



# CITY OF LESLIE

602 W. Bellevue • P.O. Box 496 • Leslie, MI 49251-0496  
Phone: 517-589-8236 • Fax: 517-878-6868 • Web Site: [www.cityofleslie.org](http://www.cityofleslie.org)

**LESLIE COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING  
7:00 PM WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2021  
LESLIE CITY HALL, 602 W. BELLEVUE STREET**

**A special meeting for the purpose of: appoint new council member; opening bid documents received for the sale of an eight (8) acre parcel in the Business Park; special use permit request; elected officials orientation.**

## **AGENDA**

1. Roll Call.
2. Pledge of Allegiance.
3. Approval of The Agenda.
4. Public Comment.
5. Appoint new council member from candidates that submitted a letter of interest to fill vacant two-year term.
6. Open bid documents received for the sale of the eight (8) acre parcel in the Business Park. No action will be taken at this meeting.
7. Special Use Permit Request – 510 Industrial Drive.
8. Elected Officials orientation.
9. Motion to Adjourn.

**NOTICE  
LETTERS OF INTEREST  
FOR LESLIE CITY COUNCIL SEAT  
PARTIAL TERM**

The Leslie City Council is accepting letters of interest to serve the following vacancy:

**LESLIE CITY COUNCILMEMBER:      ONE SEAT                  2 YEAR TERM**

If you are interested in serving on the Leslie City Council and meet the candidate qualifications, please submit a letter of interest no later than 12pm on December 1, 2021 to City Clerk Chelsea Cox, PO Box 496, Leslie, MI 49251.

Candidate qualifications for Councilmember are: must be a registered elector of the City of Leslie who shall have resided within the City for at least one year immediately before the date of the election.

Chelsea Cox  
Leslie City Clerk



**CITY OF LESLIE**  
**Special Land Use Application**  
 Visit our website at [www.cityofleslie.org](http://www.cityofleslie.org)



**Specify Use:** Adult-Use Marihuana Class C Grow Facility & Adult-Use Processing Facility  
**Applicant Name:** Cultio, LLC  
**Street Address:** 510 Industrial Drive  
**City, State, Zip:** Leslie, MI 49251  
**Phone Number(s):** (954) 740-0913  
**E-mail:** dchaney954@gmail.com

- I hereby attest that all information on this application is, to the best of my knowledge, true and accurate.
- Additionally, I hereby grant permission for the City of Leslie Zoning Administrator to enter upon the above mentioned property (or as described in the attachment) for the purposes of gathering information related to this application.
- Furthermore, I hereby acknowledge that in review of this application, the City of Leslie may require the outside services of a Planner, Engineer, and/or the City Attorney to ensure that the requested item(s) for review in this application is compliant to the current zoning laws and policies of the City of Leslie. I, as the applicant, acknowledge that any costs incurred by the City of Leslie as they relate to the review of this application by any of the City's consultants listed above are my responsibility to reimburse and agree to repay the City of Leslie for any and all costs incurred to it in the review of this application.

**Signature:** Derek Chaney **Date:** 10/24/2021  
**Applicant is the:**  Owner  Lessee  Optionee  Contractor/Architect \*will be owner on 11/30/21 at closing

**Property Owner's Name** (if different from applicant): Verde Fields, LLC (Norman Albrecht)  
**Street Address:** 677 Virginia Ave.  
**City:** East Lansing **State:** MI **Zipcode:** 48823  
**Phone Number(s):** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Project Location or Address:** 510 Industrial Drive, Leslie, MI 49251  
**Property is:**  Residential  Commercial  Industrial **Property zoned:** M-1 (?)

**THIS APPLICATION WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED COMPLETED, AND THEREBY NOT PRESENTABLE TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION, UNLESS ALL ITEMS LISTED BELOW HAVE BEEN PROVIDED:**

- ✓ A description of the property or properties in question on this application and a site/plot plan as required by the City's Zoning Ordinance must be attached to this form.
- ✓ Evidence must be provided to show that the proposed use meets all general and specific special land use standards required by the Ordinance.

**TO BE COMPLETED BY CITY**

Date application and fee received: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff Initials: \_\_\_\_\_ Receipt #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Application is:  APPROVED  DENIED  
 Explanation: \_\_\_\_\_  
 PC Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_ City Council Meeting Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zoning Administrator: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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**Street Address:** 677 Virginia Ave.  
**City:** East Lansing **State:** MI **Zipcode:** 48823  
**Phone Number(s):** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature:** *Norman Albrecht* **Date:** 10/26/21

**Project Location or Address:** 510 Industrial Drive, Leslie, MI 49251  
**Property is:**  Residential  Commercial  Industrial **Property zoned:** M-1 (?)

