

VILLAGE OF SARANAC
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
August 12, 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, Koster; Trustees – Day, Doll, Klutman, Mulnix, Talcott, Whorley
Absent: None
Guests: None

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 July 2024.

Council members reviewed pay application #4 submitted by Grand River Excavation for the Church Street Reconstruction Project. Fleis & VandenBrink Engineering (F & V) recommends that the village withhold \$39,000 for liquidated damages. The contract states that \$1,000 will be withheld for each day that expires, after the substantial completion date of 6/13/24. As of 8/8/24, that is \$56,000 (56 days x \$1,000/day), \$17,000 of which was withheld from pay application #3, leaving \$39,000 to withhold from pay application #4. Per contract, Grand River Excavation can submit a change order for a time extension, with an explanation and documentation supporting the reason(s) for the time extension request. F & V will review the change order and approve or deny it in whole or in part. Per contract, the engineer's decision is final unless appealed by the village or the contractor.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Talcott, to approve pay application #4 submitted by Grand River Excavation for the Church Street Reconstruction Project, in the amount of \$363,426.24 (\$402,426.24 less liquidated damages of \$39,000), as recommended by Fleis & VandenBrink Engineering.

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

Council members reviewed Fleis & VandenBrink's proposal to provide traffic engineering services on N Bridge Street.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Doll, to accept F & V's proposal to collect speed data on N Bridge Street between the southside of the bridge on N Bridge Street and the north village limits, for a lump sum fee of \$4,500.00

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

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Day, to accept minutes of the July 8, 2024 Regular Meeting. All yeas.

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

Various Accounts Payable items were reviewed and questions answered.

Motion was made by Doll, supported by Talcott, to approve the Accounts Payable of August 12, 2024, in the amount of \$221,607.51.

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

The Village Council, in their capacity as the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA), reviewed an application for variance submitted by Saranac Community Church, which is located at 125 S Bridge Street, Saranac. The variance request is to have an electronic reader board area within a new church name sign. The church is located in the MDR1 zoning district where electronic reader boards are not permitted.

Due to noticing requirements, the earliest date that the ZBA could hold a Public Hearing on the variance request is Tuesday, September 3rd. ZBA members concurred to set the Public Hearing date for Monday, September 9th, which is the date of the next regularly scheduled Village Council meeting. Straubel will prepare a Public Hearing notice for publication in the Ionia Sentinel, and mail a copy of said notice to all properties located within 300' of 125 S Bridge Street.

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

The Planning Commission's regularly scheduled meeting for July 7th was cancelled, due to lack of business.

Committee Reports

Budget – No report.

Personnel

Darby reported that the Personnel Committee met to discuss Koster's concerns regarding additional work load, which can be mainly attributed to park additions and the growing number of fire/first-responder calls.

Committee members discussed the topic of potentially adding another full-time DPW employee, which could equate to an annual cost (wages/benefits) of \$75,000 +/- . Other options discussed were offering overtime to current employees, contracting certain services, adding a part-time employee, and adding a full-time firefighter.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Talcott, to add a part-time employee, with the understanding that the position could develop into full-time at a later date.

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

Darby further reported that two DPW employees have failed their sewer certification exam twice and one has failed it once. The importance of having at least two certified employees for back-up purposes, was discussed. Currently, DPW Director Koster is the only certified sewer and water operator. Two DPW employees will be retaking the sewer certification exam in November and are confident they will pass. If so, the two will begin working toward their water certification.

Koster reported that the third DPW employee does not wish to pursue certification in water or sewer and therefore has been assigned to work parks only.

Public Safety

Chief Koster reported that the fire department now has a Chaplin on-board, who can provide vital services to fire department members.

Chief Koster also reported that based on the number of calls to date, the fire department is tracking at 750 calls for the 2024 year. In the last two months, the Saranac Fire Department has had a higher call rate than any other department in Ionia County.

Parks & Recreation

Mulnix reported that the volunteer group from Impact Church plans to make the clean-up along the river, an annual project. Council members have noticed more trail usage since Impact cleared the area, making the river more visible and accessible.

Darby inquired about signage for the Social District. Koster suggested that the information be put in the outdoor display case on the trailhead building. Council members agreed with the idea.

Streets

Council members discussed a water pooling issue on the sidewalk at the northeast corner of 188 Church Street. Koster is aware of the issue and has plans to correct it after the Church Street project is complete.

The Main Street project is scheduled to begin September 3rd, per Koster.

Buildings & Grounds – No report.

Water & Sewer

Koster reported that the permit has been issued for gas service at well 4 and the generator will soon be operational.

Public Comments – None.

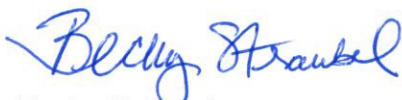
Additional Business

Council members reviewed an estimate submitted by RedBeard PC Repair, to provide internet services throughout downtown Saranac. The proposed tower locations are the utility pole next to the electronic sign, the roof of the Greenridge Realty building and the roof of the Fire Station.

Council members asked various questions, including but not limited to, the expected coverage area and whether there is a monthly cost after installation.

At the request of several council members, Darby will seek another quote for service/cost comparison.

Meeting adjourned at 8:24 p.m.



Becky Straubel,
Treasurer/Deputy Clerk