

VILLAGE OF SARANAC
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
January 8, 2018

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, Smith, Straubel, DPW Simmons; Trustees – Doll, Klutman, Mulnix, Ricket, Simmons, Whorley

Absent: None

Guests: John VanTholen, Kurt Bindus, Bob Cusack, Marcia Kutchin, Dennis G Bowen

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

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Klutman, to open the Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing regarding an application for variance from Zoning Ordinance Section 30.6.04 C & E, submitted by the Boston Township Board, to construct an 8' by 30' addition to the south side of the township hall which is located at 30 N Center Street, Saranac. All yeas.

Dennis G. Bowen, Boston Township Supervisor, answered various questions from council members regarding Boston Township's application for variance.

No public comments were heard.

Motion was made by Simmons at 7:06 p.m., supported by Whorley, to close the Public Hearing. All yeas.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Doll, to approve the application for variance from Zoning Ordinance Section 30.6.04 C & E, as submitted by the Boston Township Board.

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

Public Comments

Bob Cusack was in attendance to request that council consider reimbursing him \$67.86 in late fees assessed to the water/sewer/refuse account of 164 Washington Street, Saranac. Cusack explained that the tenant defaulted on the land contract and was evicted from the premises. Cusack claims that he would have paid the bill in a timely manner, had he received a copy of it. Straubel explained that she had not sent Cusack a copy of the bill, because he was not listed as the owner on Ionia County's website. Cusack explained that this was because the land contract was recorded, allowing the property to be in the tenant's name.

Cusack has since paid the past due water/sewer/refuse bill for 164 Washington Street, including the late fees assessed. Future bills will be sent to him, as opposed to the new tenant. In light of Cusack's promptness in paying the past due balance upon learning of it, council concurred to grant him a one-time credit in the amount of \$67.86.

Motion was made by Klutman, supported to Mulnix, to apply a credit in the amount of \$67.86 to the water/sewer/refuse account of 164 Washington Street, for reimbursement of late fees paid by Bob Cusack.

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

Marcia Kutchin, Saranac Village resident, inquired as to which contaminates the Village water is tested for. She explained that her curiosity about the topic is due to a poor experience in a community she previously resided in.

Darby stated that water testing is regulated by the DEQ and assured Kutchin that the Village is in compliance with all requirements. Klutman stated that the Village has a Wellhead Protection Program in place as well.

DPW Simmons stated that he would gather the most recent test results for each of the contaminants tested for. Kutchin said she would pick them up at the Village office.

John VanTholen, with Granger Waste Services, thanked the Village Council for their continued business and inquired if there were any questions or concerns with the refuse service Granger has provided over the last year.

VanTholen reminded council members that the contract for waste services was extended in 2016, to 12/31/18. The extension amendment states that fees will remain the same until 12/31/17, at which time they will be increased by the lessor of 3% or the 2017 CPI. Per VanTholen, the CPI for 2017 was 2.2%. Effective 1/1/18, the fees for refuse and recycling will increase by 2.2%, which equates to approximately 4 cents per week for recycling and 5 cents per week for refuse.

Whorley inquired about the effects of China not accepting as much recycling from the U.S. VanTholen stated that most of our recycling is handled here in the Midwest, so the effects are not felt as strongly.

VanTholen informed council that changes will have to take place with this year's spring clean-up, mainly due to regulations regarding non-employee personnel on Granger's trucks. In past years, Village DPW employees have assisted with spring clean-up. This will no longer be allowed. VanTholen plans to attend the March council meeting with estimated costs and options.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Simmons, to accept the minutes of the December 11, 2017 Regular Meeting. All yeas.

Motion was made by Ricket, supported by Simmons, to accept the Treasurer's Report of December 31, 2017. All yeas.

Various Accounts Payable items were reviewed.

Motion was made by Doll, supported by Mulnix, to approve the Accounts Payable of January 8, 2018, in the amount of \$75,744.47.

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

The Zoning Administrators Report for December 2017 was reviewed.

Vandersloot reported that she was contacted by a realtor, who inquired whether the Village's well access drive off of Parsonage Street could be utilized for residential purposes, should the 15-acre parcel that it runs next to, be split. Council members reviewed an aerial photo provided by Vandersloot as they discussed the inquiry.

Motion was made by Doll, supported by Whorley, to deny residential use of the Village's well access drive, as it was not designed as a public street, nor intended for public use. All yeas.

The Planning Commission did not meet this month.

