



**PUBLIC HEARINGS & REGULAR MEETING OF THE BUCHANAN CITY
COMMISSION**

TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2026 – 7:00 PM

CHAMBER OF BUCHANAN CITY HALL - 302 N REDBUD TRAIL, BUCHANAN, MI

MINUTES

I. Call to Order Public Hearing #1

The public hearing was opened at 7:00 PM by Mayor Weedon.

II. Roll Call

Weedon, Swem, Vigansky, Money, and George

III. Opening of Public Hearing #1

Motion: Moved by Swem, supported by George, to open Public Hearing #1. Voice vote; motion carried unanimously.

IV. Statement of Purpose and Announcement of Rules

A. The purpose of this public hearing is to receive public comment on a proposed amendment to the City of Buchanan Downtown Development Authority Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan. The proposed amendment has been prepared and approved by the Buchanan Downtown Development Authority and transmitted to the City Commission for consideration in accordance with the Recodified Tax Increment Financing Act, Public Act 57 of 2018, as amended. The amendment is intended to further the purposes of the Act by supporting downtown development, preventing deterioration of property values, encouraging economic growth, and identifying proposed improvements and financing methods within the downtown district.

Dan Fette presented the proposed amendment to the Downtown Development Authority Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan. The presentation explained that the DDA plan amendment was prepared from priorities identified by the DDA Board and City staff; that DDA tax increment financing revenues may only be spent on activities or programs included in the DDA plan; and that the City Commission will approve the DDA budget annually and review expenditures for consistency with the plan and budget.

The proposed plan was summarized as a 15-year plan for tax years 2026 through 2040. Major plan elements discussed included downtown marketing and wayfinding, operations and programming assistance for the Commons, Tin Shop Theatre, Pears Mill, Farmers Market support, facade grants, and maintenance of downtown public spaces. The plan was described as pay-as-you-go, with no contemplated DDA debt, a beginning fund balance of approximately \$505,000, annual tax increment revenues estimated at approximately \$115,000, total revenues estimated at approximately \$2.1 million, total expenditures estimated at approximately \$2.6 million, and an estimated remaining balance of about \$100,000 at the end of the plan period.

No further public comment was received.

V. Close of Public Hearing #1

Motion: Moved by Money, supported by George, to close Public Hearing #1 at 7:18 PM. Voice vote; motion carried unanimously.

VI. Call to Order of Public Hearing #2

The public hearing was called to order at 7:19 PM by Mayor Weedon.

VII. Roll Call

Weedon, Swem, Vigansky, Money, and George

VIII. Opening of Public Hearing #2

Motion: Moved by Swem, supported by Money, to open Public Hearing #2. Voice vote; motion carried unanimously.

IX. Statement of Purpose and Announcement of Rules

- A. The purpose of this public hearing is to receive public comment on the City of Buchanan's proposed Fiscal Year 2026–2027 Budget, covering the period of July 1, 2026, through June 30, 2027, and the proposed property tax millage rate that will support the budget. The City Commission will consider the proposed budget, including projected expenditures for General Government, Public Safety, Public Works/Cemetery, and Parks/Recreation/Other services. The proposed total expenditures for FY 2026–2027 are \$5,682,258.00. The proposed property tax millage rate is 16.2839 mills per \$1,000.00 of taxable value.
No public comment was received.

X. Close of Public Hearing #2

Motion: Moved by Money, supported by Vigansky, to close Public Hearing #2 at 7:20 PM. Voice vote; motion carried unanimously.

XI. Call to Order the Regular Meeting

Mayor Weedon called the Regular Meeting to order at 7:20 PM.

XII. Recognition

XIII. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

XIV. Invocation

Invocation was given by Dave Mitchell.

XV. Roll Call

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

ABSENT: None

CITY STAFF: City Manager Tony McGhee and City Clerk Kalla Langston

XVI. Approve Agenda

Motion: Moved by George, supported by Vigansky, to approve the agenda as presented. Voice vote; motion carried unanimously.

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

No public comment was received.

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

A. Minutes- Consider approving the Regular Meeting Minutes from May 11th, 2026.

B. Planning Commission Appointments -Consider the following appointments and reappointments to the Planning Commission.

-Appointment of John Wregglesworth, term ending June 2029.

-Reappointments of Matt Pleasant and Tony Houser, term ending June 2029.

-Reappointments of Peter Lysy and Jacob Brown, term ending June 2028.

