

VILLAGE OF SAND LAKE
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING
MINUTES

18 W. Lake St

Sand Lake, MI 49343

March 27, 2026 7:00PM

UNAPPROVED

CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

The meeting was called to order at 7:03 p.m. by Chris Stieg, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

ADOPTION OF AGENDA:

A motion to adopt the agenda with the additions of Guidance on election wording and Clark Hill engagement letter, and addition of second public comment was made by Stieg, supported by Helton. Motion carries.

NEW BUSINESS:

a. APPONTMENT OF TRUSTEES AND VILLAGE PRESIDENT:

Stieg asked that each person who submitted a letter of intent stand and say a little about themselves and why they want to be on the council. Stieg asked before you trash people remember they stepped up and give them a chance. Following state law Helton and Stieg not a quorum will appoint 2 new trustees and then the 4 will appoint a member and then the 5 will appoint a member. The 6 will then appoint the President.

Helton nominated Merritt and Stieg nominated VanEtten.

A motion was made by Stieg to appoint Merritt and VanEtten to the Village Council, supported by Helton. Motion carries. Merritt and VanEtten were sworn in by Clerk Lewis before taking a seat at the table.

VanEtten made a motion to appoint Johnson the council, supported by Helton. Motion carries.

Merritt made a motion to appoint Shirey to the council, supported by VanEtten. Motion carries.

VanEtten made a motion to appoint Hula as Village President, Johnson supported. Roll Call: Shirey – yes, Johnson – yes, VanEtten – yes, Helton – no, Stieg – yes, Merritt –yes. Motion carries.

Hula deferred leading the remainder of the meeting to Stieg.

Helton made a motion to appoint Stieg as President pro-tempore, supported by Johnson. Roll call: Merritt – yes, Stieg – abstain, Helton – yes, VanEtten – yes, Johnson – yes, Shirey – yes.

CONSENT AGENDA:

Helton made a correction to the February 16, 2026, minutes. To change Nelson Township to Pierson township.

A motion to approve the consent agenda with the correction to the February 16, 2026 minutes was made by Stieg, supported by VanEtten. Motion carries.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Stieg asked to hear more from Village residents. Nelson Township will be getting the Fire Department and savings,. Nelson will cover the Village for 10 years. Renew every 5 years after that. Must give 1 year notice if they are not going to renew. \$500,000.00 in assets divided over 10 years is a pretty good deal for Fire coverage.

Public comment opened at 7:49 p.m.

-Dave 244 W. Lake St. ISO rate is based on distance from the fire department. Who is going to be responsible for the rate increase if Nelson Township moves the Fire Department.

-Martin, Can you make it part of the contract they have to keep it here. Helton explained they own half of the building why would they move it.

-Debra Cumings, If they move the Fire Department house insurance will go up. When they re-did E. Lake St they increased the road elevation 6” and now her property is flooding and causing serious damage. What is the Village going to do about it?

- Another resident asked what happens after the first 10 years. Stieg responded it could be a legal question and we will have to figure those out at that time.

-What if disincorporate? Would then go under the Township.

-Is the Fire Department in agreement. Fire Department responded yes. Referred rest of the question to the Nelson Township Board.

-Will ownership of the building change? No both municipalities will still own half the building.

-Supervisor Nelson Township, Will not move the Fire station. May add substations down the road. This station will not be leaving the Village.

-Vicky, Ensley has a substation would be nice if all townships had one.

-Cost to run the Fire Department will increase.

-Village mills for Fire Department Nelson Township is asking for an increase.

Public Comment Closed : 8:12 pm

NEW BUSINESS:

a. PERSONNEL MATTERS:

NEW TREASURER:

The Village received a letter of intent for the Treasurer position also an engagement letter from Maner Costerisan an accounting firm that Bloom Slugget recommended to help catch things up and help with the process of the possibility of the Village disincorporating. There needs to be a public posting for the treasurer position.

A motion to post the treasurer position was made by Helton supported by Johnson. Motion carries.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR:

A motion to post the Zoning Administrator position was made by Stieg, supported by VanEtten. Motion carries.

DPW SUPERVISOR:

There is a possibility that village will need to seek a new DPW Supervisor in the near future. Could possibly get someone from Rural Water or partner with Howard City it has been done in the past. A motion to check into options was made by Helton, supported by VanEtten. Motion carries.

b. FIRE EQUIPMENT MATTERS:

Attorney has recommended they not give away their assets before the vote. A motion was made by Helton to sign the agreement with Nelson Township, supported by Johnson. Roll call: Hula – yes, Shirey – yes, Johnson – yes, VanEtten – yes, Stieg – yes, Merritt – yes, Helton – yes. Motion carries.

FIRE DEPARTMENT requested to spend \$40,000 out of the 2025-2026 FY budget that had not yet been spent. Stieg’s opinion is to not. Hula recommended waiting until the budget hearing. Mike Patin said he could not wait until Tuesday to order. Stieg made a motion to not spend the budget. Merritt made a motion to allow the spending of \$40,000, supported by VanEtten. Roll call: Hula – yes, Shirey – yes, Johnson – yes, Helton – yes, Stieg – no, Merritt – yes.

c. FINANCIAL MATTERS:

CHANGEMAKERS:

Stieg would like to see an itemized bill. Could involve a lawyer? We owe for work done. Merritt asked if anything was signed. VanEtten made a motion to table paying the bill until the next meeting, supported by Johnson. Motion carries.

ENGAGEMENT LETTER MANER COSTERIAN:

A motion to table the letter from Maner Costerian was made by Stieg, supported by Helton. Motion carries.

ZONING ADMINISTRATOR RESIGNATION:

A motion to accept the resignation of the Zoning Administrator was made by Helton, supported by VanEtten. Motion carries.

REIMBURSEMENT FORM:

A reimbursement form for fire training hotel room. A motion to not pay the reimbursement based on the date was made by Johnson, supported by VanEtten. Motion carries.

REMOVE TYLER KAISER:

A motion to remove Tyler Kaiser and Mollie Doerr from the Independent Bank Account was made by Johnson, supported by VanEtten. Motion carries.

A motion to add Chris Stieg to the bank account was made by Helton, supported by Johnson. Motion carries.

ADMINISTRATION MATTERS:
GUIDANCE ON ELECTION LETTER:

A motion to leave the wording alone was made by Helton, supported by Johnson. Motion carries.

CLARK HILL ENGAGEMENT LETTER:

Question about the bonds how much is owed and would they become immediately due upon dissolving the Village.

A motion to deny the engagement letter was made by Stieg, supported by Helton. Motion carries.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Public Comment Opened: 8:49 p.m.

- Darcy thanked the Council for doing the right thing.
- Agreement with changemaker have they been terminated?
- Darcy, power given to the last president can it be null and void?
- School property? It is on hold as there is no Planning Commission and no Zoning Administrator.

Public Comment Closed: 8:56 p.m.

COUNCIL COMMENT:

Helton, 4-18 Clean up day at Sand Lake Cemetery from 8-noon. Need volunteers.
Rain day April 25, 2026

VanEtten and Johnson both thanked Stieg for his time in keeping things running smoothly.

Helton Easter Egg Hunt

Pancake Breakfast for the Fire Department

Stieg made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 p.m., supported by VanEtten. Motion carries.