

**MINUTES**  
**Plainwell City Council**  
**May 26, 2026**

1. Mayor Keeler called the regular meeting to order at 7:00pm in City Hall Council Chambers.
2. Invocation: Given by County Commissioner Gale Dugan.
3. Pledge of Allegiance was given by all present.
4. Roll Call: Present: Mayor Brad Keeler, Mayor Pro Tem Lori Steele and Councilmembers Randy Wisnaski, Roger Keeney and Cathy Green.  
Absent: None.
5. Approval of Minutes:  
**A motion by Steele, seconded by Wisnaski, to accept and place on file the Council Meeting Minutes of the 05/11/2026 regular meeting. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.**
6. Public Comment: None
7. County Commissioner Report: Commissioner Dugan provided an update on happenings throughout Allegan County. The Allegan County Emergency Siren protocol was discussed, with suggestions from Council and staff to be relayed to Allegan County Emergency Services concerning siren confusion and the need for clarity and possible training.
8. Agenda approval:  
**A motion by Wisnaski, seconded by Keeney, to approve the Agenda for the May 26, 2026 meeting as presented. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.**
9. Mayor's Report: Mayor Keeler commented on the nice weather we had for the parade.
10. Recommendations and Reports:
  - A. City Manager Lakamper discussed the SEIU collective bargaining unit tentative agreement. The SEIU represents the Department of Public Works (DPW) and Waste Water (WW) employees. Their collective bargaining agreement expires in June. The SEIU, union stewards from both DPW and WW and management met over the past two months, and both have agreed on the attached tentative agreement (TA). The main goal for management was to incorporate updates to the employee handbook for all non-union employees and clarify call in pay procedures. We have agreed on a three-year contract which includes annual increases of 5% for year one, 3% for year two, and 3% for year three. Over the last six years, SEIU members have received the least amount of raises of all City employees. The 11% increase over the next three years will bring them back in-line in terms of percentage of wage increases.  
**A motion by Keeney, seconded by Steele, approving the SEIU collective bargaining unit tentative agreement as presented. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.**
  - B. City Manager Lakamper discussed Ordinance 405, which adopts the 2024 International Property Maintenance Code. Plainwell has long struggled to enforce blight and nuisance ordinances. The current ordinances are outdated and do not contemplate modern issues with blight enforcement. Therefore, the City sought out best practices for blight enforcement management, leading to the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC). IPMC is the industry standard for blight enforcement and is used across the Country to ensure that properties are maintained in an acceptable manner. Due to its widespread use, it is battle tested in the courts. One of the biggest issues with code enforcement is the quality of the Ordinance. If it is outdated or written poorly, courts often will throw citations out, which has happened to Plainwell. We believe that this Ordinance will help address problem properties and allow for a standard of compliance within the community. If passed, Plainwell

**MINUTES**  
**Plainwell City Council**  
**May 26, 2026**

would be adopting the 2024 IPMC by reference, meaning our code will continue to be current as the IMPC is updated.

**A motion by Wisnaski, seconded by Steele, adopting Ordinance 405 as presented. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.**

- C. Councilmember Green discussed Special Event Permit Application 2026-12 – Collywobbles Theatre Company. The Plainwell Arts Council has submitted Special Event Permit 2026-12 requesting permission for Collywobbles Theatre Company to hold a play called *United States of America – the Early Years* at the Bandshell on Thursday, June 25, 2026, from 6pm until 8:30pm. This free event is open to public and includes comedy by Stan Freiburg. Attendees are encouraged to bring their own chairs or blankets, as seating is not provided.

**A motion by Keeney, seconded by Steele, approving Special Event Permit Application 2026-12 as presented. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.**

- D. Superintendent Keyzer discussed an odor control study by BioAir at the Water Renewal plant. BioAir is a leader in the technology and design of new Odor Control systems. They have many different options and can help design an efficient and cost-effective solution for Plainwell. This study will provide the information necessary to design the replacement of the existing in-ground biofilter (Biobed) which was installed in 2023. The existing Biobed has a 5-year lifespan and will need to be replaced in the Fiscal Year 2027-2028.

