Review for the Planning Commission vacancy.

MOTION made by President Rutt, Seconded by Council Member Dandalides to re-appoint Deborah Burgess and Hank Lorant to four-year terms on the Downtown Development Authority Board, terms to expire on October 31, 2029 and is subject to approval of Village Council.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr, Papacek

VOTING NAY: Moshier, Lamb

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Carried

President Rutt thanked the DDA board members for their service to the DDA board over the years.

L. Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee FY 2026-27 Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) Request

Council Member Dandalides stated at the request of the Village Manager and Council during budget discussions, the Parks and Recreation Committee was asked to submit its priority projects for the upcoming budget year by October. At its last meeting, the committee identified three priority projects and outlined how available discretionary funds could be used.

Chairperson Rosemary Ford presented the Parks and Recreation Committee's three priority projects for the upcoming budget year:

1. Atwater Park Basketball Court – Replace the deteriorated court with proper engineering to ensure long-term durability.

2. Greens Park Pavilion – Construct a rentable pavilion to support community events and generate park revenue.
3. Greens Park Sprinkler System – Install a new irrigation system to improve lawn conditions and help deter geese.

She emphasized using durable materials and proper planning to extend the life of these improvements.

Council Member Lamb and Council Member Dandalides had a brief discussion on possible solutions, and which projects should move forward.

MOTION made by President Rutt, Seconded by Council Member Papacek to receive the request from the Parks and Recreation Advisory Committee for consideration for funding for FY 2026-27 Capital Improvement Projects and to consider the same as part of the FY 2026-27 budget preparation process.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr, Papacek

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Carried

M. Request from Council Member Lamb for Revision to Council Rules of Procedure

Council Member Lamb noted that in 2023, Council Rules were changed to restrict only the President and Pro Tem from contacting the Village Attorney. He stated that attorney costs did not decrease due to this rule but rather because the Village Manager was able to address many legal questions internally. Council Member Lamb argued that all Council members should have access to legal counsel for clarification on procedural or legal matters, such as Open Meetings Act compliance.

President Pro Tem Ford stated the process should not be changed. Council Member Papacek said access to the Village Attorney should be uniform for all members. Council Member Dandalides suggested the Village Manager should handle attorney-related issues. President Rutt cited the MML handbook, noting there should be a process for contacting the attorney, and reviewed the pros and cons of the current procedure.

Council Member Moshier noted that historically all Council Members could contact the attorney, not just the President and Pro Tem. President Rutt added that the change could reduce transparency and increase liability.

Lee Marriott shared an analogy comparing attorney access to doctors and patient advocates.

Scott Parnell agreed, emphasizing that limiting access could raise costs and that there should be a single point of contact for the attorney.

Rosemary Ford stated that the billing could add up with the new changes.

MOTION made by Council Member Lamb, Seconded Council Member Moshier to amend the Council Rules and Procedure to allow for any council member to contact the village attorney:

Item G, Page 6 “Only the Village Manager shall direct or issue requests of the Village consultants and department heads. Except that only the President and President Pro Tem may initiate contact with the Village Attorney insofar as their duties for the Council are concerned. Village consultants shall include the Attorney, Planner, and Engineer.”

VOTING YEA: Moshier, Lamb, Papacek

VOTING NAY: Comparoni, Jr, Dandalides, Rutt, Ford

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Failed

N. Request from Council Member Lamb to Provide for Payment of DDA Bonds from General Obligation Pledge and to Terminate DDA Tax Increment Financing Plan

Council members emphasized the need to first identify problems before proposing solutions regarding the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) boundaries. It was noted that reducing the DDA district could limit funds for infrastructure projects throughout the Village, while keeping it larger supports both downtown improvements and broader Village needs. Council members stressed the importance of collaboration with the DDA, balancing downtown and non-downtown priorities, and ensuring fiscal responsibility to all residents. Concerns were raised about the DDA focusing solely on its own funding, while Village-wide infrastructure needs—roads, sewers, water mains, and public safety—also require attention.

The discussion included reviewing best practices from other municipalities, evaluating whether the DDA district boundaries are appropriately sized, and considering impacts on tax burdens and infrastructure funding. Council agreed any future amendments should be carefully planned, data-driven, and collaborative with the DDA.

The conversation was opened to public comment, limited to the topic of downtown district boundaries.

Bob Davis, DDA Attorney, spoke in support of collaboration between the DDA and Village Council. He highlighted his role in creating the 75/25 funding split that dedicates a portion of DDA funds to infrastructure, calling it a unique and effective approach. He emphasized that any changes to the DDA district or funding must follow statutory guidelines and cautioned against shrinking the district while attempting to spread funds outside it, noting this would be counterproductive. He assured the Council that the DDA is willing to work together on creative solutions to support Village-wide infrastructure needs.