Committee Reports

Parks & Recreation

The Committee will meet this week to discuss changes to the draft 5-year Park & Recreation Plan prepared by Fleis & VandenBrink. A notice must be placed in the Ionia Sentinel stating that the draft plan is available for review for 30 days prior to the 2/19/18 Public Hearing to accept comments on the document.

Streets

Straubel reported that some good news came from the Rural Task Force (RTF) meeting at the Ionia County Road Commission she attended with Todd Richter. Additional funds became available to Ionia County for FY2018. The Road Commission was eager to accept the additional funds for their scheduled project. However, the second half of the Village of Saranac's Bridge Street project was originally to be funded at 73% of participating costs. RTF projects are allowed (when funds are available) to be funded at 80%. Richter inquired whether a portion of the additional funds could go to the Village of Saranac, to bring funding for the Bridge Street project up to 80% of participating costs. A motion was made and supported and RTF members voted to increase Village of Saranac funding by approximately \$20,000, to bring funding up to 80% of participating project costs.

Klutman stated that Saranac will piggy-back with Ionia County for chip and seal projects this year. The Streets Committee has identified streets for this project.

Buildings & Grounds

DPW Simmons reported that the roof-top heating unit at the Fire Station is not functioning properly and will most likely need to be replaced. He is seeking quotes for a new unit.

Council members reviewed an estimate of potential expenses/revenues, prepared by Straubel & DPW Simmons, for the purchase and resale of 234 Vosper Street property.

DPW Simmons reported that an individual who is interested in purchasing the property and building duplexes, recently approached him. The property would have to be re-zoned, per Ricket. DPW Simmons will invite the interested party to the next council meeting.

Water & Sewer

Council members received a copy of the Village of Saranac's Asset Management Program (AMP) for Water Utility Systems, prepared by Fleis & VandenBrink. The document is a new DEQ requirement. Straubel & DPW Simmons reviewed and made necessary changes to the document and F & V submitted it to the DEQ before its due date of January 1, 2018.

Per DPW Simmons, he and Koster responded to a watermain break at Adac (6138 Riverside Drive) on Christmas Eve. They were unable to find the shut-off valve, and because it was a fire suppression line, they opted to let it run until after Christmas. If they had turned the water off, 20 residential properties would have been without water on Christmas and the Village would have had to issue a boil water notice to the affected residents. The shut-off valve, which was marked wrong, was eventually located.

Council members reviewed Straubel's calculation of revenue loss due to Adac's watermain break, which amounted to approximately \$5,500. At council's direction, DPW Simmons will forward the information to Adac, in the form of an invoice.

DPW Simmons reported that there was another watermain break on Bridge Street, making it the 4th one in a 2-block stretch.

Public Safety

Deputy Bindus informed council that while conducting a property check in Scheid Park he noticed a natural gas smell, prompting him to contact Consumers Energy. They dispatched a technician to investigate and all was found to be safe. On a second occasion, he heard a noise coming from one of the DPW buildings and noticed the same odor. He contacted Consumers Energy and once again the technician was unable to identify any issues. The technician explained to Bindus that it's normal to smell natural gas when temperatures are so low and people are using their gas furnaces more. Even though this situation did not result in a crisis, council members thanked Bindus for being vigilant and mindful of the safety of Village residents.

Simmons, in Fire Chief capacity, reported that the Fire Department had 490 calls (runs) this year, which is a new record. According to Simmons, Saranac Fire Department is the 3rd busiest department in Ionia County. Based on 490 runs, firefighter pay equates to \$6.60 per run. This is not an hourly rate; firefighters are compensated \$6.60 per call, no matter how many hours they are on the call.

The annual Fire Board meeting is scheduled for January 22nd. Chief Simmons stated that he plans to propose an increase in run compensation and may be looking at a different pay structure as well.

Budget

Motion was made by Simmons, supported by Klutman, to change the date of the February meeting from the 12th to the 19th to allow for additional budget preparation time. All yeas.

Personnel

Darby reported that the committee met to discuss a few items. Straubel requested, and the committee granted, an increase in her cell phone stipend, as she uses data for village business. Also discussed was overtime and doubletime as they relate to holidays and hourly versus salaried personnel.

Public Comments – None.

Additional Business

Doll inquired if a reminder could be placed on the Village Facebook page about shoveling sidewalks in a timely manner. Straubel stated that she would post a notice.

Meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.



Roberta Jo Smith, Clerk