C. Construction Board of Appeals

1) Consider approving the Construction Board of Appeals Bylaws.

2) Consider the appointments to the Construction Board of Appeals.

-Ron Hein and Kevin Barker, 2-year terms ending in June 2028.

-Dan Carlson and Mike Armstrong, 1-year term ending in June 2027.

D. Downtown Design Review Committee- Consider approving the DDRC Bylaws.

E. Zoning Board of Appeals- Consider approving the ZBA Bylaws.

F. Road Closure- June 6th, 2026, from 8:00 AM- 8:00 PM, Victory St. to Arctic St. and Victory St. to Elizabeth St., submitted by Larry Cashier.

G. Authorization of Credit Card- Consider authorization of Credit Card for the Buchanan Area Fine Arts Council with a \$1,000.00 limit.

Discussion included questions regarding a credit card, reactivation of the Construction Board of Appeals, Zoning Board of Appeals membership, and a road closure request for a community fish fry at Victory Park. **Motion:** *Moved by Vigansky, supported by Swem, to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Voice vote; motion carried unanimously.*

XIX. Scheduled Matters from the Floor (if any)

XX. Reports by: Departments, Committees, Boards

XXI. Unfinished Business

A. Vacant Building Fees- Consider the Adoption of the Vacant and Underutilized Building Ordinance Fee Schedule.

City Manager McGhee presented the proposed fee schedule for the vacant and underutilized building ordinance. The ordinance was described as a tool to encourage activation of vacant or underutilized commercial, industrial, and residential properties. The fee schedule presented was \$1,500, \$2,500, \$3,000, \$4,000, and \$5,000 for commercial/industrial properties for years one through five and thereafter, respectively, and \$500, \$1,500, \$2,000, \$2,500, and \$3,000 for residential properties for years one through five and thereafter, respectively. It was noted that owners may apply for a hardship exemption or reactivation plan.

Motion: Moved by George, supported by Swem, to adopt the Vacant and Underutilized Building Ordinance Fee Schedule as presented. Roll call vote: Weedon, yes; Vigansky, yes; Money, yes; Swem, yes; George, yes. Motion carried.

XXII. New Business

A. Budget Presentation for Fiscal Year 2026–2027 and Consideration of Resolution Adopting the FY 2026–2027 Budget

1) Budget FY 2026-2027 Presentation, City Manager Tony McGhee.

2) Consider Resolution 2026.05/09, a Resolution for the City of Buchanan to adopt a budget for FY2026-2027.

City Manager McGhee presented the proposed FY 2026-2027 budget. The presentation reviewed budget purposes, funding sources, distribution of tax revenues, proposed expenditures, capital projects, operational priorities, street funding, and water and sewer budget needs. The proposed overall budget was stated as approximately \$5.68 million, compared to approximately \$4.29 million the prior year, with the increase primarily attributed to capital projects. Capital items discussed included voting tabulators, BS&A Cloud conversion, fire department SCBA packs and turnout gear, police cameras and radios, sidewalk program funding, Red Bud Riverfront Park improvements, downtown parking lots and utility improvements, Oak Street work, streetscape furniture, DPW and cemetery equipment, and a housing rehabilitation program.

Discussion included water and sewer rate needs, deferred infrastructure maintenance, lead service line replacement, wastewater plant capacity, township utility costs, and the statement that the proposed budget included no new tax increase and reflected a small rollback.

Motion: Moved by Swem, supported by Money, to adopt Resolution 2026.05/09, a resolution adopting the City of Buchanan Fiscal Year 2026-2027 Budget. Roll call vote: George, yes; Weedon, yes; Vigansky, yes; Money, yes; Swem, yes. Motion carried.

B. DDA Development Plan and TIF- Consider First Reading of Ordinance 2026.06/452, the Downtown Development Authority Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan Amendment and Scheduling of Second Public Hearing.

Discussion included the need for DDA expenditures to align with the DDA plan and the proper purpose of the DDA, concerns about prior DDA funding requests, and clarification that the facade program is intended as grants and not loans. It was noted that facade grant parameters will be developed using existing policy as a starting point and that the program would not begin in the first year.

Motion: Moved by George, supported by Vigansky, to approve the first reading of Ordinance 2026-06/452, the Downtown Development Authority Development Plan and Tax Increment Financing Plan Amendment, and to schedule the second public hearing for June 22, 2026. Roll call vote: Weedon, yes; Vigansky, yes; Money, yes; Swem, yes; George, yes. Motion carried.

