

VILLAGE OF SARANAC
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
September 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, Koster; Trustees – Day, Doll, Klutman, Mulnix, Talcott, Whorley

Absent: None

Guests: Dan Kaufman for Saranac Community Church, Trevor Phillips, Bridge Street resident, Deputy Jordan Luz

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

Public Comments

Motion was made by Mulnix at 7:01 p.m., supported by Talcott, to open the ZBA Public Hearing to accept comments on a variance application submitted by Dan Kaufman on behalf of the Saranac Community Church (SCC), which is located at 125 S Bridge Street, Saranac. The SCC is requesting a variance to replace the front yard ground sign with a new ground sign that will include an electronic changeable copy portion. The Zoning Ordinance for district MDR-1 allows ground signs with manual reader boards only.

Dan Kaufman addressed council members and guests regarding the variance request. He explained that a new electronic sign would increase SCC's ability to provide public service announcements, as well as enhance curb appeal.

Trevor Phillips, a S Bridge Street resident and close neighbor of SCC, inquired whether the sign would be dimmed during evening hours. Kaufman assured Phillips that the illumination would be on a timer to dim at night.

Motion was made by Mulnix at 7:07 p.m., supported by Day, to close the ZBA Public Hearing.

The ZBA discussed the variance application and proposed new SCC electronic sign.

Motion was made by Doll, supported by Talcott, to approve SCC's application for a sign variance, as requested.

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

Kaufman provided Phillips with his contact information and asked that he reach out to him should he have any issues with the illumination from the new sign.

Law Enforcement Report

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

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.

Council members reviewed pay application #5 submitted by Grand River Excavation for the Church Street Reconstruction Project. Fleis & VandenBrink Engineering (F & V) recommends that the village withhold \$4,000 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 8/31/24, that is \$60,000 (60 days x \$1,000/day), \$56,000 of which was withheld from previous pay applications, leaving \$4,000 to withhold from pay application #5. 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 Mulnix, supported by Doll, to approve pay application #5 submitted by Grand River Excavation for the Church Street Reconstruction Project, in the amount of \$135,510.32 (\$139,510.32 less liquidated damages of \$4,000), as recommended by Fleis & VandenBrink Engineering.

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

Council members reviewed a letter submitted by Angela Stephens, Executive Director of the Saranac Housing Commission. In her letter, Stephens requests that council appoint Jack Ritter to replace Eva Maile as Tenant Commissioner and Director.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Klutman, to appoint Jack Ritter as Tenant Commissioner and Director on the Saranac Housing Commission Board and the Saranac Non-Profit Housing Corporation Board, to replace Eva Maile with a term expiring 5/1/29.

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

Stephens also requests in her letter, that council review two applications that were submitted to replace Bruce Chadwick on both Housing Commission Boards, and appoint one of the applicants to complete Chadwick's term.

Council reviewed and discussed applications submitted by Hannah Sawtell, Independent Bank Manager, Saranac Branch and Jason Smith, Saranac Community Schools Superintendent.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Klutman, to appoint Hannah Sawtell as Commissioner and Director on the Saranac Housing Commission Board and the Saranac Non-Profit Housing Corporation Board, to replace Bruce Chadwick with a term expiring 5/1/28.

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

Motion was made by Doll, supported by Talcott, to accept minutes of the August 12, 2024 Regular Meeting. All yeas.

Darby, in her review of the Treasurer's Report, inquired about the status of ARPA funds received in the amount of \$139,558. Straubel reported that in April of 2022, the Village Council passed a Resolution to designate ARPA funds to replacement and/or rehabilitation of utility infrastructure. The funds have not been spent to date, nor have they been allocated to a specific project.

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

Various Accounts Payable items were reviewed and questions answered.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Day, to approve the Accounts Payable of September 9, 2024, in the amount of \$587,342.81.

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

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

The Planning Commission's regularly scheduled meeting for September 4, 2024 was cancelled, due to lack of business.

Committee Reports

Budget – No report.

Personnel

The Personnel Committee met to discuss the parameters of the part-time DPW position that was approved at the 8/12/24 council meeting. Straubel will prepare an ad/notice announcing the opening, and will post it on the Village Facebook page as well as the Village website.

Public Safety – No report.

Parks & Recreation

Koster reported that he received a quote in the amount of \$900 to grind stumps along the Riverwalk. Council members concurred with Koster's suggestion to contract this out.

Streets

Koster reported on the status of the Main Street project. The contractor had planned to mill and fill this week however, this may be delayed due to the fact that the ADA ramps at Fuller and Scheid Park were done incorrectly. Timing will depend on the concrete contractor's schedule.

Buildings & Grounds – No report.

Water & Sewer

Doll inquired about the sewer project timeline. Per Koster, he hasn't received any updates lately from Todd Richter, Fleis & VandenBrink Engineer.

Koster reported that the CDSMI report was submitted to the state today.

Koster also reported that the saltbox is being refurbished this week, in preparation for the winter months.

Public Comments – None.

Additional Business

Darby informed council members that the annual Saranac Promise event takes place Saturday, October 19th this year.

Darby also mentioned that Chief Koster is going to ask fire department members if they would like to host a Haunted House at the fire department's training tower (located at the Boat Launch and Trailhead Park), with assistance from the Saranac Community Association (SCA).

Another Halloween event spearheaded by the SCA is a light pole decorating contest.

Darby provided council members with a packet of information containing quotes from three different companies, to establish Wi-Fi services in downtown Saranac. Council members discussed the elements of each quote. The consensus was to meet with one or two of the companies to ask more specific questions, before committing to one.

Meeting adjourned at 8:17 p.m.



Becky Straubel,
Treasurer/Deputy Clerk