

VILLAGE OF SARANAC
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
March 13, 2017

The Saranac Village Council Regular Meeting was called to order by President Darby at 7:02 p.m. at the Saranac Municipal Building, 27 N. Bridge Street.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: President Darby, Smith, Straubel, DPW Simmons
Trustees – Doll, Klutman, Mulnix, Ricket, Simmons, Whorley
Absent: None
Guests: See sign in sheet attached

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

Motion was made by Mulnix at 7:03 p.m., supported by Klutman, to open the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) Public Hearing to accept comments regarding; 1) a variance application submitted by Saranac Gas N Go LLC (Saranac Party Store) and, 2) the ZBA's interpretation of correct Zoning District Borders. All yeas.

Gaganjeet Singh, the owner of Saranac Party Store, has applied for a variance to retain the existing business name signs that are on two sides of his building located at 38 S Bridge Street in Saranac. The signs are larger than permitted by the Zoning Ordinance, Section 30.18.29 J.

Jeanne Vandersloot, Zoning Administrator, reviewed the details of her memo to the ZBA, regarding the sign variance application.

Singh addressed the ZBA and explained that the signs were in place before he purchased the business approximately 10 years ago. He is concerned that removing the signs would cause him to lose business. Singh stated that he has done a lot of work to improve the appearance of his property, in order to be in compliance with all other zoning regulations. Council concurred and thanked him for his cooperation.

Mark Grieves, owner of property located at 28 Mill Street, voiced support of granting a variance to Saranac Party Store, until such time that the sign needs to be replaced.

Doll inquired as to when the sign would need to be replaced. Singh expects it to hold up another 8 to 10 years.

Hearing no further comments on Saranac Gas N Go's application for sign variance, President Darby requested that Vandersloot review the details of her memo to the ZBA, regarding the Zoning Map project.

Vandersloot explained that the Zoning Board of Appeals (Village Council) has the duty per Zoning Ordinance Section 30.24.02 B., to determine the precise location of the boundary lines between zoning districts, where uncertainty exists. Vandersloot has been working with the Planning Commission on updating the Village of Saranac Zoning Map. When comparing the current zoning map with Ionia County's GIS mapping program, Vandersloot discovered several zoning district discrepancies, which she detailed in an eleven-page memo to the ZBA. Vandersloot met with the Planning Commission on February 22nd to review her findings, and present her recommendations to correct the discrepancies.

Jason Ricket, Acting Chair of the Planning Commission, confirmed that at their February 22nd meeting, the Planning Commission made a motion to recommend to the ZBA, all changes to the Zoning Map as proposed by Vandersloot.

It was also noted that Vandersloot mailed a letter to property owners whose zoning district would be affected if the recommended changes were accepted by the ZBA. In the letter, property owners were informed of the Planning Commission's February 22nd meeting, as well as the ZBA's March 13th meeting, and welcomed to attend, view the map information and comment on the proposed changes before being accepted by the ZBA.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Whorley, to close the ZBA Public Hearing at 7:12 p.m. All yeas.

Motion was made by Doll, supported by Ricket, to approve Saranac Gas N Go's sign variance until the signs need to be replaced, at which time the owner will comply with zoning ordinance regulations or submit a new sign variance application.

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

Motion was made by Klutman, supported by Mulnix, to accept the changes to the Village of Saranac Zoning Map as proposed by Vandersloot and recommended by the Planning Commission.

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

Public Comments – None.

Wendy Ogilvie was in attendance to present council with information about the Grand River Water Trail. Ogilvie presented council with a map, identifying five possible locations for Grand River access sites, within the Village of Saranac.

Council reviewed a proposed Resolution in Support of the Grand River Water Trail.

Motion was made by Klutman, supported by Mulnix, to adopt as presented, a Resolution in Support of the Grand River Water Trail.

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

Saranac Village resident Ryan Johnson was in attendance (along with several others) to present his proposal of a 9-hole disc golf course in the Village. Johnson provided council members with a written overview of his proposal. Johnson is not asking for monetary support from the Village, just space and minimal assistance with maintenance.

