

VILLAGE OF SARANAC
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
October 13, 2014

The Saranac Village Council Regular Meeting was called to order by President Darby at 7:00 p.m. at the Saranac Municipal Building, 27 N. Bridge Street.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Present: President Darby, Smith, Straubel, trustees – Doll, Mackey, Simmons, Whorley, DPW Simmons

Absent: Klutman

Guests: Deputy Charon – Ionia County Sheriff Department; Frank Alber Jr. & Alaina Rockwall – The Great Northern Adventure Company; Beth Simpson – Saranac Community Schools; LaDonna Gharub & Robert Weaver – 98 Church Street; Todd Richter – Fleis & VandenBrink Engineering

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Simmons, to approve the Regular Agenda. All yeas.

Public Comments

LaDonna Gharub of 98 Church Street was present to voice her concerns regarding the condition of a property in her neighborhood. Her complaints included but were not limited to, a downed tree that had been there for several months, the grass/weeds not being mowed, brush piles that have not been removed and the general disrepair of a neighbor's home.

Darby explained that an ordinance violation letter had been sent to the property owner, regarding the grass and weeds. The property owner has 10 days from receipt of the letter, to comply with the order. Today is the 10th day, per Straubel.

Gharub requested that council consider amending the ordinance to include some of her concerns. Darby stated that council would review applicable ordinances. Straubel advised that Gharub would have to contact the Ionia County Building Department and/or Health Department regarding any structural or health concerns/complaints she may have.

Todd Richter, Fleis & VandenBrink Engineer was in attendance to answer questions regarding recently completed village projects and to provide council with an update on future projects, such as the Stormwater Asset Management and Wastewater (SAW) project. The village applied for a SAW Grant in 2013, but was not a recipient in the first round of grant awards. According to Richter, it is projected that the village will receive funding in the third year of this grant program. The project cost was estimated at approximately \$494,000.00, the village portion of which would be approximately \$17,000.00.

Richter stated that this is the time of year he typically meets with the Streets Committee, to discuss street repair/replacement needs. He noted that his firm is currently seeing marked increases in construction costs, so planning early is recommended.

Klutman, Street Committee Chair, is not in attendance tonight but will be advised to contact Richter to schedule a committee meeting.

Sheriff Miller requested that Deputy Charon attend village council meetings, at minimum on a quarterly basis. Charon inquired if council members had any questions regarding the September report content or new format. Council members concurred that Charon's new report format is much appreciated and very enlightening.

Frank Alber Jr. and Alaina Rockwall, recently opened The Great Northern Adventure Company at 70 Bridge Street, Saranac and were in attendance to request written permission from council to sell guns and ammunition. The ATF requires written permission from the municipality (governing entity) when applying for a Federal Firearms License. Additionally, Alber requested that he be allowed to live in the back room of the bait shop as a safety precaution, should they be allowed to sell guns and ammunition.

Jeanne Vandersloot, Zoning Administrator, provided an opinion on whether the sale of guns and ammunition is allowed in the Central Business District (CBD), per the Village of Saranac Zoning Ordinance. According to Vandersloot, CBD Sec. 30.11.01, Uses Permitted by Right, allows a wide variety of retail sales (B) and any similar retail business (M). Additionally, Section 30.18.45, Home Occupations, allows for a gun dealer and gun repair service (A10), in residential districts. Given these findings, Vandersloot recommends that council allow the sale of guns and ammunition as a permitted use by right under "other" or "similar" retail businesses in the CBD.

Vandersloot was also asked to provide an opinion on whether Alber is allowed, per Zoning Ordinance, to live on the 1st floor of the building where his business is located. Vandersloot advised Alber that a residence in the CBD, is only allowed on the 2nd floor. A residence currently exists on the 2nd floor of 70 Bridge Street, however it is occupied at this time. Vandersloot advised Alber that he would have to apply for an ordinance amendment, to be able to live on the 1st floor. Additionally, he would have to apply for a building permit from Ionia County, to meet Building Code legal residence requirements.

