

Village Council Meeting Minutes April 10th, 2026

The meeting of the Village Council was called to order by President Tim McCarthy at 1:00 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Tim McCarthy, Mike Botelho, Mike Mumper, Police Chief Ryan Layman, Superintendent Rick Reitz, Building Inspector Bill Lambert, Treasurer Tracey McCay, and Village Attorney Sara Senica. Tim McCarthy excused: Nancy Thill, Brian Cassidy and Clerk Anne Heywood. There were also 20 village residence present and 6 online.

Public Comment:

Resident Kathleen Hogan Morrison asked about the upcoming police station plans and if funds would be available.

Approval of Minutes

- Council meeting from December 12, 2025 & Water Board meeting from February 27, 2026

Motion by Tim McCarthy to approve both sets of meeting minutes: Motion seconded by Mike Botelho, all in favor, motion passed.

Building Inspector Report – Bill Lambert reported that the winter months have been slow and they have only issued 6 permits. He did say there were 3 new homes in the works.

Fire Department Report- Michiana Shores Chief Gary Bendix gave his report and mentioned the pancake breakfast coming up on May 3rd. They will be serving from 7:00 to 12:00 Indiana time.

Fire Department - New Buffalo Township Chief Jamie Flick – Absent (Report on file).

Police Report – Chief Ryan Layman reported from December through March 1st, we had 103 calls. They had a busy start to the year with several different calls that required extensive follow-up investigation.

- Recruit Megan is doing well at the Academy and is on track to graduate May 7th.
- Recruit Tyler is in the Academy now. He is also doing well and will graduate July 8th.
- Chief Layman also wanted to congratulate Sergeant Creo on his five-year anniversary with us.
- Officer Heather Crooks received a commendation for receiving a letter of praise from a resident.

Beach Report- Brian Cassidy absent - Tim McCarthy gave report on behalf of Brian:

- The plan is to have **Stop 39** and all **Stop 40 stairs** stained this spring.
- Over the winter Rick and Josh took down the six water fountains along the stops and rebuilt these units from the ground up with new tubing, new compression fittings and new controls. The Village explored purchasing new ones, but it was going to cost about **\$35,000**. Instead, the entire rebuild cost approximately **\$600**, saving the village thousands of dollars.
- The wooden shower platforms at the stops will be replaced with concrete pads. These will be brushed to create a non-slip surface to improve safety.
- Fire rings will be installed on all beaches. The rings have already been purchased and will be anchored in place.

Public Works Report – Rick Reitz

- The roads are mostly cleaned up and pothole repairs will likely begin next week.
- Leaf pickup will continue until May 1st.

Water Department Report – Mike Mumper

- Water testing results are all good. The new annual water report can be found on the website.
- By the end of the month, the engineering firm expects to submit all required paperwork to the State for the water project for review. This has been in the planning for approximately three years. This portion represents the final major step before approval.
- Once approval is received, we will proceed with the project. There may be traffic impacts and construction inconvenience. However, delaying the project could risk losing federal grant funding, so the recommendation is to proceed as soon as approval is granted.
- The Village will continue keeping residents informed as the project progresses.

Parks Report – Mike Mumper

- The Village has received quotations in preparation of the pickleball courts repair. We have identified a contractor that has performed work for the village previously and is familiar with the specific characteristics of our courts. Motion made by Mike Mumper to move forward with the pickleball court repair not to exceed \$6000. Motion seconded by Mike Botelho, all in favor, Motion passed.
 - Spring work in the park has begun: Leaves have been cleaned up, debris from last fall was cleared, the grass was being prepared for new growth.
 - Planned improvements include: Replacement of the plastic fencing near the children's play equipment to improve appearance and safety. Looking into scraping and repainting of the pavilion columns.

Tree Board Report Nancy Thill absent – Given by Tim McCarthy

- Nancy wanted to remind everyone of the upcoming Arbor Day celebration this July 6th. TJ said if you have never attended, it is a very enjoyable event: The camp participates, scouts present the color guard, and a proclamation is read.
- Nancy requested to remove a Tree of Heaven located behind the fenced area in the park due to its condition.

Planning Commission Report – Mike Botelho noted on behalf of the Council that the Planning Commission did an excellent job on the second draft of the Master Plan and we should be proud of everyone who participated in developing this document. The Master Plan is now back before Council for formal review and approval.

- Following approval, there is a legally required process:
 - The draft must be shared with residents.
 - Copies must also be provided to neighboring communities for 60 days.
 - Those parties must be given the opportunity to submit comments.
- Attorney Sara Senica will forward the most current version of the Master Plan to Council members for review and stated once the document is approved it will have to be put on the website for residents and others to review to help keep the process moving.

Treasurer's Report – Tracey McCay

- The Pokagon Fund currently has a balance of approximately \$56,000.
- All village accounts are in good standing. Financially, everything is stable.

- The Village currently holds five Certificates of Deposit (CDs), which continue to earn interest.

Motion made by Tim McCarthy to approve the Treasurers Report, motion seconded by Mike Mumper, all in favor, motion passes.

