

VILLAGE OF SARANAC
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
March 13, 2023

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 – Day, Doll, Klutman, Talcott, Whorley

Absent: Mulnix

Guests: Deputy Westerlund

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

Public Comments – None.

Law Enforcement Report

Council members reviewed Ionia County Sheriff Office stats for Village of Saranac patrol for the month of February 2023.

Deputy Westerlund was in attendance to provide council members with an update on village law enforcement items of interest, and to answer any questions they may have.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Klutman, to accept the minutes of the February 20, 2023 Regular Meeting. All yeas.

Motion was made by Doll, supported by Talcott, to accept the Treasurer's Report of February 28, 2023. All yeas.

Various Accounts Payable items were reviewed and questions answered.

Motion was made by Talcott, supported by Day, to approve the Accounts Payable of March 13, 2023, in the amount of \$145,093.57.

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

Council members reviewed financial results for fiscal year ending 2/28/23, as well as proposed budget amendments submitted by Straubel. Straubel reported that all funds ended the 2022/2023 fiscal year with a net income (added to reserves), as follows; General Fund \$224,492, Major Street \$90,322, Local Street \$14,335, Water Fund \$48,448 and Sewer Fund \$55,492, for a total net income (added to reserves) of \$433,089.

Motion was made by Talcott, supported by Whorley, to accept the budget amendments for fiscal year ending 2/28/23, as presented.

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

The Zoning Administrator's Report of Services for February 2023 was reviewed.

Council members revisited the topic of unlicensed/inoperable vehicles at two businesses in the Central Business District. The Streets Committee scheduled a meeting to further discuss the issue and will bring a recommendation of action back to the Village Council for consideration.

Planning Commission Report

Council members reviewed 3/1/23 Planning Commission meeting minutes. Commission members discussed information provided to them by Straubel, relative to Jason Ricket's request to consider adopting an ordinance to allow the keeping of backyard chickens. Ricket brought his request to the Village Council on 2/20/23. Straubel forwarded said information, along with minutes from the 2/20/23 Village Council meeting to the Planning Commission, as they are tasked with reviewing any request to amend, supplement or repeal Zoning Ordinance regulations. Planning Commission members passed a motion to not pursue an ordinance for the keeping of backyard chickens at this time, due to insufficient reasoning or support.

Council members reviewed and discussed two letters submitted by Main Street property owners (Beth Kelly and Sarah Huisman & Deb Tomasik). In their letters, the residents propose that the Village plant pine trees where their north property lines meet the south property line of Village owned property (site of Scheid Park's newest ballfield), and install "private property beyond this point" signage. Their chief complaints since the installation of the new ballfield are; an increase in noise, loss of privacy and disruption of wildlife habitat due to the removal of trees.

Per DPW Koster, approximately 8-10 trees were removed from the property line. Most of the trees that were removed, were from the site of the actual ballfield and between the field and the rail trail.

DPW Koster informed council members that rocks are in place to block the drive to the new ballfield, in baseball/softball off-seasons.

Straubel noted that when anyone purchases property, they have no guarantee (unless specifically stated in the deed), that adjacent property owners will not develop their property.

Council members were reminded that the land where the new ballfield was built, was donated by a Main Street property owner. At the request of the donor, the Village agreed to plant pine trees between the donor's new east property line and the west property line of the donated land.

Motion was made by Doll, supported by Talcott, that it is not prudent for the Village to plant trees or install signage, as proposed in letters received from Beth Kelly and Sarah Huisman & Deb Tomasik. All yeas.

Straubel will draft a response letter, explaining the reasons for council's denial of Kelly, Huisman & Tomasik's proposal.

Committee Reports

Budget – No report.

Personnel – No report.

Public Safety – No report.

Parks & Recreation

DPW Koster informed council members that he received two quotes for purchase/planting of the new Village Christmas tree at the Trailhead.

One quote was \$1,000 for a 10 ft. Frasier Fir and the other quote was \$600 for a 9 ft. Norway Spruce. Per DPW Koster, he was told that a Norway Spruce will grow better in the type of soil we have at the Trailhead. Council members concurred to go with the Norway Spruce for \$600. The Saranac Community Association will assist the DPW in identifying a location at the Trailhead to plant the tree.

Streets

Straubel shared with council members, a proposed 3-step enforcement process that she and DPW Koster have been working on. The proposed process is meant to increase awareness of the Village ordinance pertaining to removal of snow and ice from sidewalks, promote property owner accountability, and ultimately, create a safer environment for residents and visitors who utilize Village sidewalks. Council members indicated that they are in favor of giving the proposed process a try.

Buildings & Grounds – No report.

Water & Sewer

DPW Koster reported that well 4 is currently down, due to a faulty valve. Fortunately, Peerless Midwest has a valve in stock and will be replacing it this week. Normally there is an approximate 3-month lead time for parts.

DPW Koster reported that the Village is 100% compliant with the requirements of EGLE's Lead and Copper Rule – Complete Distribution System Material Inventory.

Public Comments – None.

Additional Business

Council members received a letter from Dennis G Bowen, Boston Township Supervisor, explaining Boston Township's reasons for no longer hosting the annual Memorial Day parade. Boston Township will continue to place medallions on veteran grave sites, organize and host the Memorial Day program at the Saranac Cemetery, and print programs with names of all veterans in the Saranac and South Boston Cemeteries, for those who attend the ceremony.

Meeting adjourned at 8:13 p.m.



Becky Straubel,
Treasurer/Deputy Clerk