

CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS
Kate Henson, Mayor
Tony Iannelli, Mayor Pro Tem
Sam Angus
Jacquelyn Bullerman
Eric Keaton
George Merkel
Felix Stump

CITY OF CHELSEA
REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14, 2026, AT 7:00 PM
311 S. MAIN ST.
CHELSEA, MI 48118

INTERIM CITY MANAGER
Marc Thompson

CITY CLERK
Lyn Sebestyen

DEPUTY CLERK
Ashley Money

Call to Order

Present: Mayor Henson, Council Members Angus, Bullerman, Iannelli, Keaton, Merkel, Stump, Interim City Manager Thompson, Clerk Sebestyen

Absent:

Mayor Henson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States

Approval of Consent Agenda

1. Meeting Minutes of August 24, 2026
2. Meeting Minutes of August 27, 2026
3. Approval of Bills
4. Chelsea District Library August Report to Council
5. Approval of Senior Center Contract (Attorney Fink)
6. Approval of Sale of Retired Police Vehicle (Chief Kazyak)
7. Approval of Traffic Control Order – Jiffy Day (Chief Kazyak)
8. Approval of Purchase of Reverse Osmosis Filters (Superintendent Powell)

MOTION Keaton SECONDED Angus to approve the consent agenda. All ayes. Motion carried.

Approval of Regular Agenda

Council Member Bullerman requested that the agenda be amended to table item #4 of the Regular Agenda.

MOTION Iannelli SECONDED Keaton to approve the regular agenda as amended. All ayes. Motion carried.

Public Comments (available in person and via Zoom)

James Griffin, a Chelsea resident, was present to speak about Pierce School's handling of a known sex offender on the property. He stated that communication with the Director of Security at Pierce School resulted in an unsatisfactory enforcement of policy.

Jacob D, a resident of Chelsea, was present to also speak about the presence of a federally prosecuted sex offender, who has been allowed access to school grounds. He asked Council to put pressure on the school board to seriously address this issue and protect the students.

Gaye Morgenthaler, a Chelsea resident, first spoke about the concerns of the first two public speakers and spoke about her history suing the schools for dereliction of duty. She recommended that the first speakers take the School Board to court.

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Ms. Morgenthaler then went on to describe the termination of former City Manager Elle Cole. She addressed Attorney Fink regarding the Deer Ordinance. She inquired about the City's cash balance. She warned Council Members that many people were going to prison, and that Trump would likely delay the mid-term election.

Cece Montoye, a Chelsea resident, thanked the Council for putting the discussion about the formation of a Deer Committee on the agenda. She then spoke about the proposed amending of the Deer Ordinance and spoke about the new state law and how it will affect our ordinance.

Laura Damschroeder, a Chelsea resident, expressed her gratitude for the work the Mayor and Council had been doing, especially over the last few weeks. She fully supports Council's decision to terminate the City Manager and believes that the Council has the character to make the difficult, correct decisions for the City.

Presentation

Public Hearing

Council Business

1. Adoption of Proclamation Supporting Constitution Week (Mayor Henson)

Under the City's Proclamation Policy, City Council must approve proclamation requests.

On behalf of the Sarah Caswell Angell Chapter of Daughters of the American Revolution, Elizabeth Bishop requested a proclamation commemorating Constitution Week, September 17-23, 2026. Council was asked to review and adopt the proclamation.

MOTION Merkel SECONDED Bullerman to approve the proclamation celebrating Constitution Week, September 17th through September 23rd. All ayes. Motion carried.

2. Adopt at Second Reading Ordinance No. 197 Bicycles (Attorney Fink)

Chelsea's bicycle ordinance dates to the 1960s. It has a licensing and registration program that is burdensome and no longer used. Additionally, there is a desire to expand the pedestrian-only portion of downtown to align with the sidewalk traffic ordinance. The amendments remove the licensing and registration requirement and clarify the pedestrian-only portion of the downtown sidewalks.

MOTION Iannelli SECONDED Angus to adopt Ordinance No. 197 at Second Reading. All ayes. Motion carried.

