

**PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING OF THE BUCHANAN CITY
COMMISSION
MONDAY, AUGUST 25, 2025 – 7:00 PM
CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN MI**

MINUTES

THE COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF BUCHANAN, in compliance with Michigan's Open Meetings Act, hereby gives notice of a regular meeting of the Buchanan City Commission to be held in the Chamber of City Hall.

** Requests to be added to the agenda as a "Scheduled Matter from the Floor" should be submitted in writing to the City Clerk at least 5 business days prior to the scheduled meeting during which the speaker wishes to appear, and the approval of such requests remain within the discretion of the Mayor. If denied, the speaker may nonetheless speak during the "non-agenda items only" public comments section of the agenda.*

** Those who are unable to appear during a meeting but who still wish to share public comment may submit such comments in written form to the City Clerk at least 4 hours in advance of the meeting.*

** Individuals with disabilities may request necessary reasonable accommodations by submitting requests to the City Clerk, preferably at least 24 hours in advance.*

** Written requests and comments may be submitted to the City Clerk either in person or via mail to Buchanan City Hall, 302 N. Redbud Trail, Buchanan, MI 49107, or via email to clerk@cityofbuchanan.com*

I. Call to Order the Public Hearing

Motion made by Vigansky, seconded by George to open the Public Hearing at 7:00pm. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

II. Roll Call

Present: Weedon, Swem, George, Vigansky

Absent: Money

III. Statement of Purpose and Announcement of the Rules of the Hearing

A. *The purpose of the public hearing is to hear public comments on a proposed Short-Term Rental Ordinance (Ordinance 2025.09/443). The purpose of this ordinance is to protect and promote the health, safety and welfare of the City's residents, property owners, visitors, and neighborhoods by allowing short-term rentals (STRs) within the City under certain conditions and in certain zoning districts and establishing standards and regulations for the operation of the same.*

Bud Holmes – Spoke against the adoption of the Short-Term Rental Ordinance and requested an end to the moratorium. He also questioned the legality of the moratorium on new short-term rentals and whether they negatively impacted the schools as had been presented at the Planning Commission meeting. Short-term rental customers would also positively benefit the restaurants in town. He also objected to the characterization of short-term rental owners as 'slum lords', reminded the Commission of the existing noise ordinance, and was not in favor of the local government creating barriers where he does not see an existing problem.

Rick Paniagua – Spoke against the adoption of the Short-Term Rental Ordinance. More investment is needed in this community. He suggested limiting the total number.

IV. Close of Public Hearing

Motion made by Swem, seconded by Weedon to close the Public Hearing at 7:08pm. Roll call vote carried unanimously.

V. Call to Order the Regular Meeting

Meeting called to order at 7:09pm.

VI. Recognition

VII. Pledge of Allegiance

Mayor Weedon led in the pledge of allegiance.

VIII. Invocation

IX. Roll Call

Present: Weedon, Swem, George, Vigansky

Absent: Money

X. Approve Agenda

Motion made by George, seconded by Swem to approve the agenda as presented. Voice vote carried unanimously.

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

None.

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

A. Minutes- *Consider the Regular Meeting Minutes from August 11th, 2025.*

B. DDA Bylaws- *Consider approving the Downtown Development Authority Bylaws*

C. Crossing Guard Agreement - *Consider approving the 2025-2026 Crossing Guard Agreement*

Motion made by Swem, seconded by Vigansky to approve the consent agenda. Voice vote carried unanimously.

XIII. Scheduled Matters from the Floor *(if any)*

XIV. Reports by: Departments, Committees, Boards

A. Commission Reports from Various Boards *(SMCAS, BARB, Planning Commission, Landfill, DDA, JWSB)*

Swem reported that the Landfill is doing some negotiations, preparation for drilling, and equipment purchases.

Vigansky spoke about the Planning Commission's meeting regarding the short-term rental ordinance. There was a long conversation and the goal is to get ahead of a situation like New Buffalo's or St Joseph's. The 'slum lord' comment was not regarding bed and breakfast owners. The new zoning ordinance is beginning its approval hearings.

George reported on BARB and the progress of the Disc Golf Course at the McCoy Creek Recreation Area. We are still waiting to hear back about the Kathryn Park grant.

Weedon shared that the DDA is working with Brian Disette, the Berrien County Administrator, to update their TIF plan. Weedon is pleased with their progress.

