

VILLAGE OF SARANAC
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
December 9, 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 – Doll, Klutman, Mulnix, Talcott, Whorley

Absent: Day

Guests: None

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

Public Comments

Eleven-year-old Grant Whorley was in attendance to present council members with a drawing as well as a verbal explanation of his idea to keep the village safe. His drawing depicts a wall around the village with guarded towers in each corner and in the middle. Council members thanked Grant for his ideas and for presenting them to council in such a professional manner.

Incumbents Sharon Lynn Darby (Village President), Kevin Klutman (Village Trustee) and Brandon Mulnix (Village Trustee) took the Oath of Office for a 4-year term expiring November 20, 2028.

Incumbent Norman Day was also reelected as Village Trustee, but could not be in attendance at tonight's meeting. He will take the Oath of Office at the January 13, 2025 Village Council meeting.

Law Enforcement Report

Council members reviewed Ionia County Sheriff Office stats for Village of Saranac patrol for the month of November 2024.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Doll, to amend the motion made at the November 11, 2024 Village Council meeting regarding Sarah Rose's appointment as Trustee on the Saranac/Clarksville District Library Board. Rose's corrected appointment as Trustee is retroactive to 10/22/24 and expires 9/30/26, to complete the remainder of Pat Essig's term upon her resignation.

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

Motion was made by Klutman, supported by Whorley, to accept the minutes of the November 11, 2024 Regular Meeting. All yeas.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Mulnix, to accept the Treasurer's Report of November 30, 2024. All yeas.

President Darby inquired whether a motion was necessary to obligate ARPA funds. Straubel noted that the village had already internally obligated the funds to water/sewer infrastructure, by way of a resolution in 2022. When Straubel completes the annual report in January, she will show that the funds were obligated and expended, by reporting the project (Church Street Sewer Infrastructure) and providing proof of a contract and related expenditures. This will satisfy the state's "obligation" requirement.

Various Accounts Payable items were reviewed and questions answered.

Motion was made by Talcott, supported by Whorley, to approve the Accounts Payable of December 9, 2024, in the amount of \$99,050.35.

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

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

Straubel reported that the Planning Commission met in December and briefly discussed the Well Head Protection Plan (WHPP) topic as a follow-up from last month. No new business was brought forth.

Committee Reports

Budget

Straubel reported that all committees have provided her with their proposed expenditures for the 2025/2026 budget year. Quotes will be forthcoming.

Personnel

The committee met and discussed wage and benefit numbers for fiscal year beginning 3/1/25. They are recommending up to a 4% pay increase for full-time village employees and an increase in total bonuses to \$12,000.

Public Safety

Chief Koster reported that as of today, the Fire Department has responded to 701 calls since January 1, 2024.

The committee met with an individual who is looking to start an ambulance service and wanted to share his ideas with the village. However, committee members are not looking to make a change at this time, as Life EMS has made significant positive strides such as, being fully staffed, increasing employee wages to that of neighboring counties, adding another ambulance and offering a 24-hour shift. Koster reported that they have been meeting the response time stated in the contract, over 90% of the time.

Parks & Recreation

The committee met to discuss budget items for the next fiscal year. One of the main topics discussed was installation of pickleball courts at Scheid Park. The likelihood of obtaining a grant for the project is low. Committee members discussed getting community members involved, as many people have expressed interest in seeing this project become a reality. Koster shared his plans for additional unimproved trails, as this would be a low-cost, popular item.

Streets

The committee did not meet to discuss 2025/2026 budget numbers, as no reconstruction projects are scheduled. The budget will include an allotment for chip/sealing sections of various streets, as in past years.

Buildings & Grounds

The committee met and discussed several maintenance projects for the upcoming fiscal year. Koster is working on obtaining quotes for siding the north DPW building, roofing/soffit/fascia for the main DPW building and repairing the fire department roof. He received a quote for improving the public parking lot on Erv Taylor Avenue in the amount of \$23,000.

Water & Sewer

The committee met to discuss budget items for next year. Todd Richter is working on a bid package for sewer infrastructure improvements. At minimal, the sewer budget will include \$150,000 for these improvements, which is a carry-over from the current fiscal year. Items to be included in the water budget are, a new meter for well 4 and replacement of the door to both wellhouses.

Darby inquired whether the water tower would require any maintenance next year and Doll inquired whether either of the wells will be due for rehabilitation. Koster will confirm, but believes that there is not any routine maintenance scheduled for 2025/2026.

Darby inquired whether Koster has been working his way through the recommendations list that was established as part of the SAW and DWAM projects. Koster confirmed that he is.

Koster informed council members, that per the SAW project, there is an approximate 800 ft. section of sewer main and one structure that needs to be replaced near the school. The school is planning a project for the summer of 2025, so this would be an ideal time for the village to replace the sewer main and related structure. While it will likely be a cost savings to schedule the replacement at the same time as the school's project, it will still be a costly project.

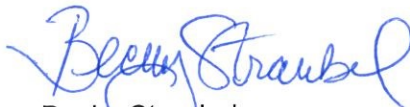
Mulnix inquired if Koster is still seeing lower daily water usage since fixing the broken pipe that was discovered at Scheid park during construction of the new restrooms. Koster confirmed that water usage has maintained at the lower level since that time. He is anxious to see what the annual total is, in comparison to previous years.

Public Comments – None.

Additional Business

Darby informed council members that the Saranac Community Association is hoping to add a "Street Dance" event in 2025.

Meeting adjourned at 7:41 p.m.



Becky Straubel
Treasurer/Deputy Clerk