

VILLAGE OF SARANAC
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
November 14, 2022

The Saranac Village Council Regular Meeting was called to order by President Darby at 7:00 p.m. at the Saranac Village Office, 27 N Bridge Street.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: President Darby, Straubel, DPW Koster; Trustees – Doll, Klutman, Mulnix, Simmons, Whorley
Absent: Day
Guests: Todd Richter

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Whorley, to approve the Regular Agenda. All yeas.

Public Comments

Law Enforcement Report

Council members reviewed Ionia County Sheriff Office stats for Village of Saranac patrol for the month of October 2022.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Mulnix, to accept the minutes of the October 10, 2022 Regular Meeting. All yeas.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Doll, to accept the Treasurer's Report of October 31, 2022. All yeas.

Various Accounts Payable items were reviewed and questions answered.

Motion was made by Doll, supported by Klutman, to approve the Accounts Payable of November 14, 2022, in the amount of \$100,304.89.

Roll call vote: yeas – Doll, Klutman, Mulnix, Simmons, Whorley, Darby; nays – none; absent – Day.

The Zoning Administrator's Report of Services for October 2022 was reviewed.

Planning Commission Report

The Planning Commission did not meet, as there was no new business to discuss.

Council members reviewed BakerTilly's Proposal for a Sewer Rate Study in the amount of \$8,500. Straubel reminded council members that a Sewer Rate Study was performed several years ago by Utility Financial Solutions, as part of the SAW grant project. The cost for this was covered by grant proceeds.

Straubel explained that BakerTilly will be performing a Water Rate Study as part of the DWAM grant project. The cost for this service is covered by grant proceeds.

Straubel requested that BakerTilly submit a proposal to complete an updated Sewer Rate Study. Having both rate studies in the same format, created in the same year, would be extremely beneficial when reviewing the studies each year to determine if water/sewer rate adjustments are needed.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Doll, to approve BakerTilly's proposal for a Sewer Rate Study for an amount not to exceed \$8,500.

Roll call vote: yeas – Doll, Klutman, Mulnix, Simmons, Whorley, Darby; nays – none; absent – Day.

Todd Richter, Fleis & VandenBrink Engineer, was in attendance to explain to council members, the reason he encouraged the Village to submit "Intent to Apply" (ITA) forms to EGLE (one for the Clean Water Program and one for the Drinking Water Program). Filing the ITA forms with EGLE, puts the Village in line for grants and/or low interest loans for water and sewer projects. Per Richter, EGLE received approximately 530 ITA forms. The usual process is for EGLE to schedule a meeting with the Village to discuss project needs. Due to the overwhelming number of ITA submittals, they will be holding two webinars, one for each program. EGLE will then follow up with Microsoft Teams meetings for each program, to answer specific project or eligibility questions that were not covered in depth in the webinars. Per Richter, the Village can decide after the webinars and meetings, if/when they want to submit a project for consideration.

Council reviewed a proposed Water and Sewer Rate Resolution prepared by Straubel. The resolution incorporates a 3% rate increase for both water and sewer, effective January 1, 2023. The proposed resolution also incorporates a 2% annual rate increase for both water and sewer, effective January 1st of each subsequent year.

Straubel also provided council members with a rate projection spreadsheet which shows that a 3% rate increase effective January 1, 2023, will generate an additional \$6,500 in water revenue and \$8,400 in sewer revenue.

Motion was made by Doll, supported by Klutman, to approve the Water and Sewer Rate Resolution with the 3% rate increase effective January 1, 2023, but without the 2% annual rate increase each year thereafter.

Roll call vote: yeas – Doll, Klutman, Mulnix, Simmons, Whorley, Darby; nays – none; absent – Day.

Committee Reports

Budget – No report.

Personnel

Darby reported that four resumes were received for the open position of DPW/Firefighter. The Personnel Committee interviewed all candidates, either in person or via telephone. The committee recommends that the Village offer the position to Hayden Stickney, at the rate of \$18 per hour. Stickney lives locally, is already a member of the Saranac Fire Department, and has his MFR, FF1 and FF2 certifications. The other applicants did not have these credentials.

Motion was made by Simmons, supported by Doll, to offer the open DPW/Firefighter position to Hayden Stickney at the rate of \$18 per hour.

Roll call vote: yeas – Doll, Klutman, Mulnix, Simmons, Whorley, Darby; nays – none; absent – Day.

Darby informed council that DPW Koster plans to cross-train all three DPW employees and rotate duties, as opposed to having one employee dedicated to the fire department. Council members indicated their approval of Koster's plan.

Public Safety – No report.

Parks & Recreation

Council members discussed the 12-ft circle area near the pavilion at the trailhead, which is currently filled with woodchips. The question is what to do with the area. Council members agreed that it is too close to the pavilion and parking lot to put the village Christmas tree there, or an outdoor gas firepit. After discussion, council members concurred to cement the area in.

Mulnix requested that the 2023/2024 budget include asphalt repair at the Nature Park.

Streets

Klutman reported on the Street Committee's meeting with Todd Richter. Committee members reviewed the PASER report and a street map provided by Richter to assist in determining which streets to chip/seal next year and which streets were beyond the point that a chip/seal process would be effective. The committee requests a budget of \$50,000 for chip/seal in the 2023/2024 budget. Reconstruction of Church Street will also be budgeted for, but due to lead times and potential grant opportunities, the project may not take place until the next budget year.

Buildings & Grounds – No report.

Water & Sewer – No report.

Public Comments – None.

Additional Business

Better Together 4 Saranac requested that council consider observing Halloween (specifically trick or treating) on the last Saturday in October, as opposed to October 31st. The group's reason for requesting the change, is because when it falls on a weekday it affects school and work schedules. Council members concurred they are not opposed to looking into the request.

Straubel reported that one of the boys that was involved in damaging the restroom facility at the Trailhead, read an apology letter to her and DPW Koster. A public apology was required as part of his restitution.

Council members received a letter from Saranac Community Church, announcing that Pastor Becky Poor has received another calling, and inviting them to attend a farewell dinner on Sunday, November 27th at 4 p.m. in the Saranac High School Cafeteria.

Darby recapped the November 8th election results. Trustee Incumbents Doll and Whorley were reelected for a 4-year term, Talcott won the third Trustee seat as a write-in candidate for a 4-year term, and Day will be reappointed as Trustee for a 2-year term to complete Ricket's term.

Meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.



Becky Straubel,
Treasurer/Deputy Clerk