

Village Council Meeting

August 14, 2026

Call to Order: Present were Tim McCarthy, Mike Bothelo, Brian Cassidy and Nancy Thill were present. Also present was Police Chief Ryan Layman, Superintendent Rick Reitz, Treasurer Tracey McCay and Clerk Anne Heywood. Tim McCarthy excused Mike Mumper and said Nancy Thill should be arriving shortly running late. There were 17 residents present and 4 residents participated on line.

Additions and Deletions to the Agenda – N/A

Public Comment

President Tim McCarthy reminded the residents that the first public comment period is for matters specifically related to items appearing on the agenda. Members of the public were asked to approach the microphone, state their name and address, and address the Council.

Liz Cutler, 3973 Lake Shore Dr. addressed the Council to consider providing a police blotter or similar weekly report to residents. She referenced other communities that publish general information about recent incidents without disclosing inappropriate or sensitive details. She felt that providing residents with information about incidents in the Village would help residents remain aware and take appropriate precautions.

The Tim McCarthy explained that the Police Chief provides a report at each Council meeting regarding police activity. He also noted that the Village communicates significant or emergency situations to residents through its notification system and other Village communications. He stated that some police matters cannot be discussed publicly because of ongoing investigations or court proceedings, but acknowledged that police activity has increased compared with several years ago.

Joanne Fisher - 3898 Michigan Drive, thanked Rick, Josh, and the Public Works crew for their work following the recent storm and for addressing storm-related damage throughout the Village.

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes - Mike Bothelo made a motion to approval of the July 10, 2026 Village Council meeting minutes and the July 16, 2026 Tree Board meeting minutes; Nancy Thill seconded the motion; Discussion, Nancy noted under the Tree Report contained a date that needed to be corrected from July 21 to July 16 along with a removal stated by Mike Mumper; Anne said she would review the statement with Mike Mumper before any change would be made. Mike Bothelo amended his motion to approve the minutes subject to the noted corrections and addition; motion was second Tim McCarthy; motion was approved by the Council.

Building Inspector's Report -The Building Inspector reported that approximately four projects from 2025 are nearing completion. Since the beginning of 2026, the Village has issued 33 building permits. Most of the permits have been for relatively small projects.

The Council asked Bill the Building Inspector if he an update on the property that had a fire. Bill said the house was a total loss. Their insurance company has request information from the Village requiring documentation to what would be required for a new home. This includes complete sets of plans, verification of setbacks, and applicable Health Department permits and approvals. The property owner will proceed with demolition and removal of the remaining structure and personal property once they have approval from insurance company.

Fire Departments Report - The Council received a report from the Michiana Shores and New Buffalo Volunteer Fire Department. Both Chiefs were not present, Council President Tim McCarthy read over their reports stating they had several incidents were reported during July, including a fire alarms, and a structural fire.

Police Report - Police Chief Ryan Layman reported they responded to approximately 180 calls during the reporting period. Which included several significant incidents and investigations, including a death investigation, marijuana possession, cocaine possession, and other criminal and evidence-related matters. The Chief also reported multiple traffic stops involving firearms. Two incidents occurred within a two-week period in which firearms were discovered during traffic stops, including loaded firearms. The Council thanked Chief Layman and the Police Department for their continued work and service to the Village. Chief Layman said that he has been keeping a spreadsheet for the past 6 months on the increase of calls the police have had since the cannabis stores have opened.

Beach Report - Brian Cassidy reported the recent weather and lake conditions have affected the Village's beaches, with significant changes in the shoreline and shifting sand. Brian said Stop 43 was coming along and looking great. The contractor was asked to give the council a quote to include a 16-foot by 5-foot platform/deck constructed near the top of the retaining wall, adjacent to the stairs. The platform is intended to provide a safer and more permanent area for access and to protect the remaining beach features during periods when the shoreline is diminished. John Yanz the contractor provided an estimate of approximately \$7,289 for the additional work. After discussion, a motion was made by Brian Cassidy to approve the additional work in the amount not to exceed \$7,400; the motion was seconded by Mike Bothelo; discussion; council expressed appreciation for the contractor's work and noted the contractor complexity of work in the beach environment, including the amount of preparation and leveling required before construction. The Council discussed the importance of permanently securing the area because the beach does not always remain accessible and the shoreline continues to change. They noted that the proposed platform/deck would provide a usable area for sunsets even when beach conditions change. Motion passed. The Council noted that the Stop 43 project, along with previous improvements at other beach stops, has provided significant improvements to Village beach access while keeping costs substantially below a previous beach project. It was discussed the need for signage or fencing to discourage people from entering unsafe areas. They said the previous barriers have been vandalized and that people have continued to enter dangerous areas despite warnings.

