

CASS LAKE VILLAGE
West Bloomfield Township, Oakland County, Michigan
**MINUTES OF THE FIRST ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF THE VILLAGE
COUNCIL**

A DRAFT prepared from the automated (Gemini Notes) transcript of the meeting. This draft is provided to the Council for review and correction of any errors before the Clerk finalizes and signs the official minutes, consistent with Charter Sec. 5.4(a)(2). Passages the source transcript rendered ambiguously or garbled are flagged in highlighted text below and must be confirmed by the Clerk, Chair, or affected Council member before adoption.

Date: August 25, 2026

Time: 7:40 p.m. EDT (call to order) – 9:35 p.m. EDT (adjournment)

Location: 4927 Greer Road, West Bloomfield, MI 48324

Notice: This meeting was noticed and open to the public in accordance with the Michigan Open Meetings Act, MCL 15.261 et seq.

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at approximately 7:40 p.m. Prior to roll call, on motion made and seconded, the Council voted unanimously by voice vote to appoint Council Member Christopher LaDuke as Acting/Temporary Meeting Chair, to serve until the election of the Village President later in this meeting (Item 6, below). The Council then voted unanimously by voice vote to elect Marc Edelstein as Interim Village Clerk, to serve pending completion of the search and interview process for a permanent Clerk. Mr. Edelstein then called the roll.

Council Members Present (roll call, all answered present):

- Robert Redner
- Michael Johnson
- Cathy O'Connell
- Kenneth Russell
- Christopher LaDuke
- Brik Pardo
- Joshua Barstow

Also Present: Village Attorney Gerry; members of the public (approximately 14 in attendance, per the Clerk's best estimate; a sign-in sheet was not circulated at this meeting).

2. Pledge of Allegiance

The Council and attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Approval of Agenda

On motion made, seconded, and approved by unanimous voice vote (no opposition), the Council approved the agenda as presented, with no modifications.

4. Public Comment (opening)

The Chair opened public comment and advised a three-minute limit per speaker. One member of the public spoke, expressing enthusiasm and support for the Village's formation and the work accomplished by the Council. No other public comments were offered. Public comment was closed.

5. Council Comment

The Chair asked whether any Council Member had a comment on a matter not on the agenda. None were offered, and Council comment was closed.

6. Adoption of Rules of Order

Consistent with Charter Sec. 5.1(i), and on the advice of Village Attorney Gerry that the Charter calls for adoption of Robert's Rules of Order "loosely interpreted," a motion was made and seconded to adopt Robert's Rules of Order, loosely interpreted, to govern Council meetings. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote, no opposition.

Note: This verbal adoption is intended to be formalized through a written Rules of Procedure resolution at the Council's next regular meeting, incorporating the verbal adoption made here together with additional procedural detail (e.g., virtual-attendance policy, public-hearing procedure).

7. Election of Village President

Per Charter Sec. 4.2(e), the Village President is nominated and elected by majority vote of the Council to a two-year term. Council Member Michael Johnson was nominated. Mr. Johnson accepted the nomination. Following comment (thanking Mr. Johnson for stepping forward), the Council elected Michael Johnson as the first Village President by unanimous voice vote, no opposition. President Johnson then assumed the chair for the remainder of the meeting.

8. Election of Village Vice President

Per Charter Sec. 4.2(e), President Johnson nominated Council Member Christopher LaDuke as Village Vice President, to a two-year term. Mr. LaDuke accepted the nomination. On motion made and seconded, the Council elected Christopher LaDuke as the first Village Vice President by unanimous voice vote, no opposition.

9. Appointment of Interim Village Treasurer

On motion made and seconded, the Council appointed Cathy O'Connell as Interim Village Treasurer, with all authority provided to the office of Treasurer under the Charter, to serve pending completion of the search and appointment process for a permanent Treasurer. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote, no opposition. (The meeting paused briefly at this point to allow the Clerk to complete his notes of the motions and seconds taken to this point in the meeting.)

