

VILLAGE OF CALEDONIA

County of Kent, Michigan

MINUTES

Village Council Meeting

July 14, 2025, 7:00 p.m.

250 S. Maple St. SE, Caledonia, MI

- 1. Call to Order – 7:00 pm**
- 2. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 3. Roll Call:** Niles, Daley, Soest, Lindsey, Miller, Schuler, Erskine
- 4. Brief public comment on agenda items (2 minutes)**
 - a. Lynn Baird
 - b. Jeffrey Kusmierz
- 5. Communications**
 - a. Letter from Sharon Mortenson
- 6. Inquiry of Conflict of Interest**
- 7. Approval of consent and regular agenda***
- 8. Consent Agenda. (*One Motion Accepts All*)**
 - a. Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes for June 9, 2025 Council Meeting
 - b. Treasurer report
 - c. Payment of bills

Motion by Miller, 2nd by Schuler

Vote: All Ayes
- 9. Reports from Council, Staff and Consultants**
 - a. Engineers & Consultants – *Fleis & Vanden Brink, Infrastructure Alternatives*
 - i. Parks & Rec plan updated - no movement, Cat B project is completed will sign off and pay last bill installment, Kinsey II project in process, DNR passport grant waiting until December to hear back, additional designs are being considered, Kinsey sink hole – F&V will not be charging us to remediate and are reaching out to McCormick Sands to fix the issue
 - b. Liaisons – *School Board, Township*
 - i. School Board – Budget and amendments talks, resignation of a member that moved out of district; accepting applications for the vacancy
 - ii. Township – sent out an RFP for a Parks & Trail development plan, received bids from 3 companies, approved a watermain crossing at 76th St, meeting at 7pm on Weds July 18
 - c. Other Committees
 - i. Enhancement Committee – Celebration on Main August 6 & 7, need volunteers
 - ii. Sidewalk Committee – Working with a new company to grind the sidewalks to make them level
 - iii. Tree Committee – Will need to remove 3 trees so far, appoint Floyd to be added as a member of the committee
 - d. DPW Foreman Report
 - i. Working on removing weeds downtown
 - ii. Took possession of the International Chassis, waiting for parts to be delivered so they can outfit the chassis, will be able to use it to plow next winter

- e. Manager Report
 - i. Floyd has worked on trimming trees on Maple, Johnson and Main
 - ii. Started our agreement with the Township to help maintain the Community Greens area
 - iii. The county came out to trim the overgrowth on Emmons & M-37 for viewing clearance
 - iv. F&V estimated how much it may cost to flush and view the storm system lines on Main St
 - v. Need to create a long-term budgeting for all the roads that will need work in the next 5 to 10 years, repaved, rebuilt, patched
 - vi. The county took a look at Lake Street where it goes into the park and the flooding issues that are happening; they are coming up with solutions for the future

10. Discussion Item(s)

- a. Long term/Short term disability
 - i. We have this coverage with OneAmerica and pay for it monthly; it is employer paid
 - ii. Look into what the policy considers a full-time employee, update salaries for employees in the portal, look into offering voluntary life insurance option at renewal
 - iii. MML is our insurance company, look at competitive quote options, have our insurance reviewed by someone to make sure the limits are appropriate

11. Unfinished Business

- a. Employee Handbook
 - i. Overview and discussion of the remaining sections 8 through 11
 - a. There will be amendments made and final review
- b. Branding Campaign
 - i. **Motion by Niles to accept quote from New Venture Design Studio and meet with the historical society; project cost up to \$4500, 2nd by Miller**
Vote: Ayes – Niles, Daley, Soest, Lindsey, Miller, Schuler
Nay – Erskine

12. New Business

- a. Ordinance update to Chapter 15
Motion to approve by Miller, 2nd by Schuler –Vote: All Ayes
- b. Crime Bond on the insurance policy for the Clerk
 - i. Contact MML for more information
Tabled by Schuler, 2nd by Niles –Vote: All Ayes
- c. Sarah Buer - \$500 request for Celebration on Main Event, asking the Village to contribute funds for miscellaneous invoices that may come in
Motion by Miller, 2nd by Soest – Vote: All Ayes
- d. Invite Floyd Callendar to join the Tree Committee
Motion by Schuler, 2nd by Niles – Vote: All Ayes