Public Works Report - Rick Reitz provided the Public Works report and discussed the extensive cleanup following the recent severe storms. Rick reported that the crews would continue working through the Village and anticipated needing approximately four or more dumpsters to complete the cleanup. Residents were reminded that trees and storm debris located on private property are the responsibility of the property owner. Public Works will continue removing trees and debris that are located within Village rights-of-way and road areas. The Council recognized Rick and the Public Works crew for their outstanding response to the recent storms and thanked the crew for working quickly to clear roads and make the Village safe and accessible following what was described as an unusually severe storm.

Water Department – Mike Mumper discussed the ongoing water project and delays involving the EPA. The Village has completed the work necessary to move the project forward but is still waiting for final federal approval on an outstanding issue. The Council expressed frustration with the continued delays and noted that the Village had hoped to have construction underway by September. Tim McCarthy discussed the impact the delay may have on the Village's road program. Because some roads will be affected by the water project, the Village does not want to resurface those roads before the water work is completed. Tim McCarthy discussed a recent major water incident involving the Village's pumping station. A significant water breach occurred, resulting in substantial water flow and requiring the Village to shut off water coming from Michigan City to the Village. Public Works personnel responded and worked through the night to monitor the system, operate equipment, and restore the water system. The Council recognized the extensive work performed by Josh and the

Rick during the emergency. The Council expressed its appreciation to the Public Works for their emergency response and continued efforts to protect the Village's water system.

Parks Report -Mike Mumper complimented the condition of the Village lawns and parks and recognized Josh and the Public Works crew for maintaining the grounds so well. Mike noted that park equipment had been repaired as needed and that there were no significant equipment concerns at this time. He also discussed unauthorized signs and notices being posted throughout Village properties. Staff will continue removing signs that are not authorized or related to Village business.

Tree Board – Nancy Thill said the Tree Board has scheduled a meeting for August 16 to review storm-damage reports and estimates. The Board is continuing to obtain estimates from tree service companies for necessary work. It was noted that obtaining estimates may take longer than usual because of the widespread storm damage throughout the area. The next Tree Board meeting is scheduled for August 28 at 1:00 p.m. (est)

Nancy also reviewed this year's Arbor Day activities and discussed plans for **Arbor Day** 2027. A date of Monday, July 12, 2027, at 10:30 a.m. Michigan Time was proposed, pending confirmation by the Tree Board. Members expressed appreciation for the Arbor Day and tree ambassador programs this year. The day camp activities were described as especially successful, with children participating.

Nancy discussed the need to better protect recently planted trees and other Village landscaping investments in the parks. A recommendation was made to expand the mulch area around the trees and install permanent fencing to prevent damage and protect the trees as they become established. Nancy discussed the butterfly garden and playground garden, including the need to identify replacements for plants and trees that did not survive. The Tree Board is continuing to look for volunteers and assistance with the gardening projects.

Planning Commission - Mike Bothelo reported that, following extensive work and review, the Village Master Plan was ready for approval. Mike Bothelo read the proposed resolution approving the Village of Michiana Master Plan 2026. The resolution noted that the Planning Commission had prepared and updated the Master Plan in accordance with Michigan law, distributed the draft to the appropriate agencies and surrounding governmental units for review and comment, held a properly noticed public hearing on August 8, 2026, and subsequently adopted the plan by resolution. The resolution further recognized the Village Council's authority to approve or reject the Master Plan following its adoption by the Planning Commission.

Mike Bothelo made motion to approve the Resolution to Approve the Master Plan; Tim McCarthys seconded the motion; a roll call vote was taken 4 ayes and 0 nays; motion passed. The Council thanked the Planning Commission and all residents and members who contributed to the Master Plan process.