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3. Adopt at Second Reading Ordinance No. 198 Lawn Extensions (Attorney Fink)

Amendments to the Lawn Extension Ordinance (Article V of Chapter 26) are proposed to align with instructions online for residents to place brush out for pickup by the City. Additionally, Public Act 264 of 1990 prohibits the transfer station from collecting yard clippings. The current ordinance was adopted in 1985 and still allows for lawn clippings to be placed on the extension. This amendment aligns the ordinance with the statute.

MOTION Angus SECONDED Stump to adopt Ordinance No. 198 at Second Reading. All ayes. Motion carried.

4. Discussion Regarding Formation of Deer Management Committee (Mayor Henson)

Over the past years, residents have come to Council reporting issues with the deer population damaging lawns and destroying landscaping, causing traffic safety issues, and other nuisance issues. Last month, the Mayor, the City Clerk, and City residents met with the Department of Natural Resources to learn about residential deer management options. At that meeting, it was agreed that the City Council would form a committee of resident volunteers supported by staff and a Council Member to investigate the matter further and work towards a solution.

It was decided that a committee of seven members including one council member would be appropriate. Mayor Henson will serve as the Council Member for the committee.

MOTION Henson SECONDED Stump to form a Deer Management Committee consisting of seven members for a minimum of one year. All ayes. Motion carried.

5. Approval of CLEMIS Contract (Chief Kazyak)

The Chelsea Police Department has been a partner agency with CLEMIS since 2008, for all of its Records Management System needs, including computer-aided dispatching, report writing, fingerprinting, and mugshot photographs. For the last 60 years, CLEMIS has operated as a regional collaboration within Oakland County government. In 2025, CLEMIS moved to become the CLEMIS Authority, which will officially take effect on October 1, 2026.

At the previous meeting, Council approved the contract for an amount that was in error. Chief Kazyak brought forward an updated contract with the correct amount and asked for approval.

MOTION Keaton SECONDED Bullerman to approve the quote for CLEMIS services for \$28,492.00 for the 2026-2027 fiscal year. All ayes. Motion carried.

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6. Approval of Purchase of 2023 Bucket Truck with Chip Box (Operations Manager Stevens)

The Electric Department continues to focus on tree trimming to help prevent damage to the City's electrical system during storms. Having dedicated equipment will strengthen the City's ability to proactively manage vegetation around its electrical infrastructure, reduce the risk of outages caused by trees and limbs, and improve electric service reliability for our customers.

The purchase of a 2026 Vermeer Diesel Chipper for \$53,889.00 was previously approved by City Council, and the equipment has been received. The Electric Department requested that City Council approve the purchase of a 2023 Freightliner 70-foot Bucket Truck with Chip Box for \$150,400.00.

MOTION Stump **SECONDED** Iannelli to approve the purchase of a 2023 Freightliner Bucket Truck with Chip Box for a purchase price not to exceed \$150,400.00 from Custom Truck. All ayes. Motion carried.

7. Approval of Purchase of Crane for F450 (Superintendent Chandler)

With the addition of a new submersible lift station going into operation this year, staff need a way to be able to service the station. A crane will allow them to do that, as well as numerous other day-to-day activities. The F450 that will hold the crane was purchased in 2008 and completely outfitted for a crane. However, a crane was never installed on the truck.

MOTION Merkel **SECONDED** Angus to approve the purchase of the Ventura crane from Automotive Service Company for \$19,990.76. All ayes. Motion carried.

8. Approval of Recoating of Clarifier #3 (Superintendent Chandler)

The Wastewater Department needs to have a clarifier sandblasted and recoated. A clarifier is a large circular settling tank that is critical to the operation of the plant. The City has a total of five clarifiers, all of which need repairs in one way or another. Clarifier #3 is currently not in operation.

MOTION Iannelli **SECONDED** Stump to approve the recoating of Clarifier #3 by OME for a cost of \$27,510.00. All ayes. Motion carried.

Staff Reports

Police Chief Kazyak presented the August report of activity for the Police Department. He then spoke about the Fair Parade and thanked our DPW department and all those who supported the parade, including his own Police Department staff.

