Council Meeting
Common Council
November 2, 2026

The regular meeting of the Common Council was held at 21 S. Elm Street, Zeeland, MI 49464 on Monday, November 2, 2026. Mayor VanDorp called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councilmembers - Mayor VanDorp, Mayor Pro-Tern Gruppen, Timmer, Lam, Langeland, Perkins, Bult
ABSENT: None

Staff Present: City Attorney Jim Donkersloot, Interim City Manager/Finance Director Kevin Plockmeyer, Community Development Director/Assessor, and City Clerk Kristi DeVerney

The Invocation was offered by City Attorney Jim Donkersloot
The Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Consent Agenda

Motion was made by Councilmember Lam and Supported by Councilmember Timmer to approve the Consent Agenda.

1. Approve minutes of the City Council Work Study of October 19, 2026.
2. Approve minutes of the Regular City Council meeting of October 18, 2026.
3. Receive for information draft minutes of October 1, 2026, Planning Commission meeting.
4. Receive for information draft minutes of October 8, 2026, Shopping Area Redevelopment Board.

Motion carried. All present voting aye.

Public Comment

John Duquette (9581 Cedar Ct.), representing Wreaths of Honor, asked for donations and help placing wreaths on veteran's graves.

Travis McGeehan (22 N. Jefferson) disagrees with having flock cameras as there is misuse of the system.

Communications
None

Interim City Managers Report
ICM Plockmeyer reported:

Church Street Construction Project

The reconstruction project is progressing nicely with crews focusing on completing remaining work between Main Avenue and Washington Avenue. Final paving was scheduled for Friday.

Planning Commission Update

The Planning Commission's meeting is on Thursday to discuss the following:

- Bridge Youth Center (435 W Main Ave) for a site plan review for a gym addition and deck.
- 600 E Riley St for a special land use for camper, trailer, and large recreational equipment repair within a portion of the property.
- Continued work on the Master Plan by reviewing draft survey questions and discussing community engagement opportunities
- Review status of projects on the 2026 Capital Improvement Program list
- Discuss new ideas following their October bus tour of the City

Joint Planning Commission / City Council Meeting

The primary purpose of this meeting will be to discuss the Sligh Block and future considerations for development of the area.

Zeeland Pumpkin Path

Reminder to visit Vande Luyster Square to see the carved pumpkins that are illuminated each evening at dusk.

Public Hearing 7:12 p.m. – Mead Johnson Act 198 Industrial Development District

Motion was made by Councilmember Timmer and Supported by Councilmember Lam to have Mayor VanDorp call the Public Hearing to order at 7:12 p.m. Motion carried. All voting aye.

Community Development Director/Assessor Maday stated during 2024 and 2025, Mead Johnson & Company, LLC acquired several properties adjacent to its existing campus as part of its planned campus modernization project. With its property acquisitions complete, the company has submitted a request to establish Act 198 Industrial Development District that aligns with its expanded campus boundaries, including the former North Division Street right-of-way that was recently vacated.

An Industrial Development District (IDD) established in 2019 encompasses the company's earlier campus holdings, and several of the industrial properties acquired since that time have their own existing districts. However, these districts do not encompass the entire expanded campus. The proposed district would encompass the full campus and simplify future exemption applications.

Upon adoption of the resolution by the Council, this would complete the district establishment process.

Mead Johnson representatives, Art Pike and Allan Barren, noted that they wanted to simplify by bringing all properties together. They had already started the construction of relocating utilities underground and finishing grading pavement.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Gruppen and Supported by Councilmember Langeland to close the Public Hearing for the Mead Johnson Act 198 Industrial Development District at 7:20 p.m. Motion carried. All voting aye.

Public Hearing 7:21 p.m. – Mead Johnson Act 198 Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate

Motion was made by Councilmember Langeland and Supported by Councilmember Lam to have

Mayor VanDorp call the Public Hearing to order at 7:21 p.m. Motion carried. All voting aye.

Community Development Director/Assessor Maday stated Mead Johnson & Company, LLC is undertaking substantial ventilation and related improvements to its existing manufacturing facilities at 725 E Main Avenue as part of its campus modernization efforts. The work includes north and south tower ventilation improvements and related upgrades to the facility's ventilation and heat exchange systems, along with associated structural, mechanical, electrical, and fire protection improvements.

The company has submitted Act 198 Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate application for these improvements which identifies approximately $58.5 million in real property investment and requests a 12-year exemption. The improvements are located within the Industrial Development District established by City Council in June 2019.

Upon approval of the application and supporting documents by the Council, they would be forwarded to the State Tax Commission for their consideration and issuance of the certificate.

Mead Johnson representatives, Art Pike and Allan Barren, noted that they were investing $58.5 million in mostly HVAC improvements. They appreciated that they had the ability to use local contractors and engineers for this project.

Travis McGeehan (22 N. Jefferson) questioned why the Council approved an IFT for Mead Johnson.

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Gruppen and Supported by Councilmember Langeland to close the Public Hearing for the Mead Johnson Act 198 Industrial Facilities Exemption at 7:25 p.m. Motion carried. All voting aye.

