



CITY OF BUCHANAN PLANNING COMMISSION
TUESDAY, JANUARY 13, 2026 – 6:00 PM
CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI

MINUTES

- I. *The City of Buchanan Planning Commission, in compliance with Michigan's Open Meetings Act, hereby gives notice of a Planning Commission meeting to be held in the Chamber of City Hall.*
- II. ** Comments may also be submitted in writing at least 4 hours in advance to the Community Development Director Richard Murphy at rmurphy@cityofbuchanan.com*

** Buchanan City will provide necessary and reasonable auxiliary aide and services to those individuals with disabilities who wish to attend the public meeting upon receiving at least one (1) week's prior notice. Any such individual requiring such aids or services should contact the city in writing or by telephoning: Buchanan City Clerk; 302 North Redbud Trail, Buchanan, MI 49107, 269-695-3844.*

III. Regular Meeting - Call to Order

McDonald called the meeting to order at 6:02pm.

IV. Pledge of Allegiance

McDonald led in the pledge of allegiance.

V. Roll Call

Present: McDonald, Vigansky, Houser, Brown, Pleasant, Lysy. Garry arrived at 6:08pm.

Absent: None

City Staff Present: City Manager Tony McGhee, Director of Planning and Community Development Kristen Gundersen, Administrative Assistant Emma Lysy

VI. Approve Agenda

Lysy moved, supported by Brown to approve the agenda as presented. Voice vote carried unanimously.

VII. Public Comments - Agenda Items

None.

VIII. Approve Minutes

A. *Consider approving the Regular Meeting Minutes from November 18th, 2025.*

Vigansky moved, supported by Brown to approve the minutes as presented. Voice vote carried unanimously.

IX. Old Business

None.

X. New Business

A. Master Plan Timeline & Update- *Marcy Hamilton, Senior Planner/Deputy Executive Director, SWMPC*

McGhee first introduced Gundersen to the Planning Commission. McDonald welcomed her.

Marcy Hamilton introduced herself and the Southwest Michigan Planning Commission, the regional planning authority for Berrien, Cass, and Van Buren counties. Hamilton and the SWMPC have previously worked with Buchanan for previous recreation and master plans. The process will

take one year and will compile new data, maps, parcels, and additional plans from the City such as the Riverfront Master Plan, a Vision for Buchanan, County Trail plan, Tree plan, etc. There was discussion on the Master Plan process, public input, and future land use. Future land use will reflect future planning and priorities for the City.

McDonald asked about the timeline. Hamilton responded that it's a long process and outlined the stages to adoption. McDonald asked how to best work with the City Commission while working on the draft to ensure efficiency. Staff will keep the Commission in communication with the Planning Commission so they are on the same page. Hamilton suggested combining public input for the BARB and Master Plan.

B. Annual Report

Gundersen introduced the annual report and walked the Planning Commission through it. It includes future activities for 2026. Vigansky asked about the future of the flood plain in Buchanan. McGhee said it will get bigger, and Gundersen spoke to the process of appealing to FEMA. Houser asked if his Master Citizen Planner status could be added to the report, Gundersen will do so.

Brown moved, supported by Houser to approve the Annual Report as presented. Voice vote carried unanimously.

C. Unified Development Code Discussion: Signs

Gundersen has questions about the intent behind the changes to the sign ordinance in the new Zoning code. She has received some applications for sign permits and asked for permission to suggest heavy edits to the section. McDonald would like to allow room for flexibility. The inclusion of a max copy height and a 200 square foot sign allowable by right in some districts is unusual. She taped out different sign sizes on the back wall as a visual aid for reference. Gundersen reviewed some of her questions with the Planning Commission and will come back with her draft edits.

XI. Public Comment - Non-Agenda Items Only

None.

XII. Community Development Director Comments

None.

XIII. Commissioner Comments

Vigansky – Welcomed Gundersen.

Pleasant – Welcomed Gundersen.

Garry – Welcomed Gundersen and is glad to be back.

Houser – Welcomed Gundersen and is very impressed.

Lysy – Welcomed Gundersen and enjoyed the discussion tonight, it was detailed and hands on.

McDonald – Welcomed Gundersen, is glad she is looking at the Ordinance.

XIV. Adjournment

Kalla Langston-Weiss, City Clerk

Mayor Mark Weedon