

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

Absent: None

Guests: Cheryl & Mark Totch, Deputy Alec Stewart, Joseph Sowers

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

Public Comments – None

Law Enforcement Report

Council members reviewed Ionia County Sheriff Office stats for Village of Saranac patrol for the month of May 2025.

Deputy Alec Stewart was in attendance to introduce himself as the new daytime deputy assigned to the Village of Saranac. Deputy Stewart provided council members with an update on village law enforcement items of interest and answered various questions from council members.

Mark Totch was in attendance to address questions/concerns regarding his variance application. Darby inquired about his background information. Doll asked questions regarding square footage of proposed dwelling units.

Jeanne Vandersloot, Zoning Administrator, provided the Village Council (in their capacity as the Zoning Board of Appeals), with a review memo pertaining to the Variance Application submitted by Totch, for his property located at 146 Church Street. Totch would like to convert the empty church building into a 3-family dwelling. In order to do so, the ZBA would have to grant a variance for minimum lot area, minimum lot width, and number of dwelling units. A Public Hearing is required to accept comments on the variance application. The Public Hearing date is scheduled for June 30, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

Joseph Sowers was in attendance to discuss his request to pan for gold in the Grand River. Sowers is looking to do this as a hobby. He has done his homework on the subject by researching MDNR and EGLE rules and regulations.

Council reviewed a proposed Panning License Agreement prepared by Village attorney, Jim Doezema.

Motion was made Mulnix, supported by Doll, to approve the proposed Panning License Agreement, to allow Sowers to pan for gold along the Grand River where it abuts Village owned property.

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

Council members reviewed Fleis & VandenBrink's Recommendation of Award for the Sewer Lining Project. Of the four bids received, Waste Recovery Systems submitted the lowest combined bid (base plus alternate) of \$164,522 (\$134,322 base, \$30,200 alternate).

Koster stated that the project will take place sometime between August 25th and November 15th.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Klutman, to accept Waste Recovery Systems' bid in the amount of \$164,522, and award the contract to them per Fleis & VandenBrink's recommendation.

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

Council members reviewed proposed Resolution No. 060925. Straubel explained that she received an email from MDOT regarding a TEDF Category B grant opportunity. This is the same grant program that the village received funding assistance from, for the reconstruction of Center Street. Grant funding is available for preventative maintenance projects as well.

Straubel and Koster will prepare the grant application with assistance from Todd Richter of Fleis & VandenBrink Engineering. The expected project cost is \$100,000 with the village being responsible for \$50,000. Streets to receive crack/seal, chip/seal and fog/seal are as follows: Jackson Street from Shawnee Drive to Summit Street, Washington Street from Parsonage Street to Bridge Street, Liberty Street from Union Street to Parsonage Street, Fuller Street from Main Street to Mill Street, Center Street from Main Street to Church Street, and Vosper Street from Main Street to Church Street. Reconstruction of four drainage structures on Washington Street is also included in the project.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Talcott, to adopt Resolution No. 060925 to establish a request for funding, designate an agent, attest to the existence of funds and commit to implementing local street preventative maintenance in 2026.

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

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Day, to accept the minutes of the May 12, 2025 Regular Meeting. All yeas.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Klutman, to accept the Treasurer's Report of May 31, 2025. 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 June 9, 2025, in the amount of \$137,237.99.

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

The Zoning Administrator's Report of Services for May 2025 was reviewed.

The Planning Commission met on June 4th and briefly reviewed Vandersloot's memo to the Zoning Board of Appeals regarding the variance application for 146 Church Street submitted by Mark Totch. If the ZBA approves the variance application after the June 30 Public Hearing, Totch will need to submit a Special Use Permit Application to the Planning Commission and a second Public Hearing will need to be held.

Committee Reports

Budget – No report

Personnel – No report

Public Safety

Darby reported that the Special Fire Board meeting went well. Keene Township Board members apologized to Fire Department members. Fire Department members spoke about how they were affected by the words and actions of Keene Township Board members.

Darby stated that there was a lot of community members at the meeting, showing their support for the Saranac Fire Department.

Parks & Recreation

Mulnix reported that Impact Church will begin their service project on the Rivertrail next week.

Koster reported that there is a sink hole near the entrance of the Nature Park, which will be repaired this week.

The Village received a donation from Dirty 30 Events, to go towards Pickleball courts at Scheid Park.

Streets – No Report

Buildings & Grounds – No Report

Water & Sewer – No Report

Public Comments – None

Additional Business

Darby reported that the Saranac Community Association's Street Dance event was a hit and will most likely become an annual event. Koster suggested that next year, instead of closing Bridge Street for the event, close Main Street from the east end of Social House's parking lot, to the intersection of Main Street and Bridge Street. Council members concurred that this would be a better option for purposes of traffic flow.

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.



Becky Straubel
Treasurer/Deputy Clerk