10. Appointment of Members of the Planning Commission

Pursuant to MCL 125.3815 and the Charter, the Village President nominated, and the Council considered by majority vote, the following individuals to serve as the first Cass Lake Village Planning Commission: Jon Kellner, Wade Herzig, Shari Robertson, and Lonnie Adkins, together with Council Member Robert Redner to serve as the Council liaison to the Planning Commission (a non-voting-term appointment that runs concurrently with Mr. Redner's Council term).

The Charter requires that, of the first-appointed members, one serve a one-year term, one a two-year term, and two serve three-year terms, so that appointments are staggered in future years. None of the four nominees were present at the meeting; Council Member Redner reported that he had spoken with each of them and that all had agreed to serve. After discussion, the Council assigned terms as follows and adopted the entire slate, together with the liaison appointment, in a single motion, seconded, and approved by unanimous voice vote, no opposition:

- Jon Kellner — one (1) year term
- Lonnie Adkins — two (2) year term
- Shari Robertson — three (3) year term
- Wade Herzig — three (3) year term

- Robert Redner — Council liaison to the Planning Commission (concurrent with Council term; non-term appointment)

11. Establishment of 90-Day Moratorium on Residential Building and Development

The Clerk read the resolution in full. Village Attorney Gerry summarized its purpose: because the Village currently has no zoning, building, or construction regulations of its own, the moratorium is intended to prevent unregulated building and development until the Village adopts an interim zoning ordinance and building/construction standards — a process expected to take meaningfully less than the full 90 days. The resolution allows a property owner who believes the moratorium works a constitutional hardship to petition the Council for relief through the administrative process set out in the resolution, and allows the Village President and Vice President, acting together (or the President alone in an emergency), to approve temporary actions needed to accommodate normal residential living without creating a nonconforming use.

Discussion: The Council discussed how the moratorium would affect residential building activity already underway or approved by West Bloomfield Township prior to incorporation, including (a) at least one home under construction with an approved Township permit, and (b) at least two pending Township variance requests that had been redirected to the Village upon incorporation. The consensus reached in discussion, to guide implementation of the resolution (and not itself a separate vote), was:

- Projects with a building permit already approved and paid for by West Bloomfield Township prior to August 4, 2026 — including inspections already covered under that permit — are not restricted by this moratorium and may continue; the Village will confirm with the Township that it intends to complete inspection of those permits. Robert Redner agreed to compile a list of open residential permits within the Village (recent history, e.g., roughly the past 12 months) for Village Attorney Gerry to raise with the Township attorney.
- Requests that were not yet approved by the Township as of incorporation (including the two pending variance requests) are subject to the moratorium and must wait for the Village to adopt its own zoning/building regulations.
- The moratorium and this permit-completion approach do not apply to the Greer Road bridge project, which is being separately administered under the Village's engineering/construction standards (see Item 14, below) and is expressly excluded from the residential-building moratorium.

On motion made and seconded, the Council adopted the 90-Day Moratorium on Residential Building and Development resolution as read, by unanimous voice vote, no opposition.

12. Resolution Directing the Planning Commission on Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance

The Clerk read the resolution in full. Village Attorney Gerry explained that ordinarily the adoption or amendment of a zoning ordinance requires an extensive process (often 90 days to a year) with public hearings, but MCL 125.3404 allows the Council to direct the Planning Commission to prepare a recommended interim zoning ordinance — not intended to be permanent, and generally effective for up to one year — which the Council may then adopt without the extended public-hearing process otherwise required. The resolution directs the Planning Commission, in order of priority, to: (1) submit a recommended interim zoning ordinance to the Council on or before November 1, 2026; (2) proceed with deliberations on a Village Master Plan; and (3) proceed with deliberations on a permanent Village Zoning Ordinance. Attorney Gerry noted he has already begun researching interim zoning language used by another community that could be adapted for the Village, focused on avoiding provisions (e.g., minimum lot size/width) likely to require widespread variances given existing lot configurations.

On motion made and seconded, following public comment (none offered), the Council adopted the resolution as read, by unanimous voice vote, no opposition.

