

VILLAGE OF SARANAC
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
October 12, 2026

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, DPW Koster; Trustees – Day, Klutman, Mulnix, Whorley
Absent: Straubel, Doll, Talcott
Guests: Shelley Cooper – Representative for Lori Shearer, 8th Circuit Judge candidate
Ed Sternisha – 8th Circuit Judge candidate

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

Public Comments

Shelley Cooper provided background for Lori Shearer and reasons why she is a great candidate for 8th Circuit Judge. Ed Sternisha also detailed his background and his lifetime experiences. Both encouraged voting at the November 3rd election.

Law Enforcement Report

Council members reviewed Ionia County Sheriff Office stats for Village of Saranac patrol for the month of September 2026.

Council questioned the monthly report, which indicated that there were no traffic citations issued in September. Council discussed the status of recent juvenile destruction of Village property.

Council requests that the deputy assigned to Village patrol, attend the next Village Council meeting.

Becky Fitzpatrick, Saranac Library Board President, requested that the Village Council reappoint Sarah Rose as the Village of Saranac's Representative on the Saranac Library Board to a 4-year term beginning October 1, 2026 and expiring September 30, 2030.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Whorley, to reappoint Sarah Rose as the Village of Saranac's Representative on the Saranac Library Board, to a 4-year term beginning October 1, 2026 and expiring September 30, 2030. All yeas.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Mulnix, to accept minutes of the September 14, 2026 Regular Meeting. All yeas.

Motion was made by Day, supported by Klutman, to accept minutes of the September 29, 2026 Special Meeting. All yeas.

Council members reviewed the Treasurers Report and questioned the classification of "Chip Seal Vosper Street" as a Major Street item on the Capital Outlay Expense report.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Klutman, to accept the Treasurer's Report of September 30, 2026. All yeas.

Various Accounts Payable items were reviewed and questions answered.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Klutman, to approve the Accounts Payable of September 30, 2026, in the amount of \$137,036.26.

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

The Zoning Administrator's Report of Services for September 2026 was reviewed.

Council members reviewed the September 16, 2026 Planning Commission Special Meeting minutes.

The Planning Commission is holding a Public Hearing on Wednesday, October 14, 2026 to accept public comments on a Special Use Permit Application and an Application to Operate an Adult-Use Recreational Marihuana Establishment at 9 Main Street, Saranac, submitted by Mark Culmer (CHO).

Committee Reports

Budget – No report

Personnel

The Personnel Committee met to review upcoming insurance renewals. The premiums will change due to change in personnel. The health insurance premium will increase by 13%, the dental premium by 3%, and the vision premium remains unchanged. Alternatives were reviewed, but were not deemed a good replacement. The Committee proposes that the Village maintain the current plans at this time.

Motion was made by Klutman, supported by Day, to accept the recommendation of the Personnel Committee to renew the current health, dental and vision policies.

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

Guest, Ed Sternisha mentioned that he attended a City of Ionia Council Meeting where he learned that they were able to enter a Risk Pool which the school systems participate in and villages can as well. This significantly reduced their insurance premiums. Darby concurred this could be helpful and will investigate the possibility.

Darby noted that the advertisement for a part-time DPW employee has been posted. Resumes are coming in and will be reviewed by the Personnel Committee.

DPW Koster asked about the quarterly all-staff meeting schedule. The Personnel Committee stated they will be setting up the next meeting for this quarter.

Public Safety

Chief Koster reported that a fire department from Kentucky has made an offer to purchase Engine 6 and Saranac Fire has accepted the offer. The Kentucky department is waiting on funds to be dispersed from their county. Koster also stated that the additional truck equipment for Tender 3, which has a budget of \$20,000, will come in much lower with actual costs being approximately \$8,000.

Chief Koster stated that the department is trending at 824 calls this year.

Chief Koster reported that Saranac Fire will join Belding Fire on October 17, for a live burn at an old farm house in Easton Township.

Parks & Recreation – No report

Streets

DPW Koster confirmed that part of Pleasant Street and Orchard Street have been chip sealed. Council discussed a couple of comments from residents regarding noticing. Koster stated that notifications were not sent out in advance due to short notice from the contractor. The contractor completed the work on Saturday and Sunday in order to avoid school traffic. They were very accommodating of both local residents and church-related traffic.

Darby mentioned that a resident requested to have a sidewalk added on Parsonage Street, south of Summit Street. Koster stated that it is too late this year due to weather and engineering, but could be looked at down the road. Koster also stated that a concrete sidewalk would cost approximately \$100,000, and suggested that council consider an asphalt path on the west side of the street (due to lack setback on the east side), as an alternative. This could be accomplished at a considerably lower cost.

Buildings & Grounds – No report

Water & Sewer

DPW Koster stated that he believes the water leak issues have been resolved. Recent meter monitoring shows the variance has dropped to under 10,000 gallons, verifying the distribution mains are operating without significant active leaks.

Public Comments – None

Additional Information/Business

Darby stated that the Dial A Ride request for funding from the City of Ionia needs to clear one more hurdle before being fully funded. The Village is planning to fund at \$12,000 for the year, Saranac Housing at \$10,000 and Boston Township is being approached to fund at \$8,000. This will satisfy the cost of the program. Boston Township's Board meeting is Wednesday, October 14. This item is on their agenda.

Meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Sharon Darby,
Village President