

Regular Village Council Meeting Agenda January 20th, 2026  
G. Simpson, T. Rankin, J. Crawford, T. Fisher, R. Empson, T. Dickerson, B. Strong

**1. Roll Call-** All present

**2. Public Comment**

- Discussion addressed available cleaning product options, noting differences beyond price. Appreciation was expressed for staff and volunteer efforts in maintaining the facility, with acknowledgment that upkeep is an ongoing process.

**3. December Expenses**

General Fund-\$61,551.39	Major Streets-\$23,558.90
Sewer Fund-\$6,425.93	Local Streets-\$0.00

**4. Approval of current Agenda OR Amendments to the current Agenda**

- Amendment
  - President's monthly report- regarding shared Village/Township space related to a court settlement.
  - New Business- stipend for building cleaning
    - Amended agenda approved by unanimous roll call vote

**5. Approval of November 18th, 2025 & December 16th, 2025 Regular Meeting Minutes**

- Motion by R. Empson supported by G. Simpson. Roll-Yes. Motion Carried

**6. Communication:**

- Van Buren County Commissioner-None
- Parks and Recreation
  - A February budget meeting was discussed, with scheduling conflicts noted. It was agreed the meeting will be held at the Village Office prior to the next regular meeting, with arrangements made for space as needed.

**7. Reports on Village Officials**

- President's Monthly Report
  - Van Buren District Library Addendum to Branch Library Agreement
    - An addendum to the Bangor District Library branch agreement was presented, allowing the District Library to contribute up to \$15,000 for maintenance in 2026 and up to \$7,500 in subsequent years, at its discretion. The funds will be paid to the Village and must be accounted for, with the Village Clerk designated to track and report expenditures.
    - Motion by T. Rankin, supported by T. Dickerson. Roll-yes. Motion Carried.
  - Shared space letter
    - Council discussed shared space use under a prior Township–Village court settlement. Storage needs, secure election record requirements, and access to shared rooms were reviewed. Consensus was reached to pursue a 50/50 division of the records storage space and continue cooperative efforts with the Township to meet legal requirements and avoid further disputes.
- Treasurer's Report
  - Report attached
  - Closing the Bond and Interest Redemption Account
    - Discussion was held on closing the Bonded Interest Redemption account following bond payoff. Legal guidance has been requested from the Village attorney to determine requirements and options, including whether funds must remain tracked separately by ordinance.

## Regular Village Council Meeting Agenda January 20th, 2026

G. Simpson, T. Rankin, J. Crawford, T. Fisher, R. Empson, T. Dickerson, B. Strong

- Clerk's Report
  - Southwestern Michigan Dust Control -Brine- 11/7/2025 & 12/02/2025- \$1,625.00
    - Motion by B. Strong, supported by G. Simpson. Roll- yes. Motion Carried.
  - Fleis & VandenBrink- Operation Support- 11/23/2025-12/31/2025- \$1,291.00
    - Motion by B. Strong, supported by G. Simpson. Roll-yes. Motion Carried.
  - Fleis & VandenBrink- Depot soils consultation- 10/26/2025-12/31/2025- \$2,309.78
    - Motion by J. Crawford, supported by T. Dickerson. Roll-yes. Motion Carried.
- Grant Oversight
  - The Village President reported attending the Market One dinner on February 12 and pursuing two grants for interior improvements to the historic depot, anticipated to be 100% funded.
- Budget
  - Council was advised that year-end finances are in good condition, with some budgeted items not expended. Preparation for the upcoming year's budget is underway.
- Parks
  - 1. Haven Park
    - Memorial Bench in honor of Shirley Noble
      - Council discussed a request from Sam Benson to install a memorial bench in the park in honor of his mother, Shirley Noble. The family will cover all costs, with installation planned for later in the spring pending weather conditions.
  - 2. Depot
    - Council discussed state requirements for excavated soil at the depot site. EGLE advised the Village is responsible for the disturbed soil, with an estimated \$50,000+ cost to remove remaining material. Alternatives such as on-site encapsulation and landscaping were discussed. Staff will continue seeking guidance and potential relief from EGLE and legislators; no immediate action was taken.
- Sewer
  - Lagoon pumping is ongoing, with levels rising due to rain and snowmelt. Pumping will resume in February and March to reduce levels before spring turnover, with infiltration noted but water remaining relatively clean.
- Streets
  - Council discussed planned grinding of Oak Street prior to paving Rumrey to avoid rework, with estimates expected by February 1 and funds likely available. Concerns were raised about delays in the current street project, highlighting the need for future contracts to include penalties for missed deadlines. Drainage issues and incorrect drain installations were reviewed, with the contractor agreeing to make corrections when weather permits.
- Ordinance
  - Setback Ordinance
    - Council reviewed and discussed a proposed Building Setback Ordinance establishing minimum setback and building requirements. Concerns were raised regarding impacts on small lots and development, with an appeals process noted.
    - Motion by G. Simpson, supported by T. Rankin. Roll- 6 yes, 1 No. Motion Carried.
  - Council discussed enforcement actions for several blighted properties, including a recently sold property and properties on North Van Buren Street. Letters will be sent to owners with cleanup required by the Village cleanup day deadline. One property may require attorney involvement due to ownership or estate issues. It was noted the Village cannot enter private property without permission and must follow ordinance and court procedures. Budgeted funds for blight enforcement are available if needed.

Regular Village Council Meeting Agenda January 20th, 2026

G. Simpson, T. Rankin, J. Crawford, T. Fisher, R. Empson, T. Dickerson, B. Strong

**8. Unfinished Business**

- Windows/Roof in Municipalities building status
  - Council discussed the status of roof and window issues at the municipal building. The roof inspection will be completed once weather conditions allow. Contact information for a window contractor was shared, and follow-up is pending.
- Cleaning Service
  - Council reviewed cleaning service proposals and discussed funding use. To remain consistent with the Township, Council approved following the Township's selection. A contract with a probationary period and annual renewal is anticipated.
  - ☐ Motion by G. Simpson, supported by T. Rankin. Roll-yes. Motion Carried.

**9. New Business**

- Spring Clean Up Date
  - Council discussed scheduling the annual Spring Cleanup for May. To accommodate staff availability and avoid Mother's Day weekend, it was agreed to hold the cleanup on May 16, prior to Memorial Day.
- Stipend for Cleaning
  - Council expressed appreciation for Gail's volunteer cleaning of the municipal building while services were not in place. A motion was approved to provide a stipend of \$100 per week for the time she has been cleaning and until a cleaning service begins.
  - ☐ Motion by T. Rankin, supported by R. Empson. Roll 6-yes, 1-abstain. Motion Carried.

**10. Public Comment (Final Call)**

- Bloomingdale Food Access Project
  - Council heard a presentation on the proposed Bloomingdale Food Access Project, a community-owned grocery cooperative focused on local food access and economic development.
  - ☐ Motion by B. Strong, supported by T. Fisher for a letter of support. Roll-yes. Motion Carried.

**11. Adjournment**

Meeting adjourned at 9:28pm