

VILLAGE OF SARANAC  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
February 10, 2020

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 Simmons; Trustees – Doll, Hooper, Klutman, Mulnix, Simmons, Whorley

Absent: None

Guests: Sheriff Charlie Noll, Deputy Rachel Ervin, Toni Frazer, Nathan Day, Norman Day, David Bollone

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

Public Comments

Toni Frazer, representing the Women's Auxiliary of American Legion Post 175, was in attendance to request council's permission to place flags/poles along the north Bridge Street bridge. Frazer referred to Cascade Township's display of flags that extend over the Thornapple River on Cascade Road. The Auxiliary would like to see something similar in Saranac. They would purchase all necessary supplies (flags, poles, clamps, etc.) through fund-raising efforts.

Council members inquired about the method of mounting the poles, the number of flags to be displayed and when they would be displayed. Frazer indicated that she could better answer these questions after additional research. Auxiliary members did not want to proceed, without first obtaining council's approval. If the project is approved, Frazer will keep Village personnel informed of the particulars, before installing the flags/poles.

Motion was made by Hooper, supported by Simmons, to allow the Auxiliary to proceed with their plan to affix flag poles and display flags along the north Bridge Street bridge, as long as Village property is not altered or damaged in the process. All yeas.

Nathan Day, Boy Scout with Troop 71, was in attendance to observe a Village Council meeting in order to obtain a merit badge.

David Bollone, representing the Saranac Youth Baseball League (SYBL), was in attendance to share information with council. Bollone reported that SYBL had 28 teams in 2019, from t-ball to 8<sup>th</sup> grade, with 307 participants (players & coaches). The league's intent is to fundraise heavily this year, with proceeds going toward the construction of a new field. Per Bollone, fencing alone is estimated to cost \$30,000.

Bollone mentioned that SYBL may host a kickball tournament at Scheid Park the day before Bridgefest, as a fund-raising event.

Bollone inquired about sponsor signage on field fencing, as another means of fund-raising. Darby suggested that Bollone contact Village Zoning Administrator, Jeanne Vandersloot for signage regulations.

Bollone reported that practices start April 13, field clean-up day is April 18 from 9 a.m. to noon, and opening day is April 25, beginning at 9 a.m.

DPW Simmons stated that Scheid Park restrooms will be open by April 13 and the new parking area available for use as well.

Bollone inquired about reserving a pavilion for player/team photos on opening day. Per Straubel, a reservation is not necessary in April, as the pavilions are typically not in use.

#### Law Enforcement Report

Council received Ionia County Sheriff Office stats for Village of Saranac patrol for January 2020.

Deputy Rachel Ervin recapped the stat report for January 2020. As a result of a resident's recent complaint, Summit Street at Riverside Drive is being heavily patrolled for speed violations. Ervin also mentioned that she routinely checks the restrooms at the Trailhead for vandalism, as they are open year-round.

Sheriff Charlie Noll was in attendance to share Ionia County Sheriff's Office (ICSO) items of interest. Noll stated that the contract for Sheriff Office Services that council approved at last month's meeting, will be presented for approval at the Ionia County Board of Commissioner's meeting on Tuesday, February 11.

Sheriff Noll spoke about the recent passing of Dinar, the ICSO's K-9 officer. Dinar's passing was due to an unexpected health issue. The ICSO did not expect Dinar to retire for another two years, and therefore was not financially or otherwise ready for another K-9. Choosing and purchasing the right dog for the job can be a lengthy and costly process. Noll reported however, that other agencies have reached out to the ICSO with potential leads, which the department is looking into.

Sheriff Noll reported on the fluctuating status of jail staff as well as inmate count. The ICSO has recently partnered with Wedgewood Christian Services, an agency that works with inmates upon their release, as well as during incarceration. Michigan Works also provides job related training during incarceration and placement services upon release, for low-risk inmates.

Sheriff Noll spoke about road patrol staffing and the fact that the department was down six deputies at one point. Three new officers have recently been hired and one has returned from medical leave. Noll is hopeful that the remaining two positions will be filled in the near future.

Council members thanked Sheriff Noll and Deputy Ervin for their attendance and for the ICSO updates.

Motion was made by Mulnix at 7:26 p.m., supported by Klutman, to open the Public Hearing to set the 2020 property tax millage and approve the 2020/2021 budget. All yeas.

No public comments were offered on the proposed budget and millage rate to support it.

Motion was made by Simmons at 7:29 p.m., supported by Hooper, to close the Public Hearing. All yeas.

Straubel provided council with budget reports, as follows: Summary and Detail Budget (with notes) for 2019/2020 and 2020/2021, Reserve Balances by Year and Fund, Net Income/Loss Estimates for 2019/2020 and 2020/2021 and Projected Vehicle/Equipment Replacement Timeline with Projected Costs.