Council advised Alber and Rockwall to contact the Ionia County Building Department to inquire about legal residence requirements, to first determine if a renovation is feasible. Alber was given an application for Ordinance Amendment, should he decide to pursue that route. As it stands right now, Alber is not allowed to live on the 1st floor of 70 Bridge Street, per the Village of Saranac Zoning Ordinance.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Doll, to approve Frank Alber Jr.'s request to sell guns and ammunition at his place of business, The Great Northern Adventure Company, located at 70 Bridge Street, in the Village of Saranac, Michigan. Said approval is given under CBD Sec. 30.11.01, Uses Permitted by Right, "Other" or "Similar" Retail Businesses, of the Village of Saranac Zoning Ordinance. Additionally, council's approval is conditional on Alber obtaining a Federal Firearms License from the ATF.

Roll call vote: yeas – Doll, Mackey, Simmons, Whorley, Darby; nays – none; absent – Klutman.

Beth Simpson, Saranac Community Jr./Sr. High School Co-principal, was in attendance to promote the upcoming Headlee Override Property Tax millage renewal proposal that will be on the November 4th ballot. Simpson provided a 2 page flyer with information on the proposal. According to the information contained in the flyer, the millage request will not increase homestead property tax on agricultural land and/or the primary residence you live in and own. Further, the millage request will not increase non-homestead property tax, but will maintain the current 18 mills until the year 2023.

Council reviewed Fleis & VandenBrink's Recommendation of Award for the Scheid Park Sidewalk Extension Project. Three bids were received, the lowest of which was submitted by TJM Services in the amount of \$24,600.00. After review of TJM's list of project experience and corporate information, F & V recommends acceptance of their bid.

Motion was made by Mackey, supported by Simmons, to accept F & V's recommendation and to award the contract for the Scheid Park Sidewalk Extension Project to TJM Services in the amount of \$24,600.00.

Roll call vote: yeas – Doll, Mackey, Simmons, Whorley, Darby; nays – none; absent – Klutman.

Per Straubel, the village is required to enter into an Operating Agreement with the MDNR, to allow the sidewalk extension to connect to the Rail Trail. A sample agreement was provided by MDNR personnel and reviewed by Fleis & VandenBrink Engineer, Aaron Catlin. Per Catlin's recommendation, Straubel will inquire with MML regarding insurance requirements. Straubel received email confirmation from MDNR personnel allowing the village to proceed with construction of the sidewalk extension, with the understanding that the agreement will be finalized as soon as possible.

Council reviewed a letter dated October 10, 2014 submitted by Doris Beukema and the Sons of the American Legion, addressed to Saranac Village Council members. The letter authorizes the distribution of the Beukema Memorial fund balance, which was \$18,115.54 on 9/30/14. The funds were originally designated for construction of tennis courts at Scheid Park and then re-designated in 2010 for construction of a baseball field at Scheid Park. Due to the fact that neither project came to fruition, the fund contributors requested a reallocation and distribution of the fund balance, as follows: 50% (\$9,058.00) of the funds to be distributed to Saranac Community Schools, specifically designated for use in the 2014 track resurfacing project and the balance to remain with the Village of Saranac, specifically designated for use in the 2014 Scheid Park Sidewalk Extension Project (see letter for further details).

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Doll, to accept the letter from Doris Beukema and the Sons of the American Legion, requesting distribution of the Robert Beukema Memorial fund, as stated in said letter. All yeas.

Darby stated that a dedication ceremony could be held upon completion of the project, to thank Doris Beukema and the Sons of the American Legion for their generous contribution.

Council reviewed Proposed Ordinance #96, an Ordinance Addressing Floodplain Management Provisions of the State Construction Code. In the ordinance, the Village of Saranac designates the Ionia County Building Inspector as the enforcing agency in Floodplain Management within the Village of Saranac and adopts by reference FEMA's Flood Insurance Study and Flood Insurance Rate Maps which are both dated and become effective January 16, 2015.

Motion was made by Mackey, supported by Simmons, to adopt Ordinance #96, an Ordinance Addressing Floodplain Management Provisions of the State Construction Code, as presented. All yeas.

Council reviewed Michigan Paving and Materials Co. Application for Payment #1 in the amount of \$80,572.15, for the Summit Street Improvements Project. The Application was submitted through F & V and approved by Todd Richter, F & V Engineer.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Simmons, to accept Application for Payment #1 from Michigan Paving and Materials Co. in the amount of \$80,572.15, as presented.

