

Village of Schoolcraft



Preserving our Past, Enriching our Present, Planning our Future

www.villageofschoolcraft.com

Vision Statement

The Village of Schoolcraft commits to building on its strong heritage while moving forward to a vibrant future as a community where all citizens are safe and secure, local businesses thrive, and residents and visitors alike are drawn to the variety of recreational and cultural activities.

Mission Statement

The Village of Schoolcraft seeks to enhance the community through development that contributes to its welcoming hometown atmosphere, complements its landscape and local business environment, and reinforces its rich history and quality schools.

2025 Quarterly Meeting Calendar

Village Council 7:00 p.m.

January 6	January 20
February 3	February 17
March 3	March 17

Planning Commission 7:00 p.m.

January 13	February 10
March 10	

**All meetings are open to the public.
442 N. Grand St., Schoolcraft**

Village President's Message

Happy New Year, Village Residents!

As we welcome the new year, I am filled with gratitude and excitement for the opportunities that lie ahead for our wonderful Village. Reflecting on the past year, we have faced challenges and celebrated successes together, and I am proud of the strength and community spirit that defines us.

Achievements and Milestones

This past year has been a testament to our resilience, unity, and the unwavering solidarity of our Village. Together, we have faced a challenging road project with determination by supporting each other with kindness and compassion. After celebrating the project's completion, we had a very successful Christmas Walk to round out the 2024 year.

Looking Ahead

As we step into this new year, our focus should be on continuing to build a sustainable and vibrant community. Our shared vision and collective efforts will drive us forward, making our Village an even better place to live, work, and grow. Many will be looking forward to our Annual Fourth of July celebration and fireworks display. With Independence Day falling on a Friday this year, this may provide the opportunity for a fantastic celebratory weekend! Your input and participation will be crucial in making this and other community events successful.

Community Engagement

I encourage all residents to stay engaged and involved in our Village activities. Attend council meetings, participate in community events, and share your ideas and feedback. Together, we can create a thriving and inclusive environment for everyone.

Gratitude and Appreciation

I want to extend my heartfelt thanks to all the Council and Commission members, village staff, volunteers, and residents who have contributed their time and effort to our community this past year. Your dedication and hard work are what make our Village a special place to live.

President's Message, continued from page 1

Also, I wish each of you and your loved ones a prosperous, healthy, and joyful New Year. May it be filled with new opportunities, memorable moments, and the continued strength of our community spirit.

Wishing you all the happiest new year!

Warm regards,



Michael Rochholz
Village Council President

News from the Village Manager's Desk

After a three-month medical leave, I am back at work and happy to be here! I want to express my sincere thanks to all Village Staff. They performed their job responsibilities and mine with great success. I am also pleased to tell you that not only was I happy to see them, but they were also happy to have me back, which means that we all work together as a great team.

At this time, I would like to let you know that we have had a successful year in obtaining grant monies. This summer, we were awarded \$47,000.00 from the Vicksburg Foundation to assist our small local retail businesses with funding and prepaid gift cards to assist them during the US 131 Road Project.

We were also awarded a grant from Kalamazoo Area Transportation Study (KATS) for a complete reconstruction of Lyon Street – 14th Street to US 131. This grant is an 80/20 grant and will be available in 2028. We know that Lyon Street needs work now, however, we are not able to designate the year that we will be receiving the funding. The total approximate cost of the award is \$450,000.00. Our portion will be approximately \$90,000.00 plus engineering.

We recently learned that we were awarded a 50/50 grant from the State of Michigan for a complete reconstruction of West Eliza Street from US 131 West to the Village limits. This grant will be awarded in 2026. The total cost of the project is expected to be approximately \$400,000.00. The Village will be responsible for approximately \$200,000.00 plus engineering.

Last, we were awarded \$100,000.00 from Kalamazoo County to assist us in replacing our lead and copper water lines. This is a State Mandated requirement to be completed by 2041. Estimated costs for this Unfunded Mandate are over \$3,000,000.00. We will soon be speaking with our State and Federal Representatives to see if additional monies can be allocated for this project.