XV. Unfinished Business

A. Ordinance 2025.09/443- *Consider the first reading of Ordinance 2025.09/44, Short-Term Rental Ordinance.*

Motion made by Vigansky, seconded by Swem to approve the first reading of Ordinance 2025.09/44, Short-Term Rental Ordinance as presented. Roll Call vote carried unanimously.

XVI. New Business

A. Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Services- *Consider awarding the contract for Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Services.*

The City has a Brownfield Authority that has been inactive for a number of years. There are three Brownfields that have likely run their course, and the City still has Brownfield Funds. The City issued an RFP for Brownfield services and interviewed two firms. City Manager McGhee recommends awarding the contract for Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Services to Fleis and VandenBrink.

Vigansky asked what the three Brownfields were. McGhee answered that they were at Third St near Lehman's, Third St at the Fitness Center, and the former Electro Voice building.

Vigansky also asked what the City will get from an agreement with one of the firms, and McGhee answered that they will close out the old Brownfield and make sure everything is organized. They'll also update the bylaws of our Brownfield Authority to bring them up to date legally.

Vigansky asked if the old feed mill property was a Brownfield, McGhee answered that it isn't but that could be an option for the future if a developer is interested once our Brownfield Authority is current.

Motion made by Vigansky, seconded by George to award the contract for Brownfield Redevelopment Authority Services to Fleis and VandenBrink. Roll Call vote carried unanimously.

B. Closed Session- *Consider entering Closed Session pursuant to MCL 15.268 Section 8 (a), to conduct a periodic personnel evaluation of the City Manager.*

A. Motion to enter in Closed Session pursuant to MCL 15.268 Section 8(a), personnel evaluation of City Manager.

Motion made by Vigansky, seconded by George to enter into Closed Session pursuant to MCL 15.268 Section 8(a), personnel evaluation of City Manager at 7:25 PM. Roll Call vote carried unanimously.

B. Motion to re-enter Open Session

Motion made by Vigansky, seconded by George to re-enter open session at 7:45 PM Roll Call vote carried unanimously.

Weedon shared that City Manager McGhee scored very well average score was 32.4 out of 35 and thanked him for the great work he's done for the City.

B. Expenditures- *Consider approving the expenditures in the amount of \$76,493.33*

Motion made by Swem, seconded by Vigansky to approve expenditures in the amount of \$76,493.33.

Vigansky noted that the expenditures have been going down.

Roll call vote carries unanimously.

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

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

Norma Ferris – Buchanan is getting a Pharmacy.

XIX. Executive Comments

A. City Manager Comments

The Planning Commission will have their public hearing on the adoption of the new zoning ordinance at their September 9th meeting. The Disc Golf Course is coming along well and is nearly completed, with fundraising being the next step for additional park amenities and signage. McGhee thanked Administrative Assistant Lysy for managing the Disc Golf project. The City has issued an RFP for ongoing concrete services to accompany the new sidewalk policy for the City with the goal of beginning repair and replacement of sidewalks in October. Paving is underway on River and S Redbud Trail.

All the service lines have been replaced for Phase 1 of the downtown project, running from the Wastewater treatment plant to Front St. New services will be done in two weeks. Curbs are also going in and roadbuilding is largely completed and ready for paving. The dewatering on Front St where the water table is very high is resulting in our Wastewater treatment plant going through 200k fewer gallons than normal. The pipes being replaced were having to take that groundwater, so when the project is completed, we expect to see a great reduction in wastewater pumped per day. On Phase 2, Front St, all water mains are done, and the five-way intersection is largely done.

B. Commissioner Comments

Vigansky – A lot of progress is being made at the former Stark School, he congratulated them.

George – McGhee is doing a great job; she appreciates the work he is doing along with City staff and the City Commission. Faith and Family Day saw a great turn out. She thanked Nathan Babcock of Buchanan Christian Church, Stacy Martin with Life Action, and Brendan Shea of Buchanan Church of the Nazarene for their help in putting on the event.

Swem – Swem was impressed with the flow drop due to the downtown improvements. He is pleased with the progress of the new DDA and welcomed the new pharmacy in town.

C. Mayor Comments

Weedon thanked Mike Baker and the entire DPW crew. They often work behind the scenes, but they are doing great work on the projects around town. Tomorrow is the ribbon cutting for the Grant Hotel. He is proud of the Commission, City Staff and the City Manager and the work they do. He asked for people to respect other people's opinions and be kind.

XX. Adjourn

Motion made by Vigansky, seconded by Swem to adjourn at 8:00pm. Roll call vote carries unanimously.

Kalla Langston, City Clerk

Mayor Mark Weedon