

VILLAGE OF SARANAC  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
January 13, 2025

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, Klutman, Mulnix, Talcott, Whorley  
Absent: Doll  
Guests: Deputy Luz

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

Public Comments – None.

Incumbent Norman Day, took the Oath of Office as Village Trustee for a 4-year term expiring November 20, 2028.

Law Enforcement Report

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

Day reported on a recent change in staff positions at the Ionia County Sheriff's Department.

Day also reported on incidents involving vehicles not stopping for red flashers on school buses.

Deputy Luz 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 Mulnix, supported by Whorley, to accept the minutes of the December 9, 2024 Regular Meeting. All yeas.

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

Various Accounts Payable items were reviewed and questions answered.

Motion was made by Klutman, supported by Talcott, to approve the Accounts Payable of January 13, 2025, in the amount of \$180,480.95.

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

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

The Planning Commission did not meet in January, as no new business was brought forward.

Committee Reports

Budget

Straubel will be diligently working on the 2025/2026 budget from now until the February Village Council meeting.

### Personnel

Village employee, Hayden Stickney, passed the State of Michigan sewer certification exam for classifications L1 and L2, and is now certified to operate the Village WWTF. Stickney has been given a pay raise of \$1/hour, retroactive to 11/7/24, the day he passed the exam. Stickney plans to sit for the water certification exam in May of this year.

Village employee, Mike Darby, is enrolled in a math class and will sit for either the water or sewer certification exam in May of this year.

Darby inquired whether Village Council members wished to review their current rate of pay for council and committee meetings. Currently, council members receive \$75/council meeting and \$50/committee meeting. Per Darby, these rates are substantially below that of other communities. Council members concurred by lack of motion, to maintain their current rate of pay.

### Public Safety

Straubel plans to propose by way of email, that the Fire Board annual meeting be held on Monday, January 27, 2025. Mulnix will not be able to attend, so Day will attend, along with Darby, as voting members for the Village of Saranac.

Chief Koster reported on communications he has had with Dennis Bowen, Boston Township Supervisor. A lengthy conversation ensued amongst Village Council members, regarding Boston Township's fire millage and the Fire Department's method of billing the Townships.

Chief Koster reported that the Fire Department ended 2024 with 740 calls and are on pace to reach 838 calls in 2025.

One of the Fire Department's trucks sustained slight damage at the scene of the barn fire that occurred on Pinckney Road in early January.

### Parks & Recreation

Koster reported that the DPW crew has begun clearing along the riverbank.

### Streets

Koster reported that his signature was requested on the final pay application for the Main Street project. He responded to the request by saying that he will sign the request after the contractor removes the silt bags from the site.

Buildings & Grounds – No report.

### Water & Sewer

Koster reported that numbers indicate that more water is being pumped than normal. He and the DPW crew have been investigating potential reasons.

Public Comments – None.

Additional Business

Darby reported on conversations she has had with Heidi Wenzel, Director of Transportation for the City of Ionia. Wenzel is proposing to request funding from the State of Michigan to expand Ionia's Dial-A-Ride service area, to the Village of Saranac. The funding would cover a one-year pilot project. After that year, Wenzel would assess data gathered, to determine the sustainability of the service. Wenzel is requesting a letter of support from the Saranac Village Council, for the one-year pilot project, from the Saranac Village Council.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Day, to provide Heidi Wenzel, Director of Transportation for the City of Ionia, with a letter supporting submission of a grant application to the State of Michigan, for funding of a one-year pilot project to provide Ionia Dial-A-Ride services to the Village of Saranac. All yeas.

Council members reviewed a letter submitted by Alice Marie Geiger of 37 S Parsonage Street in Saranac. Geiger explained her concern over the location of the fire hydrant between her property and 57 Parsonage Street. Geiger has a barn at the back of her property that she still utilizes, and states that she is "unable to drive back to the back of her property, or out again", due to the hydrant's location. Geiger recommends relocating the hydrant to the east side of Parsonage Street or the south property line of 57 Parsonage Street.

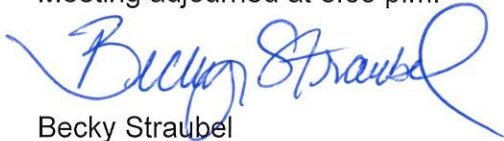
Council members discussed Geiger's concerns regarding the location of the hydrant, as well as her recommendation to relocate it. Koster estimates that it would cost approximately \$30,000 to relocate the hydrant, as the street would have to be cut, the watermain extended, and the street repaired.

Darby requested that Koster draft a response letter to Geiger.

To allow for additional time to prepare the 2025/2026 budget, February's Village Council meeting will be held on Monday, February 17<sup>th</sup>, as opposed to the 10<sup>th</sup>.

Darby brought up the topic of PE Office Solution's installation of WIFI equipment. We have paid for equipment/installation for 5 locations, 3 of which are complete. Council discussed the remaining 2 proposed locations. Darby will contact PE.

Meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.



Becky Straubel  
Treasurer/Deputy Clerk