Treasurer's Report – Tracey McCay presented the financial report and provided an update regarding the Village's certificates of deposit (CDs). Tracey stated that one CD is scheduled to mature at the end of August, another in September, and the final CD for 2026 in December. The August CD is held in the Village's general account, while the September CD is associated with the water fund. The Council discussed current interest rates and the Treasurer's authority to reinvest maturing funds. Tim McCarthy made a motion to authorize the Treasurer to reinvest the maturing funds at the best available rate, with a term not to exceed 18 months and an interest rate not below 3.25%. The motion was seconded by Mike Bothelo; motion passed.

Tracey also reported that the fire rings purchased for the Village beaches have now paid for themselves. The Council discussed the importance of monitoring beach use, particularly following the Fourth of July weekend, and noted that residents had reported concerns involving beer cans and garbage left in the rings. Overall, the Brian reported that beach users have generally been doing a good job cleaning up and removing garbage. It was stated that the beaches have been much cleaner.

Check Register – Anne Heywood requested approval of the check register in the amount of \$132,368.43. Tim McCarthy made a motion to approve the check register as submitted; motion was seconded by Nancy Thill; motion passed. Anne thanked residents who attended the recent Electric Sugar concert in the park, which attracted more than 200 people. Anne reported the Village party had approximately 145 people attending. Anne expressed appreciation to everyone who participated and helped make the event successful despite the weather. A reminder that Toxic Crayon would be performing at the upcoming Music in the Park event from 6:00–8:30 p.m. (EST) The event would be held rain or shine. It was also mentioned to the residents that kayaks and paddleboards must be removed from the racks by October 15.

Anne requested for the budget be amended related to the additional work approved for the Stop 43 project. A motion was made by Mike Botelho to amend the Village budget by \$7,400 to account for the additional Stop 43 work. The motion was seconded by Nancy Thill; motion passed.

Tim also discussed increasing the use of the Village Hall for community activities during the off-season. Members expressed interest in providing additional programs and events for residents during the winter months.

Tim explained the distinction between Village-sponsored activities and private commercial activities held at the Village Hall. It was explained that a private individual or business conducting a fee-based commercial activity at the Hall would be required to pay the applicable rental fee rather than using the public facility for free.

Old Business

New Village Entrance Signs – Tabled until September

Resolution for Approval of Master Plan – moved up to Planning Commission Report

Police Station Project – Tim McCarthy reminded that the property for the proposed police station was donated by a resident in Grand Beach at no cost and is located along the area between Michiana and Grand Beach, providing a visible location along the roadway. The architect from Grand Beach has extensive experience designing police and public-safety facilities and has provided substantial assistance to the Village during the development of the project. Tim discussed the proposed agreement between the Village of Michiana and the Village of Grand Beach regarding the police station. Under the proposed arrangement, the two communities would share 50% of the cost each for the project. Tim McCarthy explained that the agreement is still being finalized by the attorneys but that the intent is to establish a long-term arrangement regarding ownership, construction costs, and future expenses.

A motion was made by Tim McCarthy to approve 50% of the \$161,770 architectural and engineering cost, representing the Village of Michiana's share of the professional services for the police station project, subject to the Village attorney review; the motion was seconded by Mike Bothelo; Council discussed the scope of the architect's services, noting that the proposal covers the project from the initial design through the various components required for construction, including items such as fire alarms, security cameras, parking, and other facility requirements. Tim also discussed the architect's extensive experience with police and fire facilities and the significant amount of work and assistance that had already been provided to the Villages for free. The Council then discussed the timing of payments and whether the initial expense would be charged against the current fiscal-year budget or a future budget. It was noted that the design work would occur over the coming months and that construction was not anticipated to begin until approximately spring or early summer of the following year.

The Council continued discussion regarding funding for the proposed police station and the Village's anticipated 50% share of the project costs. It was explained that the Village will need to pay its share as the architectural, engineering, and other project expenses become due. The Council discussed the possibility of the

Village of Grand Beach financing the project initially and allowing the Village to reimburse its 50% share over a period of several years. This could potentially reduce or eliminate the need for the Village to issue a bond and would avoid additional interest costs. At this time, no grant funding was considered sufficiently certain to be included in the Village's financing plan. Members expressed concern that funding being considered at the federal level must pass through the State of Michigan and could potentially be delayed, reduced, or redirected. The Council agreed that the Village should proceed based on funding it can reasonably count on rather than relying on a grant that has not yet been approved. The Council emphasized the importance of improving police facilities and ensuring that the Police Department has the equipment and technology necessary to perform its duties. Tim McCarthy returned to the motion to approve the Village's 50% share of the architectural and engineering services for the proposed police station, subject to review of the contract by the Sara Senica the Village Attorney. Mike Bothelo seconded the motion; a roll call vote was taken 4 ayes and 0 nays; The motion passed unanimously.