Straubel provided a narrative on key points of the reports. General Fund is expected to use approximately \$18,000 in reserve funds for the fiscal year ending 2/29/20. This number is substantially less than forecasted last year at this time. It was expected that General Fund would use over \$300,000 in reserve funds. The difference is largely due to the sale of Village property to the Saranac Library, for \$175,000.00. Other contributing factors are normal operating expenses as well as capital outlay items, coming in under budget.

The proposed 2020/2021 budget estimates the use of reserve funds as follows; General Fund (\$172,000), Water Fund (\$102,000) and Sewer Fund (\$168,000). The Center Street project, which includes water and sewer infrastructure upgrades as well as street reconstruction, is estimated to cost over \$950,000, \$250,000 of which will be paid for with a grant from MDOT. Other capital outlay items in the proposed 2020/2021 budget include a new tractor (\$75,000), a generator at the water tower (\$8,500) and two aerators at the Waste Water Treatment Facility (\$16,000).

Straubel pointed out to council members, that reserve fund projections for the end of the 2020/2021 fiscal year, based on the budget presented, are still healthy.

Motion was made by Doll, supported by Hooper, to approve property tax mills for 2020 of 13.9321 as well as a 1% administrative fee and to approve the budget for fiscal year March 1, 2020 through February 28, 2021 in the amount of \$2,282,246 as presented.

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

Motion was made by Whorley, supported by Simmons, to accept the minutes of the January 13, 2020 Regular Meeting. All yeas.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Klutman, to accept the Treasurer's Report of January 31, 2020. All yeas.

Various Accounts Payable items were reviewed and questions answered.

Hooper suggested a permitting process for water/sewer work that involves hooking to village utilities. The Water and Sewer Committee will meet to further discuss the idea and make a recommendation to council.

Motion was made by Hooper, supported by Klutman, to approve the Accounts Payable of February 10, 2020, in the amount of \$71,726.49.

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

#### Zoning Administrator Report

The Zoning Administrator's Report of Services for January 2020 was reviewed.

Council members reviewed a proposed 2-year agreement submitted by Jeanne Vandersloot, for continued zoning administration services.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Hooper, to accept Vandersloot's proposed agreement, as presented.

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

Council reviewed correspondence from Vandersloot regarding property located at 41 N Parsonage Street, Saranac. Council requested that Vandersloot contact the realtor and inform him of the current zoning status of the property.

#### Planning Commission Report

Klutman reported on the Planning Commission's February 5<sup>th</sup> meeting, at which a Public Hearing was held to consider Mark Schaafsma's application for a Special Use Permit for the Harker House project at 234 Vosper Street. Per Klutman, four members of the public were in attendance and asked questions regarding project specifics. The Planning Commission approved Schaafsma's application, after the Public Hearing was closed.

Council received a draft copy of an ordinance prepared by Tim Johnson, allowing dwelling units in the Central Business District as a permitted use and deleting the current special land use requirement for such uses. The Planning Commission will hold a Public Hearing to receive comments on the proposed ordinance, on March 5<sup>th</sup>.

#### Committee Reports

##### Budget

The Budget Committee met and recommended the budget that was approved tonight after the Public Hearing that was held to receive public comments on said budget.

##### Public Safety

Darby reported on the annual Fire Board meeting that was held January 20, 2020. Per Darby, the board approved an increase in firefighter compensation for the 2020/2021 fiscal year and also discussed future firefighter wages. Per Chief Simmons, the average Saranac firefighter's compensation per call (not per hour) was \$11.12 for 2019, whereas \$15 is the average firefighter compensation for neighboring departments, with some being paid per call and some per hour. Darby stated that fire board members requested that Chief Simmons and Lt. Koster prepare a current report on firefighter compensation of neighboring departments, and on what basis (hourly or per call) they are paid.

Darby reported that 2020/2021 may be the last year that Boston Township's fire millage is able to cover the Village of Saranac's share (approximately \$44,000) of fire department operating expenses, due to upcoming capital purchases.

Parks & Recreation – No report.

Streets – No report.

Buildings & Grounds – No report.

Water & Sewer – No report.

Personnel

Darby reported that the Personnel Committee met and recommended \$1/hour raise for Tony Koster, as he is now DPW lead. Council members concurred with the recommendation.

Public Comments – None.

Additional Business

Straubel informed council that Pat Raimer, representing the Boston-Saranac Historical Society, requested that camping be allowed at the boat launch and/or the depot grounds on or around July 12, 2020, for 2020 Grand River Expedition participants.

Motion was made by Mulnix, support by Doll, to allow participants of the 2020 Grand River Expedition to camp overnight at the boat launch and/or depot grounds on or around July 12, 2020. All yeas.

Darby reported that the Saranac Robotics Team inquired about creating a 3D crosswalk in the Village. Council was receptive to the idea, although there were concerns with ongoing upkeep.

Meeting adjourned at 8:29 p.m.



Becky A. Straubel, Treasurer/Deputy Clerk