13. Extended Public Comment (3 minutes)

- a. Jeff Kusmierz – old Village, new Village – we are questioning what is going on, short-term rental policy, has there been a marketing analysis, who is all the expansion for, who benefits from this,
- b. Sylvia Murphy – would like sketches of the trailhead, lines should be painted for parking, grain dust and if you remove trees at the trailhead what will filter the air, short term rental questions, flower pots should be more spread out down main street
- c. Paige Schreier – walks dog around the Village, there are open spots behind the businesses, there are parking lots to park in around town to use the trail
- d. Shawn Scott – oppose the lot, the only time there is a traffic issue is with the dance studio classes, seems like we are trying to solve a problem that isn't a problem

- e. Kim Peters – in the FAQ it says that the target time is 4-9pm, no one goes out in that time frame come fall and winter, 3 of the 6 letters of support work at one business, the dance studio has 54 classes between 4:30pm and 8:45pm, multiple business do not have open hours past 6pm, only certain companies are open until 9pm, what happens if the lease falls through with the school, the school can apply for the grant themselves and pay for it
- f. Paula Pawloski – owns Ed's Body Shop, oppose trailhead, quite often there is plenty of parking on Main St, worried about kids walking on the trail with parking lot, they were denied the opportunity to buy a house to create a parking lot for their business, there are times when it is congested for a short amount of time, people are not going to park up the road or a block away to go into a business.
- g. Jacob Schreier – DNR passport grant funds going to be used to update the trail, wondering if the parking spots have to be solely at one location or can they be split up, there are different junctions on the trail, would like a trailhead at 108th St because there is a safety issue, wondering about the intent of the project moving forward
- h. Betsy Thompson – oppose the lot, the issue is Tues and Thursday nights with the dance studio drop off, in the winter the trail is not maintained, wondering why the residents didn't get a vote on it if we have to pay for it, would love to see the businesses drawing more people, but at this point they are not
- i. Stephon Baird – around 25 years ago we lost 21 parking spots, a lot of the discussion is that it is parking for businesses but it isn't, it is to alleviate the parking issues we have, every town has a nice trailhead that has a main trail, this is for user safety for families and kids to get out safely, parking at the park they are closed certain times of the years, we have looked for other areas and it is very expensive, it's about bringing the community together
- j. Aaron Lalonde – in the Village 3-4 times a week, beautification project looks wonderful, we have never had an issue of parking, make the cross walk at the trailhead safer with signage, reflective paint, bike lanes painted, adding a pedestrian walk sign

14. Manager Comments - None

15. Village Council Comments and Announcements

- a. Niles – Rental Ordinance is for the Planning Commission, having a meeting on July 31 at 7pm, thank you and we have learned a lot, we can set up a public meeting
- b. Daley – We are listening, trying to make a good decision, business owners do also pay taxes, trying to do the best we can with funding, anywhere we put in parking it will be by someone's house
- c. Soest – The parking issue will not go away, we may not put the lot in if the grant doesn't go through, we have a lot of people upset and angry with their neighbors for something that we won't hear back on until December, I didn't want the trail to come down Main St in front of my house, if parking does not go through this time it will keep coming up and the price will only keep going up
- d. Erskine – The first go around on the parking lot was drawn to the biggest we could get, the proposed lot has been reduced, there are no mature trees on that property or trail, the proposed price for the project has been reduced, if you read the local paper they are fighting about their short term rentals, when the founders wrote village laws there was no short term rentals, and only a railroad, Sarah please connect with the Township about donations for the Celebration on Main event.
- e. Schuler – We are no longer a small little farming village, there is one farm in this Village, I am stunned at how one person believes that businesses are fine and they are making enough money, they don't have the right to say that they are making enough money, I am a business owner in the Village, I know this is really hard because people don't want progress or change, something was built in my backyard, 90 acres of a development that I personally did not want, we need to focus on the future, it is about using the money the best way we can for parking we will need in the future, we are looking at short term rentals so we do not end up like Yankee Springs, growth is hard, some people don't like it but we are trying to do the right thing

- f. Miller – Just because we are not arguing with you about the parking, does not mean that we all support the original plans, we are listening, and it doesn't matter if we say no now, we find out in December about the grant funding, it's been hard to sit up here
- g. Lindsey – Thank you everyone for coming, we are available to talk, Village Hall is open, accessible by email or phone, short term rentals was brought up by the Planner and Attorney to address and have an ordinance in place, the trailhead is something we were looking to the future on

16. Adjournment – 8:52 pm

Motion by Miller, 2nd by Soest

*Any council member shall have the right to add items to the regular agenda.

Lisa Souday, Clerk, Village of Caledonia