Action Items

26.171 Mead Johnson Act 198 Industrial Facilities Exemption

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Gruppen and Supported by Councilmember Lam to adopt the resolution approving Mead Johnson & Company, LLC's Act 198 Industrial Faciality Exemption Certificate application for ventilation and related improvements at 725 E. Main Avenue, with a total project cost of $58,484,107.49 and a 12-year exemption, subject to the conditions outlined in the resolution.

Ayes: Mayor Pro-Tem Gruppen, Timmer, Lam, Langeland, Perkins, Bult, Mayor VanDorp
No Vote: None
Absent: None

26.172 Mead Johnson Act 198 Industrial Development District

Motion was made by Councilmember Timmer and Supported by Councilmember Lam to adopt the resolution establishing an Industrial Development District for Mead Johnson & Company, LLC encompassing its full campus at 725 E. Main Avenue and adjacent properties, as described in the resolution and shown on the survey map.

Ayes: Timmer, Lam, Langeland, Perkins, Bult, Mayor Pro-Tem Gruppen, Mayor VanDorp
No Vote: None
Absent: None

26.173 Fire Department Chaplain Position

Motion was made by Councilmember Lam and Supported by Councilmember Timmer to approve and support the addition of a Fire Chaplain position to our roster as outlined in the proposal.

Ayes: Lam, Langeland, Perkins, Bult, Mayor Pro-Tem Gruppen, Timmer, Mayor VanDorp
No Vote: None
Absent: None

26.174 Lawrence Park Design and Construction Administration Contract Award

Motion was made by Councilmember Langeland and Supported by Councilmember Timmer to award a design development, construction documentation, bidding and construction administration contract in the amount of $78,407 to the MCSA Group for the reconstruction of Lawrence Park.

Ayes: Langeland, Perkins, Bult, Mayor Pro-Tem Gruppen, Timmer, Lam, Mayor VanDorp
No Vote: None
Absent: None

Mayor Pro-Tem Gruppen noted the CEP meeting dues will remain the same. Gifts can be given if desired.

ICM Plockmeyer thanked the Clerk Staff for a job well done during the November Early Voting and Election Day.

Councilmember Perkins thanked staff for informing the local businesses about Church Street reconstruction progress. She also thought the Pumpkin Path was a great addition to our City of Zeeland events.

There being no further business, motion was made by Councilmember Timmer and Supported by Councilmember Langeland to adjourn the meeting at 7:30 P.M. Motion carried. All voting aye.

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Mayor Richard VanDorp III

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City Clerk Kristen R DeVerney

MEMORANDUM OF-STUDY SESSION
Zeeland City Hall Council Chambers Monday, November 2, 2026
6:00 P.M.

Mayor VanDorp called the Study Session to order at 6:00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councilmembers - Mayor VanDorp, Mayor Pro-Tern Gruppen, Timmer, Lam, Langeland, Perkins, Bult

ABSENT: None

Staff Present: City Attorney Jim Donkersloot, Interim City Manager/Finance Director Kevin Plockmeyer, Community Development Director/Assessor Tim Maday, Fire Chief Brad Deppe, and City Clerk Kristi DeVerney

Fire Department Chaplain Position

Fire Chief Deppe stated Zeeland Fire Rescue feels the addition of a Chaplain will give the department more depth of support in dealing with difficult circumstances and transitioning back to their home life after certain types of calls. Because the suicide rate is 21% in fire service, their goal, as a department, is to be proactive in overall support and mental health awareness. Our long-term plan with a Chaplain in place is to begin exploring a Peer Support Team within the department to work in unison with the Chaplain. This would start these difficult conversations even sooner, providing thorough and comprehensive support. This position would first be a voluntary staff member fulfilling duties outlined in the policy and secondly as a contract service for individuals requesting assistance through the Fearless Chaplain program.

Staff recommended for Council to approve and support the addition of a Fire Chaplain position to our roster as outlined in the proposal.

Parks and Recreation Five-Year Master Plan

ICM Plockmeyer stated over the past several months, the Cemetery and Parks Commission has worked with MCSA Group and City staff to develop the updated plan. This process included reviewing existing park conditions, evaluating the goals and objectives from the previous plan, reviewing the results of a community survey, and conducting a bus tour of the City's parks to evaluate potential improvement projects. The Commission also participated in an exercise to prioritize future capital improvements, which helped establish the direction of the Action Program and Capital Improvement Schedule included in the draft plan.

The community survey provided valuable feedback as respondents expressed strong support for reinvesting in existing facilities, improving accessibility, enhancing playgrounds and restrooms, expanding trail connections, and preserving natural areas. This feedback, together with the Commission's discussions and project rankings, helped shape the priorities identified in the updated plan. The Cemetery and Parks Commission completed its review of the draft plan and provided final feedback to MCSA Group and staff.

The draft plan will be made available for public comment during the month of November and into December.

No formal action is requested of City Council at this time. The intent is simply to provide Council with an opportunity to review the draft plan and offer any preliminary feedback before it is released for public comment.