The Village Nature Park and Village property west of the boat launch, are two sites that Johnson feels would work well for a 9-hole course. The course would require approximately one acre per basket, according to Johnson.

Council members voiced concern over flooding, trash, maintenance and potential interference with "other" park users.

Johnson responded to council's concerns. He is not concerned with flooding issues, as the baskets are made to withstand the weather and are removable as well. He would ask that the Village provide waste receptacles at various points throughout the course and empty them as needed. Johnson stated that the disc golf "community" takes pride in their courses and often have "clean-up" days. He would also request that the Village provide on-going maintenance in terms of mowing, which would be minimal if at all, dependent upon where the course is located.

As far as disc golfers interfering with other Village park users, Johnson stated that there would be little if any interaction between the two. A disc golf course is primarily located in wooded, hilly areas that are basically of no use to other park users.

Council members expressed a general consensus that a disc golf course has the potential to bring business to the community, as it is one of the largest growing sports.

Darby voiced a concern over alcohol use and wondered if this might become an issue, as alcohol is prohibited on Village property. Johnson stated that while he could not monitor the park at all times, he felt that the majority of disc golf enthusiasts, honor park rules.

Ricket inquired about liability concerns for the Village. Per Straubel, the Village would not have any additional liability.

Johnson inquired if council would support him in moving forward with plans for a 9-hole disc golf course in the Village. The suggestion was made that he meet with the Parks & Recreation Committee once he has developed a course design.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Klutman, in support of Johnson's proposal for a 9-hole disc golf course in the Village of Saranac, with specific site and design to be approved at a later date.

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

Johnson will contact Straubel to schedule a meeting with the Parks & Recreation Committee.

Motion was made by Simmons, supported by Klutman, to accept the minutes of the February 20, 2017 Regular Meeting. All yeas.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Simmons, to approve the Treasurer's Report of February 28, 2017. All yeas.

Various Accounts Payable items were reviewed.

Per DPW Simmons, during the wind storm last Wednesday, a branch fell on the metal roof of the south pavilion at Scheid Park and damaged a few of the panels. The pavilion was originally built by the Saranac Lions Club. Simmons will inquire as to whether club members wish to repair the damages.

Motion was made by Klutman, supported by Whorley, to approve the Accounts Payable of March 13, 2017, in the amount of \$122,993.85.

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

Council reviewed the financial results for fiscal year ending 2/28/17. Straubel provided a brief narrative and proposed two small budget amendments to General Fund Revenue.

Motion made by Whorley, supported by Klutman, to accept the budget amendments for fiscal year ending 2/28/17, as presented.

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

The Zoning Administrator's Report for February 2017 was reviewed.

As discussed earlier tonight, the Planning Commission held a Special Meeting February 22nd to review information submitted by Vandersloot, regarding zoning map discrepancies. The Planning Commission passed a motion to recommend to the ZBA, all changes to the Village of Saranac Zoning Map as proposed by Vandersloot.

Committee Reports

Public Safety

Straubel will contact Deputy Sommer to inquire about his report for the month of February.

Chief Simmons stated that the Fire Department did a great job on Wednesday in handling a record amount of calls (16).

Budget – No report.

Parks & Recreation – No report.

Buildings & Grounds – No report.

Streets – No report.

Water & Sewer

DPW Simmons provided council with information on the sewer lagoon and water tower alarm system. The system is in need of being upgraded or replaced soon.

DPW Simmons stated, that per DEQ requirements the DPW will be conducting a Village-wide inspection of all water meters and underground piping. Letters are being hand delivered in batches, requesting that the property owner call Simmons to schedule an appointment.

Personnel – No report.

Public Comments – None.

Additional Business

Straubel reported on the meeting with the MEDC and an investor looking to purchase commercial property in the Village of Saranac. Straubel is moving forward with the MEDC's Redevelopment Ready Communities program, to ensure that potential investors as well as current commercial property owners, have the opportunity for MEDC grant assistance.

Council members discussed the fact that the vacant Harker Middle School, located at 234 Vosper Street, is for sale.

Meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m.



Roberta Jo Smith, Clerk