All in all, we did well for grant assistance this year. We are constantly looking for grant opportunities. This coming year, I would expect us to start looking for additional grant monies to assist us with the lead and copper rule, and other major water improvements that are in our Capital Improvement Plan.

I wish all of you the best and Happy New Year!

Cheri M. Lutz
Village Manager



Schoolcraft Police Department

Lock it Up—Say Something

Many communities around Kalamazoo County are experiencing an uptick in criminal behaviors such as auto thefts, burglaries and larcenies. Schoolcraft is not immune to these types of crimes and officers have responded to complaints recently. Our officers vigorously patrol our community to deter, prevent and address these behaviors, but unfortunately police cannot be everywhere. Here are some simple things you can do to help!

Lock it Up- We often hear people talking about the recent “Break-ins” and we would like to clarify something. The term “Break-in” implies that the suspects are forcing entry to commit these criminal acts. Although forced entry burglaries, theft or auto thefts can happen, the crimes that have been occurring recently are by far simply targets of opportunity, not forced entry. What we mean is these criminals are not necessarily breaking-in; they are simply looking for unlocked doors. Follow these precautions and make them your routine, they can significantly reduce your chances of becoming a victim:

- ◆ Always lock your car doors when you cannot monitor them
- ◆ Never leave your car keys in the vehicle when you are not
- ◆ Do not leave your car running unattended (Even to warm up or “run-in quick”)
- ◆ Do not leave valuables in your car – if you must, hide them so they are out of sight
- ◆ Close your garage doors when you cannot monitor your garage –even during the day!
- ◆ Keep doors to your home locked and double check before you go to bed
- ◆ Talk with your kids about these tips so they follow the routine also

Criminal Tactics- We feel it’s important to understand some of the tactics being used so you can better prevent becoming a victim. Tactics can always change so please remain vigilant, but here are some basic examples of cases we have investigated:

- Suspects will drive around neighborhoods looking for open garage doors (At all hours of the day/night). Once an open garage is observed, 1 or more subjects jump out of their vehicle and enter the open garage. Once inside they may rummage through the vehicles looking for valuables or, if the keys are in the vehicle, they may take the vehicle. They have also taken key fobs or garage door openers meaning they may plan to return later. On occasion they open the door leading into the home from the garage. They may take the car keys hanging on the hook by the door and steal a car or they may take valuables found inside.
- Suspects will drive around in a vehicle looking for unattended vehicles. They have stolen vehicles warming up in garages or driveways, running parked outside of daycares, running parked at gas stations or stores, etc. Once a running unattended vehicle is observed, 1 or more subjects jump out and into the running vehicle and take off stealing the car. It only takes seconds to steal a running unattended vehicle!
- Groups of suspects enter a neighborhood and begin pulling on car doors (At all hours of the day/night). If an open car door is located, they may take valuables inside the vehicle or look for a garage door opener. They have used the garage door opener to open the garage to gain access; from there they may take valuables or car keys (to steal the car) inside the garage or on occasion from inside the home.

See Something Say Something- If you see suspicious activity, it’s important to call 911 right away. We have had people tell us they did not want to bother us, so they didn’t call, or they report something they saw overnight the next day. Suspicious activity could be serious and should be addressed by an officer right away, this is not a bother-this is our job. Early intervention by law enforcement not only stops a possible crime in progress but also can be instrumental to ensure a conviction for the crime committed.

The Schoolcraft Police Department wishes our community a safe and happy year.

Chief Scott Smith

VILLAGE OF SCHOOLCRAFT 2025 COUNCIL MEETINGS

The meetings of the Schoolcraft Village Council are held on the first and third Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

- January 6, 2025
- January 20, 2025
- February 3, 2025
- February 17, 2025
- March 3, 2025
- March 17, 2025
- April 7, 2025
- April 21, 2025
- May 5, 2025
- May 19, 2025
- June 2, 2025
- June 16, 2025
- July 7, 2025 **
- August 4, 2025 **
- September 2, 2025 *
- September 15, 2025
- October 6, 2025
- October 20, 2025
- November 3, 2025
- November 17, 2025
- December 1, 2025
- December 15, 2025

* Meetings are held on Tuesday when the Village Office is closed for Holiday on Monday.