13. Road Rededication — HOA to Village (Added Item)

President Johnson introduced correspondence and supporting materials received from Ed Hug at SEMCOG describing a process for transferring (dedicating) the subdivision's roads from the homeowners' association to the Village, and distributed copies to the Council. On motion made and seconded, the Council adopted a resolution directing Council Members Kenneth Russell and Joshua Barstow, working with Village Attorney Gerry, to review the SEMCOG materials, compile the necessary road survey/dimension records (noting that plat records may not include road dimensions, in which case surveys may be needed; engineering firm Spicer was identified as a possible source of existing dimension/location records), and determine the steps required to complete the road rededication to the Village. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote, no opposition.

14. Ordinance No. 2026-1 — Standards and Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction and Improvement

The Clerk read the ordinance in full. The ordinance adopts by reference the Road Commission for Oakland County (RCOC), Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), AASHTO, and Federal Highway Administration (23 CFR Part 625) standards and specifications governing road and bridge construction and improvement in the Village, effective immediately upon publication. Council discussion noted this ordinance is needed to put engineering standards in place for the Greer Road bridge project.

Because adoption of an ordinance involving Village standards was treated as requiring a roll-call vote consistent with Charter Sec. 4.2(g), the Clerk called the roll following the motion and second (no public comment offered):

- Joshua Barstow — Yes
- Robert Redner — Yes
- Michael Johnson — Yes
- Cathy O'Connell — Yes
- Kenneth Russell — Yes
- Christopher LaDuke — Yes
- Brik Pardo — Yes

Result: 7 Yeas, 0 Nays. Ordinance No. 2026-1 was declared duly adopted. The Council directed the Clerk to arrange for publication of the ordinance and discussed publication method and cost (see Item 15, below).

15. Publication of Ordinance No. 2026-1

The Council discussed that Charter Sec. 11.4 requires publication of an adopted ordinance in a newspaper of general circulation in the Village (in full or synopsis form), or, if no such newspaper exists, printing and posting on the Village website and in at least four public places. The Council determined that Ordinance No. 2026-1 will be published in the Beacon. The Clerk was authorized to proceed with obtaining a publication quote and placing the notice with the Beacon, and to keep receipts for reimbursement once Village funds are available (see Item 18, budget, below).

16. Designation of Depository for Village Funds

Consistent with Charter Sec. 7.5, and on the understanding that Council approval of a bank is a prerequisite to the Treasurer opening any account there (even though the Village presently holds no funds), a motion was made and seconded to approve Chase Bank and Bank of America as approved Village depositories. This was treated as requiring a roll-call vote:

- Joshua Barstow — Yes
- Michael Johnson — Yes
- Cathy O'Connell — Yes

- Kenneth Russell — Yes
- Christopher LaDuke — Yes
- Brik Pardo — Yes
- Robert Redner — Yes

Result: 7 Yeas, 0 Nays. Chase Bank and Bank of America were designated as approved depositories for Village funds.

17. Resolution Setting Public Hearing Date on Interim Temporary Budget

Village Attorney Gerry explained that, under Charter Sec. 7.2, because the Charter was approved by the electors after April 15, 2026, the Village may adopt an interim temporary budget of not more than 60 days' duration to fund initial operations, following a public hearing preceded by at least 10 days' notice (Charter Sec. 7.3(a)). The Council discussed notice logistics, including newspaper lead time versus a direct mailing to residents, and the number of days needed to allow for mail delivery before the 10-day clock begins.

On motion made and seconded, the Council set a public hearing on the Interim Temporary Budget for Thursday, September 10, 2026, at 7:00 p.m., at the Village's regular meeting location. The motion was approved by unanimous voice vote, no opposition. The Council directed that notice be mailed to residents (rather than published in a newspaper) in order to meet the timeline, and asked Council Members to submit proposed budget line items to the Clerk (not to one another, to avoid a quorum discussing Village business outside a noticed meeting) for compilation into a proposed budget.