C. Marihuana Permit Renewals

The Commission considered the marijuana permit renewals. Background checks and required materials were reported to be complete and on file. Discussion included whether the 455 Post Road facility was still in use and comments from the Lifted Craft Cannabis representative regarding the effect of the 24% marijuana tax on vertically integrated operations.

1) Redbud Roots

A. Consider renewal of Medical Marihuana Facility Permit for Redbud Roots Lab IV, LLC, 455 Post Road- a renewal for a processor facility.

Motion: Moved by Swem, supported by Vigansky, to approve the renewal of the Medical Marijuana Facility Permit for Redbud Roots Lab IV, LLC, located at 455 Post Road, for a processor facility. Roll call vote: Vigansky, yes; Money, yes; Swem, yes; George, yes; Weedon, yes. Motion carried.

B. Consider renewal of Adult Use Marihuana Establishment for Redbud Roots Lab IV, LLC, 455 Post Road- a renewal for a processor permit.

Motion: Moved by Vigansky, supported by Money, to approve the renewal of the Adult Use Marijuana Establishment Permit for Redbud Roots Lab IV, LLC, located at 455 Post Road, for a processor permit. Roll call vote: Money, yes; Swem, yes; George, yes; Weedon, yes; Vigansky, yes. Motion carried.

2) Walpole Enterprises, LLC, Lifted Craft Cannabis

A. Consider renewal of Adult Use Marihuana Establishment Permit for Lifted Craft Cannabis / Walpole Enterprises, LLC, 303 Carroll Street- a renewal for an adult-use microbusiness permit.

Motion: Moved by Vigansky, supported by Swem, to approve the renewal of the Adult Use Marijuana Establishment Permit for Lifted Craft Cannabis/Walpole Enterprises, LLC, located at 303 Carroll Street, for an adult-use microbusiness permit. Roll call vote: Swem yes; George yes; Weedon yes; Vigansky yes; Money yes. Motion carried.

D. Resolution 2026.05/10- Consider resolution 2026.05/10, to approve the summer school tax collection.

The City Manager explained that the City collects taxes on behalf of Lake Michigan College, Berrien RESA, and Buchanan Community Schools, with a per-parcel collection cost of \$1.69, totaling \$3,208.19 per school district, or approximately \$9,600 cumulatively.

Motion: Moved by Money, supported by George, to adopt Resolution 2026-05/10 approving the collection of summer school taxes. Roll call vote: George, yes; Weedon, yes; Vigansky, yes; Money, yes; Swem, yes. Motion carried.

E. Resolution 2026.05/11- Consider the Resolution 2026.05/11 for the Updated FOIA Policy.

The update was described as intended to clarify procedures, keep the policy current, and ensure requests are handled consistently and effectively due to the volume of FOIA requests received by the City. Discussion included concerns about the burden of certain FOIA requests on City staff time.

Motion: Moved by George, supported by Vigansky, to adopt Resolution 2026-05/11 approving the updated City of Buchanan FOIA policy. Roll call vote: Weedon, yes; Vigansky, yes; Money, yes; Swem, yes; George, yes. Motion carried.

F. Delinquent Utility/ Mowing Bills Applied to Summer Taxes- Consider authorizing City Administration to take the necessary actions to add delinquent utility/mowing bills to the responsible parties' 2026 summer taxes.

The City Manager reported approximately \$16,455 in delinquent water and sewer bills and \$15,846 in mowing charges. It was noted that property owners are given 72 hours after a high grass notice before the City mows and that the City has historically added such delinquent charges to the tax bills pursuant to its process.

Motion: Moved by Money, supported by Swem, to authorize City Administration to take the necessary actions to add delinquent utility and mowing bills to the responsible parties' 2026 summer tax bills. Roll call vote: Vigansky, yes; Money, yes; Swem, yes; George, yes; Weedon, yes. Motion carried.

G. Expenditures- Consider approving the expenditures for May 26th, 2026, in the amount of \$86,561.06

Discussion included City support costs for events, porta-potties and restroom cleaning, radio service, annual fire extinguisher inspections, and reimbursement checks.

Motion: Moved by Vigansky, supported by George, to approve the expenditures for May 26, 2026, in the amount of \$86,561.06. Roll call vote: Vigansky, yes; Money, yes; Swem, yes; George, yes; Weedon, yes. Motion carried.