**THIS APPLICATION WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED COMPLETED, AND THEREBY NOT PRESENTABLE TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION, UNLESS ALL ITEMS LISTED BELOW HAVE BEEN PROVIDED:**

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**Zoning Administrator:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY OF LESLIE PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT**

**DATE:** November 19, 2021  
**TO:** Planning Commission  
**FROM:** Susan Montenegro, City Manager and Zoning Administrator  
**SUBJECT:** Special Use Permit – 510 Industrial Drive for Adult Use Marihuana Grow Facility (Class C) and Processing Facility.

**Background & Building Information**

Verde Fields, LLC purchased a three (3) acre lot from the city last year to build a 12,000 square foot building measuring 80’x150’ for the purpose of operating a marihuana grow facility. The property is in the process of being sold to Derek Morbeck Chaney for the above mentioned purpose.

**Zoning and Zoning Use**

|       | CURRENT LAND USE  | ZONING       |
|-------|---|--------------|
| Site  | Industrial – a 12,000 square foot building is built on the northeast portion of the parcel with the intent to grow and process adult use marihuana. | M-1          |
| North | Industrial -  | M-1          |
| South | Township - Agricultural   | Agricultural |
| East  | Industrial  | M-1          |
| West  | Industrial  | M-1          |

**Ordinance Provisions**

Chapter 19 of the Leslie Code of Ordinances allows medical and adult use marihuana facilities to be located on industrial property with a zoning designation of M-1 through the issuance of a special use permit as stated in Section 98-278(a).

**Staff Recommendation**

Staff recommends approving the special use permit for 510 Industrial Drive as applied for.

## Leslie Zoning Ordinance

Sec. 98-278a - Uses permitted by special use permit.

The following uses may be permitted under the provisions of article X of this chapter:

- (1) Licensed medical marihuana facilities provided the conditions and requirements as set forth in Chapter 19 ("Medical and Recreational Marihuana") are fully satisfied.
- (2) Licensed recreational marihuana establishments provided the conditions and requirements as set forth in Chapter 19 ("Medical and Recreational Marihuana") are fully satisfied.

## **Boards and Commissions:**

**Downtown Development Authority (DDA)** – A nine person board that governs the Tax increment finance district in the Downtown Development Authority District. The TIF captures tax dollars from the city, school, county, and other taxing jurisdictions and uses the money to benefit the Downtown efforts and economic development efforts. The city's DDA encompasses a great deal of property throughout the city.

**Local Development Finance Authority (LDFA)** – An 11 person board that governs the Tax increment finance district in the Leslie Business Park. The TIF captures tax dollars from the city, school, county, and other taxing jurisdictions and uses the money to benefit the Business Park and economic development efforts.

**Planning Commission** – A nine member board who are appointed by the mayor subject to approval by the council. The planning commission may make recommendations to the city council, public officials, and to citizens regarding the planning and development of the city and the surrounding area. It is also the function of the planning commission to create a master plan for the city.

**Board of Review (BOR)** – A three person board that meets in March to review and correct the assessment roll. The BOR also meets to review protests before the board concerning a property owner's property assessment. The council may schedule additional meetings of the board of review to correct clerical issues or mutual mistakes of fact.

**Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA)** – A six member board to hear zoning variance requests, appeals, or requests for interpretation. The ZBA follows a strict decision making protocol for analyzing an issue.

## **Grants**

**Strategy** – we have been aggressively seeking grants through different venues. We try to predict the grants that we have the most likelihood of success and are of the most need. Grant writing takes a considerable amount of time and energy for staff in addition to the normal day to day duties. We have made contacts with State representatives as well as our national senators and congressman seeking funding.

**Challenges** – Leslie faces several challenges when applying for grants. First, the population is small. It is difficult to show a large impact for funders when the population is not large. Second, Leslie is not considered low or moderate income. This also hurts our chances of receiving grants. Third, the amount of time it takes to write grants makes it difficult to take advantage of all opportunities. Fourth, given our financial situation it is difficult to come up with matching funds or to pre-engineer projects to get them to the point where they are ready for funding.

## **Contracted Services**

Currently the City uses several different companies for contracted items.

### **City Attorney**

Legal services are provided by the firm Grua, Tupper and Young. They have served the city for many years. Carrie Freeman is who we primarily deal with from this firm.

**Engineering** – Currently the City is using Wightman for engineering services for the WWTP and other assorted projects. Recently, the City contracted with Alan Smaka to work with the City as its engineer and project manager.

**Assessing** – We contract with Caitlyn Zemla from Boundary Assessing for our assessing of property.

**Auditing** – We contract with Willis & Jurasek, CPAs and Consultants to do our annual audits. It is a charter requirement and state law to have an audit of government operations.