Related Special Meeting: To allow the Council to review and discuss a compiled proposed budget before the public hearing, the Council also set a special meeting for Thursday, September 3, 2026, at 7:00 p.m., to be noticed no less than 18 hours in advance consistent with Charter Sec. 5.1(g), for the purpose of discussing (but not voting to finally adopt) a proposed interim temporary budget to bring to the September 10 public hearing. This motion was made, seconded, and approved by unanimous voice vote, no opposition.

Budget discussion notes for the Clerk's preparation of the proposed budget:

- Because the Village currently has no bank account or revenue, the Council discussed that the Homeowners' Association (HOA) may donate or advance funds to the Village (e.g., a gift of a set amount), which the Village would then need to appropriate through the interim temporary budget before it could be spent — money cannot be spent by the Village without a budget appropriation, per Charter Sec. 7.2/7.4.
- Suggested approach: rather than itemizing every line, consider a lump-sum administrative/organizational line (illustratively discussed in the \$10,000–\$100,000 range, unresolved) to cover initial organizational costs, to be discussed further with the Village's prospective auditor as to whether a lump-sum "organizational expenditures" appropriation is appropriate.
- Anticipated cost categories raised in discussion: Clerk compensation; Treasurer/Clerk consulting assistance to establish financial and recordkeeping procedures; ordinance publication costs; Village Attorney fees; engineering costs related to the Greer Road bridge project (a quote was said to be forthcoming within about a month).
- The Council discussed seeking guidance on Village financial setup from the Michigan Municipal League, the Michigan Association of Municipal Clerks/Treasurers, and Oakland County (including its Treasurer's office and its relationships with other small villages), given that West Bloomfield Township's own processes may be sized for a much larger municipality than the Village's approximately 600 residents.

18. Resolution Formalizing Appointment of Village Attorney

Village Attorney Gerry recommended that the Council also engage Joellen Shortly as assistant/co-counsel to the Village, citing her experience representing local governments, including Oakland County, at the same billing rate. On motion made and seconded, the Council approved the engagement of Gerry and Joellen Shortly for legal representation of the Village by voice vote; no opposition was voiced. Attorney Gerry agreed to provide the Clerk with a proposed legal-fee budget estimate for inclusion in the interim temporary budget.

19. Adoption of Regular Meeting Schedule

The Council discussed and resolved a scheduling conflict between the proposed Village meeting schedule (originally proposed as "every other Tuesday") and the existing HOA Board meeting schedule, given that all current Council Members also serve on the HOA Board. The Council agreed to keep the Village Council's regular meetings on the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m., and to adjust the HOA's meeting time on those shared dates to conclude by 6:45 p.m. so both meetings can be held without conflict.

On motion made and seconded, the Council adopted the following 2026 regular meeting schedule, all beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the Village's regular meeting location, 4927 Greer Road, West Bloomfield, MI 48324, by unanimous voice vote, no opposition:

- September 8 and September 22, 2026
- October 13 and October 27, 2026
- November 10 and November 24, 2026
- December 8 and December 22, 2026

The Clerk noted that Charter Sec. 5.1(g) and related notice requirements call for this regular-meeting schedule to be posted within 10 days after this meeting, and that the schedule may be included with the budget-hearing mailing to residents. The Council directed the Clerk to send calendar invitations for the special meeting (Sept. 3), the public budget (Sept. 10), and the full 2026 regular meeting schedule, using the Village's official (info@) email account rather than the Clerk's personal account.

20. Other Business / Announcements

The Council briefly discussed timing of the interim temporary budget relative to anticipated future needs (e.g., whether to request a larger initial gift from the HOA to avoid repeating the 60-day budget/notice process too soon), noting that any budget — however sized — must itemize the purposes for which funds are appropriated. No formal action was taken on this topic; it will be addressed as part of the proposed budget prepared for the September 3 special meeting and the September 10 public hearing.

21. Public Comment (closing)

No further public comments were offered.

22. Adjournment

On motion made, seconded, and approved by unanimous voice vote, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 9:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marc Edelstein, Interim Village Clerk

Minutes approved by the Village Council on: _____