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City Manager Thompson attended a meeting last week with members of the Michigan Municipal Power Agency about potential expansion of our generation capacity in the City. They will be presenting to Council in the near future. Also upcoming is an update on the water plant expansion and associated projects. The auditors are almost done with the annual audit. They are expected to report to Council at the end of October or early November. Last, he stated that it was an honor to be asked back as City Manager.

Council Reports

Council Member Keaton attended the Architectural Control Committee meeting, where it was discovered that the parcel they were reviewing was outside of the industrial park area.

Council Member Merkel thanked Mr. Thompson for his return. Mr. Merkel chaired the Chelsea Area Fire Authority board meeting on August 18th. They voted on contracting with a new website company. He has another meeting tomorrow to contract a new IT company. The new board member will start at this meeting, and the board will start their search for a permanent fire chief.

Council Member Stump welcomed Mr. Thompson back. He also attended the Architectural Control Committee meeting. On September 8th WAVE, Chelsea School District, and City leadership met to discuss a potential bussing collaboration. Last, Mr. Stump thanked Chief Kazyak and all others who helped with the Fair Parade.

Council Member Angus attended the Parks Commission meeting on September 1 where they spoke about the revitalization of Vets Park. They are still gathering feedback on Pierce Park. The Parks Commission issued a statement regarding the potential use of the property located on Freer/Trinkle Roads.

On September 2, Council Member Angus attended a CERC party in the park teen edition. The Chelsea Run Club continues to do well. Upcoming there is a CERC event to learn how to play bocce ball. The TimberTown Trail fest is October 24th. October 25th CERC will host a birding event. The Aquatic Center committee will meet with the Chelsea School District shortly.

Council Member Bullerman attended the Human Rights Commission meeting where they are planning for Veterans Day. The civility survey is also open for participation. Indigenous Peoples' Day is soon, and plans are in motion for that. The WATS meeting was cancelled, but she will be attending a SEMCOG meeting in October.

Council Member Iannelli attended a Western Washtenaw Recycling Authority meeting on the 26th. They were awarded a grant from the state for signage on bins. The new truck will arrive at the end of September. WWRA is also applying for a grant for the purchase of new containers and to pay for a consultant to consider curbside service for the entire WWRA region. The Planning Commission has a meeting tomorrow.

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Mayor Henson thanked everyone who supported the parade. The Western Washtenaw Regional Advisory Group attended the Southwestern Washtenaw Council of Governments meeting. The Mayor also attended the Downriver Community Conference. She will be attending the Chelsea Area Fire Authority meeting tomorrow.

CLOSED SESSION – to consider dismissal, suspension, or disciplining of, or to hear complaints or charges brought against, or to consider a periodic personnel evaluation of a public officer or employee as requested by Ms. Cole.

MOTION Stump SECONDED Iannelli to enter into Closed Session. All ayes. Motion carried.

MOTION Keaton SECONDED Stump to exit Closed Session and enter into Regular Session. All ayes. Motion carried.

MOTION Keaton SECONDED Stump to adopt Resolution #2026-45 to Accept the Resignation of the City Manager. 5 ayes, 2 nays. Motion carried.

Council Member Merkel reminded everyone that the former City Manager had the opportunity to resign prior to this evening. He also reminded everyone of the reasons for her termination and stated that he believed the appropriate course of action was to continue with termination.

Council Member Keaton stated that if they accept the resignation, they will no longer proceed with termination or the public hearing.

Mayor Henson stated that she is approving this resolution with a heavy heart because Ms. Cole had the opportunity to resign previously but didn't. She feels that even in her absence she is continuing to erode the trust between Council, staff, and the public.

Council Member Bullerman stated that the Council was confident with their decision and moving forward is in the best interest of the City.

Council Member Angus stated that it was not a difficult decision to terminate the City Manager, but that it was a difficult decision to allow the resignation of the City Manager.

Adjournment

MOTION Keaton SECONDED Iannelli to adjourn at 8:34 p.m. All ayes. Motion carried.

Approved:

Kate Henson, Mayor

Lyn Sebestyen, Clerk