**Building Inspections** – We contract with Associated Government Services to provide all the building, mechanical, and electrical permits in the City.

**Lansing Economic Area Partnership** – We contract with LEAP for economic development and grants related to the DDA and LDFA.

**Street Sweeping** – We contract with Schafers to do the street sweeping once a month. DPW has also rented a street sweeper at various times during the year to help keep the streets clean.

**Information Technology** – The City currently has a contract with Gracon Services for computer networks, software, and hardware.

We have relationships with several other contractors for code enforcement, website hosting, office cleaning, and major infrastructure repairs.



## **Public Act 222 and Other Governmental Immunity**

The City has certain protections afforded to it by statute to protect it from tort liability and claims made against it for occurrences such as sewer backups, damage created to a vehicle by a pothole, other injuries sustained on public property.

There is a series of steps that a person needs to take in order to prove that the City was in fact negligent in its duties.

The City carries extensive liability insurance in order to protect itself against large claims.

If anyone approaches you with claims that the City should be liable for something, please refer directly to the City Manager.

## **Sensitivity of Information**

The City Council and Staff is privy to a plethora of information. Much of the information is public information. Regardless of whether the information is public, the Council members and Staff take great lengths treat information with sensitivity. We regard this with the utmost importance in establishing trust with our residents.

We are approached with information about many things such as new business ventures, arrests, bankruptcies, real estate transactions, negotiations, among many other scenarios. We do our best to safeguard sensitive information.

However, for the business that is of interest to taxpayers we try to be as transparent as possible, including communications and decisions.

## **Unions**

We have two Unions. Our police officers are represented by the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), and our DPW employees are represented by the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). The police chief and DPW director are not under the union.

Our unions have three year contracts that we negotiate with them. The DPW contract was negotiated in 2021 and runs until 2024. Police will need to be negotiated in 2022.

# Understanding the Roles and Responsibilities of the Elected Official

By Peter Letzmann

**W**ell, you got elected to office—now what? As a public official in Michigan accepts the office, the following oath is taken: “I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will support the Constitution of the United States and the constitution of this state, and that I will faithfully discharge the duties of the office of...according to the best of my ability.” Most of us understand the requirements of the U.S. and Michigan Constitutions, but we may not be familiar with the duties that we swore to faithfully discharge.

It’s been over 28 years since the first edition of this article, when I first provided a checklist to be utilized by public officials before beginning the voyage. I have made hundreds of presentations discussing the roles and responsibilities of elected officials using this article. From the feedback provided by the audiences and an additional 28 years of local government law practice, I offer this revision.

This, by no means is a complete or comprehensive list, but an assembly of frequently occurring challenges, to which you should add and assign priorities as you see fit. Remember, being a public official is hard work and requires discipline. Showing up is half the job, but in this case that is not enough. Now the check list.

First, do no harm. Inattentiveness, neglect, retribution, incompetence, malice, slothfulness, distractions, dishonesty, are all to be avoided.

## Know the Requirements of the Law and Best Practices

- Understand and follow, especially: your charter, ordinances, local rules, applicable state and federal laws, and the Constitutions of the U.S. and Michigan. The municipality’s attorney can be a resource.
- Keep up to date. Educate yourself. Go to conferences, read, and just learn. (Check the Michigan Municipal League website and *The Review* for training opportunities.)
- Respect the “separation of power.” There is an identifiable difference between the legislative and the executive functions. Know them, respect them, and operate in your capacity only.



- Do your homework. Read and familiarize yourself with the meeting materials, the issues to be decided, and the background of the issues.
- Be confident in the use of electronic devices.
- Understand how to “surf the net.” Make the Internet, with its far reaching search and speed capabilities, part of your research—but view the information with the appropriate skepticism.

## Public Meetings and Public Hearings

- Familiarize yourself with the meeting rules of procedure, including parliamentary procedure.
- Engage in clear communications. Especially important is communications at meetings and with appointees and staff. Communicate in a manner that is simple and straightforward; that there are no misunderstandings. Sometimes the purpose of the communication is not only to debate but to educate.
- Ask questions. Don’t make decisions without having the facts and understanding. Test the opinions of others.
- Allow for appropriate “input” from all. Public comment is required at all public meetings.

## Understand the Finances

- Approve the budget. Based on the financial history, projections for the future and the revenues, adopt a budget that best addresses the requirements of law and the needs of the community.
- Have a “rainy-day” fund. Unexpected expenses should be expected.
- Provide for major expenditures by utilizing a “sinking fund.”
- Have a clear understanding of borrowing. Bonds are one method; have a full understanding of the procedures and implications, especially for future budgets.