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

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

Jennifer Fields of St. Joseph, Michigan, introduced herself as a candidate for Fifth District Judge and discussed her work with the Berrien County Public Defender's Office and specialty court programs, including mental health court, drug treatment court, and sobriety court.

Langston reposted a written communication from Joseph Paolucci, the comment was distributed to the commission and available to the public on the agenda table as well as on file in the clerks office.

Mary questions regarding future water and sewer rate increases, the Redbud Riverfront Park boat launch improvements, the northside improvement grant, the privately owned lift station near the river, and the City's current millage rate.

XXV. Executive Comments

A. City Manager Comments

McGhee thanked the DPW staff for their work during the Memorial Day parade and SIP Buchanan event. He announced that Clerk Kalla Langston Weiss would be receiving a Merit Award from the Clerks Association. He also announced an upcoming master plan open house on Tuesday, June 9, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., as well as a pop-up public input event at the Farmers Market on June 13. Mr. McGhee stated that the vacant building application would be available online that week and that staff had begun compiling a list of properties.

McGhee also addressed the written public comment received from Mr. Paolucci. He responded to questions regarding materials from a prior DDA agenda packet, stating that certain attachments

had been included in the private packet due to information regarding past loan performance, but were available online with the minutes. He also addressed questions regarding the loan balance, stating that there are no separate or “shadow” books, and that the amount being pursued includes the balance shown on the City’s books plus unpaid invoices. He stated that Mr. Paolucci had until June 1 to sign the note and that the city would take appropriate action if he did not.

B. Commissioner Comments

Commissioner Vigansky Comments: commented on the DDA loan matter discussed during City Manager comments. He stated that when the Commission had previously discussed foreclosure on the loan, he personally went and spoke with the individual involved. He stated that he believed there had been an understanding at that time and that one payment received in 2023 was the result of that conversation.

Stated that the public may not fully understand the extent of the situation and expressed frustration with the ongoing matter. Also stated that he had inadvertently double-booked himself and missed the pancake breakfast. He acknowledged the mistake and stated that he heard those involved did a fantastic job.

Commissioner Money Comments: Stated that he had missed the pancake breakfast due to a scheduling conflict and acknowledged that he had double-booked himself. He stated that he heard the event went well. Commissioner Money also thanked the DPW and cemetery crews for their work, particularly in preparing for the Memorial Day program. He commented positively on the Memorial Day parade, the turnout downtown, the number of participants, and the City’s support of the event. He also commented on SIP Buchanan, noting that events will always receive some criticism, but thanked the City and Commission for their work.

Commissioner George Comments: Commissioner George congratulated Clerk Kalla Langston Weiss on receiving recognition from the Clerks Association. She commented positively on SIP Buchanan, the pancake breakfast, the car show, and Run for Buchanan. She reported that Run for Buchanan had 93 sign-ups, with 89 actual participants after correcting duplicate entries, and raised \$2,600. She thanked City staff, police, downtown businesses, volunteers, and others who supported the event. Commissioner George also commented on the former Tailgaters property, stating that work had recently been done on the sign.

Commissioner Swem Comments: Commissioner Swem thanked everyone involved in the Memorial Day parade and stated that it was a well-received community event. He also thanked the Buchanan Area Chamber of Commerce and local businesses for their support of SIP Buchanan, noting that the Chamber raised approximately \$16,000 or more in donations for the event. Commissioner Swem congratulated Clerk Kalla Langston Weiss. He stated that blight remediation continues to be a major focus of the Commission and noted that several priority properties had been put on notice and were beginning to respond. He also commented on water and sewer rates, referencing prior discussion and stating that Buchanan remains generally in line with statewide rates.

C. Mayor Comments

Mayor Weedon Comments: Mayor Weedon thanked everyone involved with SIP Buchanan and stated that, while there are always opportunities to improve, the event was one of the most successful downtown events the City has had in a long time. He commented that the Memorial Day parade was one of the longest he had seen in some time and reflected strong community pride, especially among local youth and families. He also stated that many downtown businesses were open during SIP Buchanan and that some reportedly had record sales. Thanked those involved, expressed pride in the City and Commission, and congratulated Clerk Kalla Langston Weiss on her recognition.

XXVI. Adjourn

Motion: *Moved by Vigansky, supported by George, to adjourn the meeting. Voice vote; motion carried*
The meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.

Kalla Langston-Weiss, City Clerk

Mayor Mark Weedon