

**City of Eaton Rapids Work Session Meeting
March 9, 2026**

The Work Session of the Eaton Rapids City Council was held at City Hall, 200 S. Main Street, on March 9, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

Call To Order:

Mayor Colestock called the work session to order at 5:00 p.m. Present were Mayor Colestock, Mayor Pro Tem Steele, and Councilmembers Malewski, Loftus, and Nicholas.

Administrative Staff present included City Manager Ridge, Chief McNutt, Public Works/Utilities Director Pierce, Building Official Hummel, Treasurer/Finance Director Allen, and City Attorney Harkness.

Public Comments:

Patrick McNutt, 751 Island Ct., Apt. F, Eaton Rapids, asked about the project's start date on State Street.

The project is currently out for bid and is scheduled for completion this summer.

Unfinished and Special Business: None

New Business

1. Amendment to Proposal for Professional Services: Plains Road Sewer Extension

There are items that were not included in the original proposal but are necessary for the completion and management of the project, construction staking, material testing, and permit applications. The total additional cost is \$20,500.

2. Amendment to Proposal for Professional Services Agreement: E. Knight St. and Center St. Category B Design

The original scope of work for this project included six (6) ramps. There are nine (9) additional ramps, bringing the total to fifteen (15) ramps requiring updates to meet ADA compliance. The \$2,500 amendment to the professional service agreement for this project covers the additional design and bidding documents cost.

3. Brownfield Plan Agreement – Swan WFH Inverness Homes, LLC

The Brownfield Reimbursement Agreement for Swan WFH Inverness Homes, LLC residential development project has been reviewed by the City Attorney and the Brownfield consultant, Fleis & VandenBrink, to ensure compliance with applicable brownfield redevelopment laws and the terms of the approved Brownfield Plan. The Brownfield Redevelopment Authority approved the Brownfield Reimbursement Agreement associated with this project on January 13, 2026.

4. Wastewater Treatment Plant Auger Repair

The auger at the City's Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) is a critical component of the solids-handling process. The existing auger is non-functional, causing significant disruption to plant operations. Director Pierce ordered replacement parts from Hamlett Environmental Tech for \$29,690.35. City Manager Ridge approved the order due to the urgency of the situation and the 14-week lead time. Funding for this purchase is available through the WWTP equipment replacement budget for Fiscal Year 2026.

5. Conditional Use for a Plant Nursery and Greenhouse use in Low Density Single Family Residential District (RD1) – Caleb Brinson, The Flower Garden

On March 2, 2026, the Planning Commission held a Public Hearing for a Conditional Use for a Plant Nursery and Greenhouse for a vacant piece of land on Michigan Road. After the hearing, the Planning Commission recommended to City Council to approve the Conditional Use as requested.

6. Ordinance 2026-01 Rescind Commercial Medical Marihuana Facilities Overlay District

The Planning Commission held a Public Hearing on rescinding the Marihuana Ordinances sections 23.50, 23.60, and the overlay district. They voted to recommend approval to rescind the Marihuana Ordinances sections 23.50, 23.60, and the overlay district.

7. Ordinance 2026-02 Rescind Medical Marihuana Facilities

The Marihuana Ordinance 2026-02 was originally adopted to allow for the potential location of marihuana-related facilities within designated industrial parks within the City of Eaton Rapids. Since the adoption of the ordinance, the City has not received any inquiries, applications, or expressed interest from growers or related businesses.

The proposed ordinance repeal is now ready for First Reading at the March 9, 2026, Council Meeting.

8. Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIEAF)

On an annual basis, municipally owned electric utilities, such as the City of Eaton Rapids Electric Department, must notify the Michigan Municipal Electric Association (MMEA) whether they intend to (1), opt into the statewide LIEAF/MEAP program and collect the approved surcharge, or (2), opt out and instead administer their own local low-income energy assistance program that meets the requirements for Act 95.

Staff recommends opting into the LIEAF/MEAP program for 2026. The City's decision is due to the Michigan Municipal Electric Association by March 20, 2026.

Board & Committee Reports:

Steele – Mayor Pro Tem Steele provided a report on the Planning Commission Meeting of March 2, 2026.

There were 3 (three) Public Hearings on the agenda: (1) Conditional Use, Michigan Road vacant land, (2) Commercial Marihuana Facilities Ordinances, and (3) Short Term Rental (STR) Ordinance. Other items discussed included, the construction of the water distribution line upgrades, which are set to start the week of March 9th, a series of proposed bills have been introduced to eliminate planning commissions all over the state of Michigan from having any say as to how their communities can be regulated, and Taco Bell expects to open in 4 (four) months.

Malewski – Councilmember Malewski had no report.

Nicholas – Councilmember Nicholas attended the Golden Thimble ribbon cutting. The building was owned by his father a number of years ago.

Loftus – Councilmember Loftus reported that the Parks, Recreation, and Events Committee meeting will be on Tuesday, March 10. Loftus reported that the Eaton Rapids Wooden Boat Show and Outdoor Recreation Center promotion was received with enthusiasm at the February 28 MSU Quiet Adventures Symposium. So far, the boat show has five committed boats. The Oakridge Park Board's next meeting will be on March 19.

Mayor Colestock – Mayor Colestock reported the DDA will be doing a spring walk around the downtown this Friday morning after their regular meeting, so if you see a group walking around looking at various things, you will know why. They want to get an idea of what may be needed for the upcoming budget. There is no business for the Brownfield Authority this month, and LDFA will meet on March 20th.

Public Comment: none

City Manager – City Manager Ridge reported that Curbside Grant Applications will be mentioned in the March newsletter, and the deadline to apply is April 10th, with notification of awards to applicants on April 24th.

Per Chief Week's suggestion, at last month's Council Work Session, the state police are interested in using 400 Dexter for training. They are working on insurance coverage and other logistics to get things rolling.

Aaron Tobias is interested in giving the school bus at 400 Dexter to a new home. Suggestion of cutting up the bus for scrap. Also, Mr. Tobias is willing to share other items within the building. This could provide savings when revamping the City's part of the building. The interior doors are one of those items.

C&D Hughes started with the DWSRF project with wells 3 (three), 4 (four), and 5 (five). Some of the road projects will be switched around. The City will update the public as soon as changes are made to the timeline. Currently, we are writing a plan for the TMF – lead line identification grant.

We received a quote to move the City from the .net version of BS&A to the cloud version. This will be included in the draft Capital Outlay budget for 2026-2027. The City has started to work on Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance updates to the website. The deadline for the updates to be in place is April 2027.

Chief McNutt and City Manager Ridge testified in front of the appropriations sub-committee regarding appropriations for a fire truck and Horner Mill. City Manager Ridge is exploring other appropriation sources.

A survey is available to the public to provide feedback regarding the Master Plan.

In the next couple of weeks, the DDA will be touring downtown to assess what needs to be repaired, replaced, or added, such as trash cans, benches, etc.

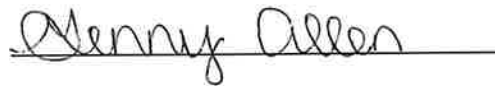
Chief Weeks – Chief Weeks was not in attendance.

Chief McNutt – Chief McNutt is applying for grants for fire equipment.

Steele moved, and Malewski seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 6:05 p.m. Motion carried.



Pamela Colestock, Mayor



Genny Allen, City Treasurer