## Working as a Body

- Be a leader among equals. Set the example. Speak up and take a stance for good government, while being part of the team.
- Avoid sandbagging. Don't set up your colleagues or staff to make yourself look good.
- Don't make promises that you cannot keep. Respond with "we'll look into that" rather than "we will fix it."
- Remember you only speak for yourself and not the whole council.
- Learn to build consensus. It's a group effort, even if the law does not always require it. Listen. Avoid alienating your colleagues; build congeniality.
- Work as a body. Policymaking bodies function as a body; that is, they take action by the rule of the majority. The individual is generally powerless.

## Making a Decision

- Be familiar with the history, demographics, and the hope and dreams of your community.
- Calculate your proposed actions. In light of past experiences, current circumstances, and future hopes, dreams, and goals, what is the wise thing to do?
- Develop a long-term strategic plan. Include vision (long term), mission (short term), values, and goals of the municipality, the council, and the manager. Avoid just focusing on the short-term fixes.
- Utilize critical thinking—the objective analysis and evaluation of an issue in order to form a judgment.
- Be cautious of special interests. Remember the Constitutional "equal protection;" that is, everyone, not only the "squeaky wheel," gets attention.
- Make objective decisions. The decisions, based on all of the facts, are to be made in the best interest of the community, not an individual or an individual group. That is a fiduciary duty; a legal duty to act solely in the community's interests.

## Purchasing and Spending

- Establish and follow a purchasing procedure, including bidding and avoiding conflicts of interest. Delegate the small purchases and approve the major purchases.
- Be aware of what a legitimate expense is and what is an illegal expenditure.

## Appointees, Employees, and Officials

- Hire, retain, and compensate appointees. With the assistance of professionals, the selection, the periodic evaluation, and the appropriate compensation is one of the most important duties. And, if it becomes necessary, the dismissal of the appointee should be done properly and without delay.
- Be a morale booster. Encourage the employees, members of the boards and committees, and the volunteers. Acknowledge and thank them for their work. Discipline and criticism is the role of the executive.

## Participation, Recruitment, and Succession

- Encourage public attendance and participation at council meetings to create an interest in government, especially among the young. Coordinate with high school civics and university public administration classes.
- Promote applications for positions on the municipality's boards, committees, and commissions.
- Select the best appointees for the boards, committees, and commissions. Not only do they make important decisions and recommendations, but the boards, committees, and commissions are frequently the training ground for new elected officials.

## Ethics and Integrity

- Act ethically. Establish a code of ethics and insure that it is enforced equally and against all. Set the example for the rest of your local government and the community. Be like Caesar's wife: not only do no wrong, but don't give the appearance of wrongdoing.
- Respect the democratic process. Follow not only the letter of the law, but the spirit and the intent of the law.
- Do not misuse the public's property, employees, and resources.
- Do not bypass the system, nor permit others to do so.

## Accountability

- Take inventory. From time to time, meet with your colleagues to make sure you are still on track to meet council's goals and acting within your values.
- Take responsibility for your actions; don't blame others for your mistakes.

## Transparency and Privacy

- Decisions are to be made in public. The Open Meetings

Act and most charters require that most decisions be made in the open. The public has a right to know and there are penalties for violations.

- Keep the confidential information confidential. Improper disclosure may have severe consequences and needless embarrassment.

## Evaluation of Services and Appointees

- Be the conduit of complaints, even the anonymous ones. Take complaints willingly, and forward them to the executive department, or proper agency, for resolution. Response to the citizen is essential.
- Periodically evaluate the appointees. Base the evaluation on previously established goals, using objective standards and provide constructive feedback.

## Intergovernmental Relations and Cooperation

- Network and work with other governmental and non-governmental agencies. You can learn from others and seek out ways to collaborate.
- Federal, state, and county officials can be helpful and the source of revenues, if they know the needs of your community.

## Image of the Community:

- Project enthusiasm and optimism. It's not always easy, especially during difficult times. Smile. Remember that no one wants to work with a whiner and complainer.
- Establish a good relationship with the media. They will find the bad and embarrassing news; don't try and hide it. Tell them the good news, quickly and give them a photo if you have one. You are a public relations agent for the municipality, at all times.
- Work at earning the respect and trust of the public. At all times, officially or unofficially, act, speak, and appear in a manner that does not besmirch the office or your character.

This is my random list of duties and responsibilities (to which you may add your own), and is to be shared with others. I would appreciate feedback so that I may enhance future lists. Finally, ask yourself, "if good government does not begin with me, with whom will it begin; and, if good government does not begin today, when will it begin?"

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Peter Letzmann is the former city attorney of Troy, Michigan. He is now in private practice specializing in local government legal and leadership issues. You may reach him at [peter@letzmann.com](mailto:peter@letzmann.com).