Second Public Comment Period

Deer Population – Holly Duran addressed the Council regarding the increasing deer population in the Village. Holly stated that deer have become increasingly prevalent and expressed concern about their impact on residents, children, landscaping, and the animals themselves.

Overgrown Properties and Vegetation – Pam Schutt from Creek Drive raised concerns regarding several properties with severely overgrown vegetation. Pam stated that some properties have been vacant for extended periods and that vegetation has grown into the roadway and obstructed visibility.

New Buffalo Township / Cannabis-Related Matters – Pam Schutt from Creek Drive informed the Council about upcoming proceedings involving New Buffalo Township and businesses operating under Michigan cannabis laws. The resident stated that there are ongoing legal challenges involving the Township and that another public hearing/meeting is scheduled for the following Monday. Residents were encouraged to attend the meeting.

Water System Incident – Jurate Landwehr from Ponchartrain thanked the Village Council and Public Works staff for their response to the recent water emergency. The resident stated that the incident was of particular interest to residents and suggested that the Village provide additional communication regarding what occurred.

Native Landscaping / Deer-Resistant Vegetation - Jurate Landwehr suggested that the Village consider using native Michigan vegetation whenever possible for landscaping projects, particularly because some native plants are less attractive to deer. The resident specifically recommended a native plant that grows in the dune environment and noted that it is attractive, hardy, and generally not eaten by deer.

Village Hall Use - A resident asked whether a private book club or similar small community group could use the Village Hall without paying a rental fee if the group was simply gathering socially. The Council explained that small community groups can use the Hall during regular Village office hours, when the building is open and staff are present. The Council noted that access becomes more complicated after normal office hours because someone would need to open and secure the building.

Lakefront Steel/Concrete Removal Stops 40 & 42— Brian Cassidy discussed the status of removing remaining corrugated steel the lakefront at Stops 40. Brian state we are still waiting for a proposal. Council discussed beginning the permit process in advance so that the Village would have the necessary authorization ready when the contractor becomes available. It was noted that the permit may be valid for one to two years. Rick will prepare a description of the proposed work and photographs for submission to the appropriate agency. Council discussed pursuing permits for both locations.

Closed Session

Tim McCarthy made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to Section 8(h) of the Michigan Open Meetings Act to consider material exempt from public disclosure, specifically a letter from the Village Attorney, which would be retained as part of the closed-session record. Motion was seconded by Mike Bothelo; Motion was passed by all. The Council temporarily adjourned into closed session and Tim McCarthy stated to the residents that it would reconvene afterward to formally close the meeting.

Council reconvened in open session following the closed session.

Tim McCarthy discussed the potential financing structure for the proposed police station and the possibility of using a special assessment to fund the Village's share. It was discussed that a preliminary repayment period of approximately seven years. The intent would be for the police-station assessment to begin after the existing water-bond obligation ends, thereby minimizing an additional financial burden on residents.

Tim discussed potential grant funding proceeds could reduce the amount ultimately required from the Village, although costs incurred before grant approval may not be eligible for reimbursement. The previously approved architectural and engineering costs were discussed as potentially being incorporated into the Village's overall project financing. Council further discussed that the assessment could potentially be paid off earlier than the anticipated term if sufficient funds become available, subject to applicable legal and financial requirements.

Mike Botelho made a motion to adopt an assessment model for the police-station capital project, not to exceed \$2.5 million in total project cost, with the matter remains subject to review and approval by the Village Attorney including the appropriate legal mechanism for establishing and collecting the special assessment Michiana responsible for 50%, not to exceed \$1.25 million, with terms to be determined. Motion was seconded by Tim McCarthy; a roll call vote was taken 4 ayes – 0 nays; Motion carried unanimously.

The Clerk will notify Grand Beach that the Village has approved moving forward with consideration of the special-assessment model for funding its share of the police station. Further steps toward establishing the assessment will be undertaken following consultation with the Village Attorney.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

Anne Heywood/Clerk