**A motion by Green, seconded by Keeney, approving a Professional Services Agreement (PSA) with BioAir Solutions LLC to perform an Odor Control Study at the Water Renewal plant for \$24,250.00. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.**

11. Communications:

**A motion by Steele, seconded by Wisnaski, to accept and place on file the April 2026 Department of Public Safety Report and the 04/14/2026 DDA/BRA/TIFA meeting minutes. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.**

12. Accounts Payable:

**A motion by Keeney, seconded by Wisnaski, that the bills be allowed and orders drawn in the amount of \$139,831.11 for payment of the same. On a roll call vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.**

13. Public Comments:

- A. Matthew Bradley discussed No Mow May in support of native pollinators, noting that he made it almost to the end of the month before needing to mow. He invited everyone to come to the Bandshell at 7pm the following night to watch him perform with The River City concert band horn section. He shared that the Plainwell Music Society hosts groups from all over, sometimes even out of State, but The River City concert band members are all local and from Plainwell and Otsego.

14. Staff Comments:

Finance Director/Treasurer Wilcox had nothing to report.

Personnel Coordinator/Deputy Treasure Kersten shared that negotiations went well, and that Open Enrollment for health insurance benefits would be taking place soon. She also noted that seasonal hire for DPW had started today, and the permanent part time position had also been filled and start in early June.

Superintendent Nieuwenhuis shared that this year the flowers didn't show up in great shape, and he is working with the greenhouse to see what can be done. He welcomed the new hire, Grady, to the DPW staff. He shared that Jackson Ford had passed his water exam. He noted that Plainwell does a great job supporting staff that want to pursue getting their licenses, and how valuable those licenses are to the City.

**MINUTES**  
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Superintendent Keyzer discussed an emergency Purchase Order that he put in for a Plummers Environmental Vector truck to catch up the lift stations during the power outage caused by the tornado. He shared that he is in the process of getting generators, so in the event of another prolonged power outage, we'll be better prepared.

Clerk Leonard shared that she is fully staffed for the 2026 election year.

City Manager Lakamper discussed the Planning Commission meeting, stating that it was a productive meeting and lots of information was shared about upcoming projects. He discussed an upcoming rezoning application for ~7 acres of land behind Golf Carts Plus. Gold Carts Plus would like to purchase the land to grow their business, and the sale of the property is contingent upon the rezoning taking place as the land is currently zoned residential. He shared that we are waiting on the site plan and Special Use Permit for the ready-mix concrete plant in Industrial Park, and the purchase agreement date has been pushed back until September. He discussed a draft Ordinance amendment to allow gas stations and automobile restoration, storage and sales in certain areas of the CBD. This will allow the old Clark Gas Station to be torn down and rebuilt and remain in use as a gas station, and Classic Auto Mill (CAM) to function as classic car restoration, sales and storage facility in the Mill building complex. He discussed a grant opportunity offered by the Kalamazoo Nature Center to the City to provide native plantings along the riverbanks to help with erosion control. He discussed a proposal from CAM to purchase and rehabilitate Building 2 that he had recently received, stating that he hadn't had the time to really dig into the proposal but would be discussing it in more detail soon. He discussed the parking lot agreement with Mill 17, stating there are a few things that need to be worked out. He stated that the new location for the Farmer's Market, Hick's Park, has been well received and gotten good feedback from both the vendors and market customers. Downtown businesses like the new location as well.

15. Council Comments:

- A. Councilmember Green congratulated Bob on his kids' scholarships.
- B. Councilmember Keeney said the cleanup at Thurl Cook Park was well done.
- C. Mayor Pro Tem Steele shared that her daughter had gotten a job with Allegan Public Schools. She will be the new Vice Principal at the High School. She will be moving back to Michigan from California soon.

16. Adjournment:

**A motion by Steele, seconded by Wisnaski, to adjourn the meeting at 8:01pm. On a voice vote, all voted in favor. Motion passed.**

Minutes respectfully  
submitted by,  
JoAnn Leonard  
City Clerk

MINUTES APPROVED BY CITY COUNCIL  
June 08, 2026

  
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JoAnn Leonard, City Clerk