

Village President's Update

July 28, 2026

On Monday July 27th, the Village Council approved placing a 2.5-mill police proposal on the November ballot. If approved by voters, the millage would be levied for three years and is estimated to generate approximately \$248,100.05 annually for operating and equipping the Village of Pinckney Police Department.

That amount represents approximately 50% of the Police Department's adopted 2026–2027 budget of \$500,000. Although the millage would not provide enough funding by itself to establish 24/7 Village police coverage, it would provide important financial support for maintaining our local Police Department and reducing the amount that must come from the General Fund.

The final decision now belongs to Village voters. Before the November election, we will work to provide residents with clear information about the proposal, its estimated cost to property owners, how the revenue may be used, and what level of police service the funding would support.

I would also like to recognize Police Chief Jeff Garrison for working with the police union to develop scheduling options that provide the best possible coverage within our current financial limitations. Jeff, thank you for the time and effort you have put into finding a workable solution for the Village.

Village Budget

The Village continues to face significant financial challenges. For several years, money from the General Fund balance has been used to cover ongoing operating expenses. Although the planned use of available fund balance may be appropriate in certain circumstances, relying on it year after year to fund regular operations is not a sustainable long-term practice.

Under Michigan's budgeting requirements, the Village must adopt a balanced budget and ensure that expenditure does not exceed the amounts authorized by the Village Council. Simply put, we must live within our means and spend only the revenues and other available resources included in the adopted budget.

Our responsibility does not end when the budget is adopted. We must carefully monitor revenues and expenditure throughout the year and make necessary budget amendments before authorized spending limits are exceeded. We must also continue looking for responsible ways to control expenses, protect essential services, and strengthen the Village's financial position.

Maintaining a balanced and sustainable budget is one of the Village Council's most important responsibilities. We must make responsible decisions today, so we are not facing the same or an

even larger financial problem next year. My commitment remains focused on accountability, transparency, and protecting the Village's long-term financial health, even when difficult decisions are necessary.

Downtown Development Authority

I remain proud of the work being done by the Pinckney Downtown Development Authority. The DDA and its volunteers play an important role in supporting our downtown, organizing community events, encouraging investment, and helping move the Village forward.

I want to personally thank DDA Chair Mike Szafranski, DDA Secretary Julie Amy, DDA Vice Chair Jen Cooke, and the entire DDA Board for their dedication, leadership, and steadfast commitment to the Village of Pinckney. They give generously of their time and energy because they genuinely care about our downtown, our businesses, and the future of our community.

Their work is not always easy or fully recognized, but it is making a positive difference. I deeply appreciate their willingness to remain focused, work through challenges, and continue moving the DDA and the Village forward.

I am also saddened that Jo Self has stepped away from her paid position with the DDA. Jo has contributed a tremendous amount to Pinckney and will be missed in that role. Her commitment to our community should not be overlooked, and I am grateful that she plans to remain involved as a volunteer and continue supporting Village events.

Community Updates

Surf Internet's fiber installation continues to move forward, and the project is expected to be completed within approximately the next month. This represents another important investment in the future of our community.

Thursday nights in Pinckney continue to bring our community together with the Farmers Market and Hootin' in the Park. I want to personally thank Regina Hamlett and her team, along with the M-36 Rotary Club, for their dedication and hard work in making these events possible.

The Farmer's Market is becoming a wonderful addition to our community and provides another reason for residents and visitors to spend time in the Village. We should all be proud of what can happen when a small group of dedicated individuals comes together with an idea and works hard to make it a reality.

These events give neighbors an opportunity to connect, support local vendors, enjoy our parks, and celebrate everything that makes Pinckney a special place to live.

Our recent Food Truck Friday also took place without any major issues. Attendance was slower earlier in the day but improved during the evening, and several vendors reported a successful event. Thank you to the DDA, Village staff, volunteers, participating vendors, and everyone who came out to support it.

Our next Food Truck Friday will be held on **Friday, August 14**. We hope you will join us for another enjoyable evening in the Village.

Pinckney-Putnam Police Authority

We are continuing our efforts to explore the possibility of creating a joint Pinckney-Putnam Police Authority. A joint meeting is planned for **August 26 at 7:00 p.m. at Putnam Township Hall**.

The goal is to bring Village and Township representatives together to explore the structure, costs, governance, and practical steps that would be required to create a joint authority. Any formal proposal would return to the appropriate elected boards for public review and consideration.

I want to personally thank Putnam Township Clerk Val Niemiec, Trustee Jim Jensen, and Treasurer Pat Carney for their willingness to participate in this conversation and explore what may be possible. Working together could create a long-term public-safety solution that benefits residents of both the Village and Township.

I also encourage residents of Pinckney and Putnam Township to respectfully visit, call, or email Township Supervisor Tom Chambers and encourage him to support the joint meeting and participate in this important conversation.

As community leaders, we must be willing to look beyond our differences and beyond the challenges of today. We need to consider what will be best for the Village of Pinckney and Putnam Township five, ten, and twenty years from now.

This does not mean that everyone must agree on every detail. It means we should be willing to sit at the same table, listen to one another, and explore whether a partnership can provide better public safety for our entire community.

Moving Pinckney Forward

I want to thank our Village employees, DDA members, Village Trustee's and Planning Commission members, volunteers, and residents who continue showing up and working for this community. We may not always agree on every issue, but we share a responsibility to keep the Village moving forward. Our discussions should remain focused on facts, solutions, and what is best for the people of Pinckney.

Pinckney has real financial challenges, but it also has real opportunities. We are seeing new investment, improved infrastructure, successful community events, and people who care deeply about this Village. My commitment is to continue making responsible decisions, protecting our essential services, and moving Pinckney forward.

We will not solve every problem overnight, but if we work together and remain focused on solutions, I believe this is the start of something good for the Village.

Jeff Buerman
Village President