Chris Barnett, Orion Township Supervisor, longtime DDA Board Member emphasized the strength and value of the Lake Orion DDA. Criticized misinformation by some Council Members, particularly regarding past elections and DDA projects, and stressed the DDA’s positive contributions to the community. He urged Council to acknowledge the DDA as an asset and work collaboratively with it rather than spreading misinformation or undermining its efforts.

Brian Winter, resident, addressed the math of DDA tax capture and funding, noting that net gains to the Village are lower than presented once DDA contributions to utilities and services are considered. He encouraged the Council to view the DDA as a lever for broader community benefit and to collaborate with experts to optimize funding.

Dana Walker, Director of Michigan Downtown Association, highlighted the Lake Orion DDA as a best-practice example for downtown development authorities statewide. She explained that DDAs, established under Michigan Public Act 197, use tax increment financing (TIF) to revitalize downtowns, invest in infrastructure, prevent blight, and promote economic growth. She emphasized that DDAs are strategic authorities meant for long-term, holistic downtown management, regardless of district size.

MOTION made by Council member Lamb, Seconded by Council member Moshier to call the question.

VOTING YEA: Lamb, Moshier

VOTING NAY: Papacek, Ford, Comparoni Jr, Rutt, Dandalides

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Failed

Council Member Lamb exited the meeting at 7:58 PM.

Council Member Lamb returned to the meeting at 8:00 PM.

Matt Pfeiffer, Orion Township Treasurer, praised the DDA's contributions to the Village, criticized Council Members for attacking the DDA, and warned that shrinking the district would reduce funding for projects like the Lumberyard. They called such attacks disrespectful and urged the Council to support the DDA's efforts.

Matthew Gibb, DDA Executive Director, stressed that shrinking the district is counterproductive and raises legal and budget issues. He highlighted the DDA's contributions and urged the Council to focus on collaboration and budget solutions instead of revisiting past decisions.

Harry Stephens suggested including the entire village in the TIF district to maximize funds for infrastructure.

Rosemary Ford emphasized that reducing the district isn't comparable to resort towns and highlighted the 75/25 split agreement, which benefits both the DDA district and other areas.

Alaina Campbell noted the importance of keeping tax dollars local, explained how TIF benefits the community, and praised the DDA's collaboration with the Village to support infrastructure and economic growth.

All speakers reinforced the value of the DDA and the existing district boundaries.

MOTION made by Council Member Lamb, Seconded by Council Member Moshier to have a special meeting with the Village Council to amend the Downtown District boundaries.

VOTING YEA: Lamb, Moshier, Papacek

VOTING NAY: Rutt, Ford, Dandalides, Comparoni, Jr
ABSENT: None
MOTION: Failed

9. Public Hearings

None.

10. Other Items

A. Proposal for Engineering Services – Atwater Park Basketball Court Replacement Project

President Pro Tem Ford noted a discrepancy between statements by Rosemary Ford, Chair of the Parks and Recreation Board, and Village Manager McClary, and requested clarification. The Village Manager responded that he would coordinate with Rosemary Ford to ensure alignment.

MOTION made by Council Member Lamb, Seconded by President Rutt to approve and accept the proposal from Nowak & Fraus Engineers dated July 23, 2025, to provide design, bidding, and construction engineering services relating to the junior high school size Atwater Park Basketball Replacement Project in the total lump sum fee of \$11,100.00; to authorize the Village Manager to execute all necessary documents relating to this contract; and to authorize Administration to proceed to solicit sealed competitive bids for the construction of the basketball court.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr, Papacek
VOTING NAY: None
ABSENT: None
MOTION: Carried

B. Administrative Assistant Position

Village Manager McClary requested Council approval to create a part-time administrative assistant position to support the expanded five-day Village Hall schedule. He explained the position would be cross-trained to handle essential administrative tasks, with recruitment beginning once approved, and the five-day schedule set to start December 1, 2025. He also emphasized that this position had been discussed previously, due to an additional 10 hours of weekly operations and staffing constraints and was needed to maintain adequate coverage with rotating shifts.

Council Member Dandalides debated whether the additional hire was immediately necessary or if the five-day schedule should first be tested and data collected to justify the position and expressed concern about spending taxpayer dollars without concrete evidence of need, while other Council Members supported the hire based on prior discussions and operational planning at previous meetings.

Harry Stephens commented about opening time and questioned the number of residents during the current starting time.

MOTION made by President Pro Tem Ford, Seconded by Council Member Comparoni Jr to approve the creation of one (1) part-time Administrative Assistant position for the Village Hall

administrative offices working up to 20 hours per week to provide necessary additional staffing support for the expanded Village Hall five-day operating hours.