FY27 Financial Sustainability Update

ICM Plockmeyer gave an update on the following:

- General Fund revenues
- Appropriations, including ongoing transfers to other funds
- Annual surpluses
- Property taxes
- State-shared revenue, permit, investment income & transfer patterns
- General Fund wages & benefits
    - Compensation, payroll taxes, health insurance, retirement & other employer-paid costs
- Motor pool, information technology, and street related investments
    - Municipal Street Fund for street reconstruction & Library operations
- Annual surpluses – projected fund balance
- Capital needs
    - Project timing, scope & sources of funding, future maintenance & operating impacts associated with investments
- City's future tax base
- Zeeland Generating Station changes

Staff suggests a three-part approach to funding the capital categories identified in the Strategic Action Plan:

- Continue existing General Fund funding for motor pool, IT and streets.
- Use available future surpluses selectively for parks, downtown and targeted facility or street improvements.
- Evaluate bonds or alternative revenue sources for major facility projects.

Overall, the ten-year financial outlook provides a positive picture of the City's ability to maintain existing service levels and continue its established financial commitments using our current tax structure. The City's strong financial position, combined with anticipated investment in our community, places us in a favorable position to continue to address some of our longer-term capital needs.

No formal action is being requested from City Council at this time. Rather, the purpose of this information is to share our financial outlook, present a potential framework for funding future capital improvements, and solicit Council's feedback on the suggested funding approaches for our various capital improvement categories and whether there are other considerations staff should incorporate as we continue developing our long-term financial plans.

Lawrence Park Design and Construction Administration Contract Award

ICM Plockmeyer stated funds have previously been set aside for the reconstruction of Lawrence Park. The next step is to refine the design, develop construction documents, and ultimately prepare the project for bidding.

Staff are requesting approval of a contract with the MCSA Group for design development, construction documentation, bidding, and construction administration services. The total cost for these services is $78,407, which includes a topographical survey, soil borings, and associated civil engineering services.

Our goal would be to begin reconstruction of the park in either the fall of 2027 or the spring of 2028.

Staff recommended awarding a design development, construction documentation, bidding and construction administration contract in the amount of $78,407 to the MCSA Group for the reconstruction of Lawrence Park.

Mead Johnson Act 198 Industrial Development District

Community Development Director Maday stated during 2024 and 2025, Mead Johnson & Company LLC acquired a number of properties adjacent to its existing campus as part of its planned campus modernization project. With its property acquisitions complete, the company has submitted a request to establish Act 198 Industrial Development District that aligns with its expanded campus boundaries, including the former North Division Street right-of-way that was recently vacated.

An Industrial Development District (IDD) established in 2019 encompasses the company's earlier campus holdings, and several of the industrial properties acquired since that time have their own existing districts. However, these districts do not encompass the entire expanded campus. The proposed district would encompass the full campus and simplify future exemption applications.

Should Council adopt the resolution following the public hearing, this would complete the district establishment process. The district would then be in place for future Act 198 Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate applications for eligible projects within the expanded campus.

Staff recommended adopting the resolution establishing an Industrial Development District for Mead Johnson & Company LLC encompassing its full campus at 725 E Main Avenue and adjacent properties, as described in the resolution and shown on the survey map.

Mead Johnson Act 198 Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate

ICM Plockmeyer stated Mead Johnson & Company LLC is undertaking substantial ventilation and related improvements to its existing manufacturing facilities at 725 E Main Avenue as part of its campus modernization efforts. The work includes north and south tower ventilation improvements and related upgrades to the facility's ventilation and heat exchange systems, along with associated structural, mechanical, electrical, and fire protection improvements.

An Act 198 Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate application has been submitted by the company for these improvements. The application identifies approximately $58.5 million in real property investment and requests a 12-year exemption.

The improvements are located within the Industrial Development District established by City Council in June 2019.

Should Council adopt the resolution following the public hearing, the approved application and supporting documents would be forwarded to the State Tax Commission for its consideration and issuance of the certificate.

Staff recommended adopting the resolution approving Mead Johnson & Company LLC's Act 198 Industrial Facilities Exemption Certificate application for ventilation and related improvements at 725 E Main Avenue, with a total project cost of $58,484,107.49 and a 12-year exemption, subject to the conditions outlined in the resolution.

City Manager Search Update

Mayor VanDorp stated the City Manager Search Committee consists of the following members:

- Mayor VanDorp
- Mayor Pro-Tem Gruppen
- BPW Commissioner Cooney
- Jill Ver Steeg
- Brett Gerrtsma
- Kurt Wassink (Screening applicants)

Interviews will take place next week and the committee is anticipating the first of the year to have someone hired.

Closed Session

Motion was made by Mayor Pro-Tem Gruppen and supported by Councilmember Lam to enter Closed Session at 6:42 P.M. for purposes of reviewing an attorney's opinion. Motion carried by all voting aye.

Motion was made by Councilmember Timmer and supported by Councilmember Lam to reconvene from Closed Session at 6:49 p.m. Motion carried with all voting aye.

There being no further items to discuss, Work Study was adjourned at 6:50 P.M.

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Kristen R DeVerney, City Clerk