Roll call vote: yeas – Doll, Mackey, Simmons, Whorley, Darby; nays – none; absent – Klutman.

Motion was made by Mackey, supported by Whorley, to accept the minutes of the September 8, 2014 Regular Meeting. All yeas.

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Mackey, to approve the Treasurer's Report of September 30, 2014. All yeas.

DPW Simmons reported on the corrective measures that were taken to rectify the drainage issue on Wyandott Court.

Motion was made by Mackey, supported by Doll, to approve the Accounts Payable of October 13, 2014, in the amount of \$158,202.63.

Roll call vote: yeas – Doll, Mackey, Simmons, Whorley, Darby; nays – none; absent – Klutman.

The Zoning Administrator's report was reviewed.

The Planning Commission did not meet.

Committee Reports

Public Safety – No report.

Budget – No report.

Parks & Recreation

Doll stated that he has noticed a few people parking in the lot at 113 Bridge Street, which the village designated and signed as trail user parking. Mackey inquired about purchasing a bigger sign, as the current one is not very noticeable, due to its size. DPW Simmons and Straubel will coordinate efforts on this topic.

Per DPW Simmons, there are approximately 120 dead ash trees along the village nature trail that are marked to be removed. Due to time constraints and limited manpower, DPW Simmons inquired if council would consider allowing individuals who use wood for burning, to cut down and remove the trees. The individuals would be under direct supervision of one DPW employee and would be required to schedule a time that coordinates with the DPW's work schedule. Council members concurred to allow this, provided the village is not liable for any damages to individuals or their equipment. Straubel will confer with the MML and/or village attorney, regarding a "hold harmless" agreement.

Buildings & Grounds – No report.

Streets

Council discussed potential upcoming issues with parked vehicles and snow removal efforts. DPW Simmons is prepared with "No Parking on Village Streets from 2:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m." notices that he will place on the windshield of vehicles in violation.

Darby suggested that the "Winter" notice be reviewed, revised if needed and delivered to all residents. DPW Simmons and Straubel will coordinate efforts on this topic.

Per Klutman's request, DPW Simmons has been researching and requesting quotes on renting a front end loader to push snow this winter. In past years the DPW has used village owned equipment, but the weight of the snow is creating too much wear and tear, resulting in excessive repair costs.

Water & Sewer – No report.

Personnel

Council members revisited the topic of health insurance renewal options, which had been tabled at the September 8, 2014 council meeting (see medical plan analysis submitted by Bill Lewis of HUB International). Darby highlighted the pros and cons of each option, for the village as employer, as well as the individual employees (see spreadsheet for cost effect of each option).

Renewal of the current health insurance plan would result in an annual increase to the village of approximately \$2,400.00 and at a 15% employee contribution, would exceed the annual cost limitations established by the State of Michigan. Renewal of the current health insurance plan, with an increase in employee contribution to 20%, would result in an annual savings to the village of approximately \$570.00. Option 1 has the same deductible as the current health plan, but significantly higher out-of-pocket maximums. Additionally, each member's premium is based on their age, as well as the age of their dependents. Option 1 has a more favorable prescription drug program and office visit co-pays are less. Option 1 would result in an annual cost savings for the village of approximately \$10,000.00.

Council also discussed the "in lieu of insurance" (opt-out) provision that is currently offered to employees who do not choose to participate in the village health insurance program.

Council members reviewed the options at length and various questions were asked and answered.

Motion was made by Doll, supported by to Mackey, to accept Option 1 with Priority Health (HMO GOLD \$500) as proposed by Bill Lewis (HUB International) and to amend the rate for opt-out to a flat \$350/month, effective December 1, 2014.

Roll call vote: yeas – Doll, Mackey, Simmons, Whorley, Darby; nays – none; absent – Klutman.

Additional Business

Darby received a letter from the Ionia County Economic Alliance (ICEA), requesting a pledge of \$500 from the Village of Saranac, in support of their program.

Motion was made by Doll, supported by Simmons, to decline the ICEA's pledge request this year. All yeas.

Public Comments – None.

Meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Roberta Jo Smith, Clerk