VOTING YEA: Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Comparoni Jr,

VOTING NAY: Rutt, Papacek, Dandalides

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Carried

MOTION made by President Pro Tem Ford, Seconded by Council Member Lamb to approve the job description for the Administrative Assistant position as presented by the Village Manager.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Comparoni Jr, Papacek

VOTING NAY: Dandalides

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Carried

MOTION made by President Pro Tem Ford, Seconded by Council Member Lamb to place the Administrative Assistant position in the same job classification as Office Coordinator, Account Clerk, and Utility Billing Clerk with the pay range of \$21.65 per hour minimum to \$25.98 per hour maximum.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Comparoni Jr, Papacek

VOTING NAY: Dandalides

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Carried

MOTION made by President Pro Tem Ford, Seconded by Council Member Lamb to amend the FY 2025-26 Budget to provide a supplemental appropriation of \$16,781.00 to increase Budget Account No. 101-260-702-000 – General Fund-General Activities-Wages Part-Time – from \$0 to \$16,781.00 for the addition of a new part-time Administrative Assistant position.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Comparoni Jr, Papacek

VOTING NAY: Dandalides

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Carried

11. Call to the Public

Alaina Campbell, DDA Board member, expressed her strong support for the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) and reflected on how the organization has evolved over the years.

Sam Caruso, DDA Vice Chair, shared his perspective on the positive changes in Lake Orion, particularly the increase in property values and how it has benefited the local community.

Bill Kokenos, representing the Orion Lighted Parade, invited all Council Members to participate in the upcoming Christmas parade. He also requested an apology from a Council Member regarding a previous remark he found inappropriate.

Harry Stephens commented that the current meeting agenda does not align with Robert's Rules of Order and suggested that the Parks and Recreation Department should have separate line items under Revenue and Expenditures.

Rosemary Ford thanked the Council for allowing her to present her Capital Improvement Plan projects, praised the recent homecoming parade, and expressed gratitude to the Department of Public Works for promptly cleaning up a smashed pumpkin in the park.

Dana Walker discussed the implications of expanding or shrinking the Tax Increment Financing (TIF) district, noting that such decisions have wide-reaching impacts.

Janet Bloom, Assistant DDA Director, provided an update on the upcoming Halloween Extravaganza and encouraged volunteers to participate.

Scott Farnell shared his experience of moving to Lake Orion and commented on the positive changes he has witnessed in the community.

Tom Traurig spoke about relocating his business into — and later out of — Lake Orion, offering reflections on how the area has changed over time.

12. Council Comments

Council Member Comparoni Jr. remarked that this was one of the most heated meetings he has experienced and expressed disappointment in what he described as a sickening level of disrespect. He also reflected on how the DDA and downtown Lake Orion have evolved over the years.

Council Member Moshier thanked everyone for attending the meeting. She acknowledged that her choice of words may not have been ideal but clarified that her intent was not to offend anyone. She emphasized that while some issues are emotionally charged, she has her own opinions independent of her husband's and supports retaining the DDA, as she is focused on the bigger picture.

Council Member Lamb also thanked attendees, clarified he did not intend to criticize anyone, and apologized to visitors. He referenced Robert's Rules of Order, commented on TIF-related politics, and emphasized the importance of equitable funding ("getting a piece of the pie"). He defended Council Member Moshier and questioned whether Sick Pizza contributes taxes.

Council Member Papacek commented that the homecoming parade was a refreshing change and expressed appreciation for the passion and energy shown by the public during the meeting.

President Pro Tem Ford stated the homecoming parade was excellent and praised the police for their work with signage and staffing. He congratulated Debbie Burgess and Hank Lorant on their reappointments to the DDA and thanked everyone for their positive contributions. He also noted how great the downtown looks.

Council Member Dandalides expressed appreciation to the DDA Board Members, volunteers, and the Township. He voiced support for Executive Director Gibb's suggestion to include a Council agenda item to include discussion on the Lumberyard project.

President Rutt stated that the public comments made during the meeting were permissible under Robert's Rules of Order. She acknowledged the recent increase in water bills and noted that similar concerns are being experienced in other communities, as discussed at the MML Conference. She

also attended a Chamber of Commerce luncheon, describing it as a well-organized event, and expressed support for adding an open dialogue with the Village as a future DDA agenda item.

13. Village Manager Comments

The Village Manager provided a summary of his report, which is also available on the Village Manager's page of the Village of Lake Orion website. He noted that any questions regarding the recent increase in water and sewer rates should be directed to DPW Director Sanchez, who can be reached at (248) 693-8391, ext. 106, or via email at wsanchez@lakeorion.org.

14. Closed Session Items

15. Business From Closed Session

16. Adjournment

MOTION made by Council Member Comparoni Jr, Seconded by Council Member Lamb to adjourn the October 13, 2025 Village Council Regular Meeting.

VOTING YEA: Rutt, Ford, Moshier, Lamb, Dandalides, Comparoni Jr, Papacek

VOTING NAY: None

ABSENT: None

MOTION: Carried

The October 13, 2025 Village Council Regular Meeting adjourned at 9:23 PM.

Teresa Rutt
President

Sonja Stout
Village Clerk/Treasurer

Date Approved: as presented on October 27, 2025.