Clerk's Report Anne Heywood – Absent - Given by Tracey McCay

Check register from December 15th to April 10th with a \$200,000 dollar Water Bond payment which was reported in the \$595,577.00. Motion made by Tim McCarthy to approve the Check Register as submitted: Motion seconded by Mike Mumper, all in favor, motion passes.

- The parking signs out front will be active on April 15th.
- Parking tags are for sale in the office and Kayak stickers will be available on May 1st.

Old Business

- **Concrete Pillars** - The pillars on the beach are either hidden by sand or gone. Rick will check with the owners and if the pillars are still on the beach the Village will remove them at the owners expensive.
- **The Master Plan** - was addressed under Planning Report.

New Business

- **Garbage Service with Republic** - The Village will be extending its contract with Republic Services for 2 more years. Motion made by Tim McCarthy to extend the Republic Services contract for two additional years, beginning July 1, 2026, and ending June 30, 2028: Motion seconded by Mike Botelho, all in favor, motion passes.
- **Sale of 2020 Police Tahoe** - The 2020 Tahoe was sold for approximately \$26,000, which exceeded the local dealership offer of \$15,000. Since the vehicle was fully owned by the village, the entire trade-in value remains with the Village and is deposited into the police vehicle reserve fund. The vehicle will be refurbished and used by a fire department in Montana.
- **Purchase of New Police Vehicle (Tesla Model Y)** - A proposal was presented to purchase a Tesla Model Y for police use. Purchase cost is comparable to a traditional gas-powered police vehicle.
- Estimated savings on: fuel, oil changes, routine maintenance. Estimated equipment installation cost: \$10,000–\$12,000. Total projected cost (including outfitting and charging station) approximately \$66,000. Michiana's share (50%) approximately \$33,000, minus the trade-in proceeds of \$26,000 significantly offset cost.

Motion made by Tim McCarthy to approve funding, not to exceed, \$33,000 for acquisition and outfitting of a Tesla Model Y police vehicle: Motion seconded by Mike Mumper, all in favor, motion passes.

Purchase of New Speed Trailer -The Village will be purchasing a new speed trailer that will be shared with the Village of Grand Beach. The unit will be used to help monitor vehicle speeds and improve traffic safety within the village. Motion was made by Tim McCarthy to approve half the cost of the shared speed trailer not to exceed \$5200: Motion was seconded by Mike Botelho, all in favor, motion passes.

Police Safety Building - Chief Ryan Layman announced that the Grant we submitted with the Village of Grand Beach for new Police Safety Building that our application was one of the candidates chosen to receive funding for the new police station. Ryan read a letter we received from Congressman Walberg's office.

The initial expenditures are considered soft costs necessary to move the project forward. Discussion emphasized that these costs represent proactive preparation so the project can proceed quickly when grant funding is secured in early 2027. Expenses include soil studies and environmental compliance work required by EGLE and the EPA. Motion was made by Tim McCarthy to approve up to \$14,000 for the Village's portion of preliminary soft costs associated with engineering, surveying, and environmental review for the joint police safety building project: Motion was seconded by Mike Mumper, all in favor, motion passes.

Stop 43 - Project components include: Installation of a retention wall to prevent sand from filling drainage systems. Installation of landscaping boulders to support dune stability and planting dune vegetation to reduce erosion. Environmental permitting through EGLE is near completion, with final clarification pending. The Army Corps of Engineers has also requested involvement through the joint application process.

Also, under consideration for Stop 43 improvement:

- Contractors involved in similar prior projects (Stops 37 and 40) are expected to provide quotes for construction of the boardwalk and stairs. Construction of new stairs for beach access installation of a boardwalk connecting the stairs to the beach.

Funds for the project have already been allocated in the current budget and future budget, allowing the work to proceed without using reserve funds.

1. **Ordinance 2007-01 Bonfire Permit**- Amended Ordinance 2026-01 modifying the existing ordinance related to beach bonfires. Require all beach fires to be contained within designated new fire rings, eliminated the \$100 refundable deposit and established a \$25 permit fee for all fires. Motion made by Tim McCarthy to amend the ordinance 2007-01 to: Motion seconded by Mike Botelho, all in favor, motion passes.

Public Comment

- Kathleen Hogan Morrison, Pam Schutt and Maureen Shekleton raised concerns regarding a promotional advertisement appearing in a real estate publication that appeared to promote events in Michiana, including summer concerts in the park.
- Pam Schutt requested clarification regarding enforcement of short-term rental regulations, particularly the minimum six-night stay requirement and raised concerns regarding noise levels from pickleball activity occurring throughout the day. Asked if quieter pickleball equipment would ever be enforced.
- Holly Duran wanted clarification regarding which roads are scheduled for repair this year and her drain.
- Jamie Moasio inquired about removal of public trash cans at beach access points.
- Maureen Shekleton expressed appreciation for prioritizing improvements to Stop 43 and noted anticipation for improved beach access and stabilization.
- A resident requested an update regarding the investigation into unauthorized tree removal within the village.
- Megan Schmollinger asked whether alternative police vehicle models had been considered, including vehicles such as the Kia EV9 or similar SUV-style electric vehicles that may perform well in local conditions.

Meeting adjourned at 2:53p.m. (EST)

Respectfully submitted

Tracey McCay/Treasurer