

VILLAGE OF SARANAC  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
November 11, 2024

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 (arrived at 7:51 p.m.), Mulnix, Talcott, Whorley

Absent: None

Guests: Ryan Hesche

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Talcott, 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 2024.

Ryan Hesche (Village of Saranac business owner and President of the Saranac Housing Commission Board) was in attendance to inform council members of an exciting opportunity aimed at revitalizing Michigan's downtowns. Hesche and Angela Stephens (Executive Director of the Saranac Housing Commission) have been made aware of state and federal programs that support affordable and market-rate housing, historic preservation and sustainable economic development. Revitalize LLC, a Michigan-based consulting firm, will be leading an informative introduction to resources available, at a meeting on December 11<sup>th</sup> at 6 p.m., at the Saranac Housing Commission, 203 Parsonage Street.

Hesche personally reached out to downtown Village of Saranac business owners, as the programs to be discussed at the 12/11 meeting include financial assistance for remodeling and/or upgrading second-story residential units. From the business owners he has met with, Hesche has received nearly 100% positive feedback.

Hesche also wanted to open the lines of communication with the Village Council regarding tenant parking, which could become problematic if second-story residential units are added. Council members indicated their support of the program and their willingness to research potential tenant parking options.

Alex Larson, Saranac/Clarksville District Library Director, requested via email that the Village Council appoint Sarah Rose to the Library Board as a Trustee.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Whorley, to appoint Sarah Rose as Trustee on the Saranac/Clarksville District Library Board with a 4-year term retroactive to 10/1/24 and expiring 9/30/28.

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

Council members reviewed pay application #6 (final) prepared by Fleis & VandenBrink and signed/submitted by Grand River Excavation, for the Church Street Reconstruction Project.

The contract for the Church Street project states that \$1,000 will be withheld from the contractor, for each day that expires after the substantial completion date of 6/13/24. To date, \$60,000 (60 days x \$1,000/day) has been withheld. Per contract, Grand River Excavation can submit a time extension request, with an explanation and documentation supporting the reason(s) for the request. Fleis & VandenBrink will review the request and approve or deny it in whole or in part.

Grand River Excavation submitted to Fleis & VandenBrink, a time extension request of 44 days. Straubel and Koster met with Todd Richter, Fleis & VandenBrink Engineer for the Church Street Project, and contractors Matt Booms and Josh Tucker (via phone) of Grand River Excavation, to discuss the time extension request. After detailed review, all parties agreed to allow 22 of the 44 days requested by Tucker and Booms. The final pay application includes \$22,000 to reimburse Grand River Excavation for 22 days (\$22,000) of the 60 days (\$60,000) that was withheld from previous pay applications.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Talcott, to approve pay application #6 (final) submitted by Grand River Excavation for the Church Street Reconstruction Project, in the amount of \$81,329.65, as recommended by Fleis & VandenBrink Engineering.  
Roll call vote: yeas – Day, Doll, Mulnix, Talcott, Whorley, Darby; nays – none; absent – Klutman.

Motion was made by Doll, supported by Day, to accept the minutes of the October 14, 2024 Regular Meeting. All yeas.

Darby inquired whether ARPA funds received in the amount of \$139,558 have been obligated. Straubel reported that the funds will be transferred to the Sewer Fund, and obligated to sewer system expenditures incurred during the Church Street Reconstruction project. Straubel will complete and submit the required ARPA reporting documents prior to the deadline of 12/31/24.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Talcott, to accept the Treasurer's Report of October 31, 2024. All yeas.

Various Accounts Payable items were reviewed and questions answered.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Doll, to approve the Accounts Payable of November 11, 2024, in the amount of \$134,044.70.

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

The Zoning Administrator's Report of Services for October 2024 was reviewed.

Day reported that the Planning Commission met in November for general discussion of the Well Head Protection Plan. Day provided Planning Commission members with the most recent information. A joint meeting of the Village Council and the Planning Commission is not necessary at this time.

### Committee Reports

#### Budget

Committee meetings are being scheduled to discuss 2025/2026 budget items.

Personnel

Darby reported that the Personnel Committee interviewed prospective part-time DPW employee, Robert Webster. An offer letter was sent to Webster today, November 11<sup>th</sup>.

Public Safety

Fire Chief Koster reported that based on number of calls to date, the Fire Department is tracking at 760 calls for the 2024 calendar year.

Parks & Recreation

Straubel reported that she received notification of the final score for the MDNR Trust Fund grant application the Village submitted for the addition of pickleball courts at Scheid Park. Unfortunately, the final score did not change from the preliminary score (275 out of 500 points), despite the fact that Fleis & VandenBrink submitted supplemental information to the MDNR. Grant announcements are expected in December.

Council members discussed other grant and/or financial assistance options, should the Village be unsuccessful in obtaining a MDNR Trust Fund grant. Straubel reported that she has discussed MEDC's Revitalization and Placemaking grant opportunity with Todd Richter of Fleis & VandenBrink Engineering. The application period for this grant will open soon.

Also discussed was the potential for assistance (monetary or otherwise) from various community members who have expressed their interest in park projects.

Streets

Koster reported that the contractor for Main Street will be raising numerous manhole structures this week, bringing them to street level. After this is completed, the contractor will remove their cones, barricades, etc. from the street.

Buildings & Grounds – No report.

Water & Sewer – No report.

Public Comments – No public comments.

Additional Business

Council members reviewed un-official election results for the Village of Saranac.

Straubel informed council members that she recently received email correspondence from Surf Internet. According to their Regional Development Manager, preliminary feasibility results indicate that everything is looking good for a build in 2025.

Meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.



Becky Straubel  
Treasurer/Deputy Clerk