** Only one meeting is held in July and August.

VILLAGE OF SCHOOLCRAFT 2025 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS

The meetings of the Planning Commission are held on the second Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

- January 13, 2025
- February 10, 2025
- March 10, 2025
- April 14, 2025
- May 12, 2025
- June 9, 2025
- July 14, 2025
- August 11, 2025
- September 8, 2025
- October 13, 2025
- November 10, 2025
- December 8, 2025

Accountability And Transparency

The 2024 Accountability and Transparency information for the Village of Schoolcraft is available for public viewing on our webpage at www.villageofschoolcraft.com or at the Village Municipal Complex, 442 N. Grand St., Schoolcraft, MI.

Christmas Tree Pick Up

The Village of Schoolcraft’s Department of Public Works will be picking up Christmas Trees, which are placed in the right of way, through January 21, 2025. TREES MUST BE PLACED OUT BY 7:00 A.M. ON JANUARY 21, 2025.

Schoolcraft Community Library

To see the Schoolcraft Library calendar and list of activities, visit their website www.schoolcraftlibrary.org

Winter Streets and Sidewalks

During the snow season, we ask for your patience and cooperation regarding snow removal. It is our goal to remove it as quickly and safely as possible.

Our first priority is to open major and local streets. This can be accomplished more efficiently if vehicles are not parked along the street.

Once the snow has been removed from the streets, the DPW will remove the sidewalks of snow. Be sure your vehicles are not blocking the sidewalks. Village residents who have placed decorative fences along the public sidewalks may wish to remove them during the winter months to avoid any damage that may occur during the snow removal season.

Snow Removal

State and Local Ordinance prohibits the plowing of snow into or across sidewalks and streets as it leaves snow or slush on the roadway. This ordinance is for vehicular and pedestrian safety.

Please be sure that when you are clearing snow from your driveway, you are also keeping it off the sidewalks and roadway.

Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated by our winter walkers.

Garage Sales

- May 16, 2025 9-4
- May 17, 2025 9-3

Call the Village Office if you would like to place your garage sale on a map. Maps will be available at the Village Office beginning May 15, 2025.

Village Spring Clean Up (Central Drop Off)

June 14, 2025

E. Clay Street (Across from Krum Recreation Center)
More information will be in the Spring 2025 Newsletter.

Village Directory

Administrative Office 269-679-4304
Police Department 269-679-5600
Department of Public Works 269-679-5658
Associated Government Services 1-800-627-2801

Village Council

President: Mike Rochholz
Trustees: Kathy Mastenbrook
Kirk Bergland
Todd Carlin
Jennifer Doorn
Shawn Rance

Messages for the Village Council can be left at the Administrative Office or on Village Staff email.

Village Staff

Manager: Cheri Lutz, cmlutz@villageofschoolcraft.com
Clerk/Treasurer: Theresa O'Leary, toleary@villageofschoolcraft.com
Office Assistant: Michelle Crawford, mcrawford@villageofschoolcraft.com
Police Chief: Scott Smith, ssmith@villageofschoolcraft.com
Sergeant: Jamie Edwards, jedwards@villageofschoolcraft.com
Officers: Joe Bippus
Eric Ray
Matt Britton
DPW Super: Rob Coffman, rcoffman@villageofschoolcraft.com
Water Operator: Dan Lewis, dlewis@villageofschoolcraft.com
Grounds Maintenance/
Equipment Operator: Emily Munson
Office Dog: Teddy (semi-retired)

PRESORTED STANDARD
ECR
US POSTAGE PAID
SCHOOLCRAFT, MI
PERMIT NO. 16

Winter 2025 Newsletter
Village of Schoolcraft
P.O. Box 8
Schoolcraft, MI 49087