

Village Council Meeting Minutes October 10, 2025

- The meeting of the Village Council was called to order by President Tim McCarthy at 1:07 p.m.

Roll Call:

Present: Tim McCarthy, Brian Cassidy, Mike Mumper, Nancy Thill, Fire Chief Jamie Flick (New Buffalo Township), Police Chief Ryan Layman, Building Inspector Bill Lambert, Treasurer Tracey McCay, Village Attorney Sarah Senica.

- Excused: Clerk Anne Heywood, and Mike Botelho.

Guests present: 15 in person, 12 online.

Approval of Minutes

- Motion by Nancy Thill to approve both sets of minutes as presented.
Supported by Mike Mumper.
All in favor. Motion carried.

Public Comment

- No public comments.

Reports

Building Inspector – Bill Lambert

- Bill reported that it has been a slow month with no new updates.

Fire Department – Michiana Shores Chief Gary Bendix. Absent

- T.J. read the report. The department thanked everyone for their continued support of the recent pancake breakfast. There was only one call in Michiana for the month.

Fire Department – New Buffalo Township (Chief Jamie Flick)

- Chief Flick reported that two new full-time employees are currently in school to become EMTs.
- He again discussed the *Community Connect* program and noted that 14 new smoke detectors were installed for residents who reached out.
- The department raised \$1,600 at their Nancy's give back which went to the New Buffalo Fire Department.
- Two firefighters have resigned, and the department is actively seeking replacements

Police Department – Chief Ryan Lehman

- Chief Layman reported 58 calls for the month.
- He cautioned residents about ongoing scam phone calls.

- He reminded everyone about *Trick-or-Treat* and asked drivers to use caution.
- There is a new applicant being interviewed for a police officer position.
- Chief Layman invited Officer Creo Brewster forward as Tim McCarthy read a Letter of Commendation. Officer Brewster received a Certificate of Recognition for exemplary service after his actions led to the safe recovery of a 16-year-old girl from a known sex offender. The Council and attendees expressed their appreciation for his outstanding work.

Beach Report – Brian Cassidy

- Brian reported that the weather continues to be pleasant, and the stairs will be removed soon at several beach stops in preparation for winter. Stairs will remain at stops 37, 38, and 41.5.
- The Village is researching new shower solutions for next year, as the current ones do not hold up through the winter. This will hopefully be done by Memorial Day.
- Brian also addressed recent negative comments made about him on Michiana People, stating that the information being circulated was inaccurate and offensive. He invited anyone with questions or concerns to contact him directly or call the Village office.

Public Works – Rick Rietz

- Rick reminded residents that kayaks and paddleboards must be removed from the beach racks by October 15th.
- It was noted that any property left after that date will receive a citation and if the items are not picked up after 30 days they become Village property.
- Rick reported that Lakeshore Drive, between Powhatan and Seminole have been paved and that it looks great.
- He added that he wasn't sure when leaf pickup will begin, since the leaves are still on the trees. He reminded residents not to rake leaves into the street, and make sure not sticks or branches are on the piles of leaves.

Water – Mike Mumper

- Mike reported that the water meter system is now fully repaired and operational.
- Hydrant flushing will take place in October, and residents may notice temporary discoloration in their water; running the water briefly should clear it.
- It was noted that the water project should be ready for Council review on the November agenda.

Parks – Mike Mumper

- Mike reported that the turf in the parks is improving and that he has been working with ServiceScape on maintenance.
- He noted that the lights at the new pavilion are now operational and change colors — with new colors featured for the month of October.

Tree Board – Nancy Thill

- Nancy reported that the Village is preparing to recertify as a Tree City USA for 2026.
- Four small trees will be removed from the garden area with assistance from the inmate work crew.

- Nancy also provided an update on the Butterfly Garden stewardship, which continues to be managed by Pizzo. Pizzo has been paid approximately \$3,500 toward the \$5,000 budgeted for the Butterfly Garden improvements.
- On September 19th, the Beach Garden Club planted over by the playground area, and the project looks great. Nancy requested that the \$513 left over from that project be put toward trees. Motion by Tim McCarthy to approve the request; seconded by Brian Cassidy. Motion carried.
- Nancy also requested the date Sept. 24th, 2026 be tentatively reserved for the Garden Club rental of the hall for next year.

Planning Commission

- Tim McCarthy read a letter from Julie, who was not present at the meeting, outlining the timeline for the Master Plan completion,

Treasurer's Report – Tracey McCay

- Tracey reported the Pokagon Fund has a balance of approximately \$53,000, and the Chase CD was rolled over on 10/10/2025 at 3.73% for five months.
- The Treasurer's Report was approved as presented.

Clerk's Report

- Tracey, reading for Clerk Anne Heywood, reported a total check balance of \$226,938.35.
- It was explained that the check register appeared high because it included \$156,000 for the paving of Lakeshore Drive and installation of dry wells.
- Motion by Tim McCarthy to approve the check register as submitted: seconded by Brian Cassidy. Motion carried.

Old Business

Structure Removal – Beachfront Property

- The Council discussed the remaining structure on the beach.
- Motion to authorize Village Attorney Sarah Senica to work with Building Inspector Bill Lambert to draft a letter to the homeowner regarding removal of the structure and to cite the applicable ordinance prohibiting its placement. Motion carried.
- Attorney Sarah Senica stated that if the homeowner chooses to ignore the letter, the Village can proceed with legal action and take the matter to court.
- Brian Cassidy asked if something could be placed on the homeowner's tax bill preventing the sale of the property until the structure is removed. Sarah confirmed that this could be done. There was no further discussion, and all were in favor of sending the letter to the homeowner.

New Business

Short-Term Rental Ordinance

- Tim McCarthy recapped that the workshop on short-term rentals went very well.
- He hopes to have an updated ordinance draft ready for the November meeting and stated that the Council will revisit the ordinances already in place for short-term rentals.

Pickleball Tournament Donation

- Sally McDonald and Karen Hardy represented the recent pickleball tournament. They reported that the event went very well and they would be donating \$6,000 to the Village. (Please note: No check was presented)
- Sally McDonald stated that the donation is intended to be used to repair the pickleball courts in the spring. If the funds cannot be used for that purpose, they requested that the donation be returned.
- They also asked to schedule the next year's tournament for the weekend before Labor Day, since the following weekend falls on a Jewish holiday.
- Tim McCarthy stated that he would not vote on the tournament date at this meeting, as he wanted to ensure that all five Council members were present before taking action.

Public Comment

- Jurate Landwehr stated she is the administrator for the Michiana People community group and that one of their rules is to respect everyone when engaging in discussion.
- Linda Stein asked about cost recovery if the Village is required to remove the beach structure.
- Nancy Bernstein inquired about the process for setting up a tournament date for next year.
- Karen Szyp asked if the police had an increased number of calls due to the marijuana dispensaries along Highway 12.

Adjournment

Tim McCarthy asked for a motion to adjourn.

Motion by Nancy Thill, supported by Mike Mumper to adjourn the meeting.

Motion carried.

Meeting adjourned at 2:14 p.m.

Tracey McCay/Treasurer