

VILLAGE OF SARANAC  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
June 8, 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, Straubel, DPW Koster; Trustees – Day, Doll, Mulnix, Talcott  
Absent: Klutman, Whorley  
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 May 2026.

Motion was made by Day, supported by Talcott, to accept minutes of the May 11, 2026 Regular Meeting. All yeas.

Motion was made by Doll, supported by Mulnix, to accept the Treasurer's Report of May 31, 2026. All yeas.

Various Accounts Payable items were reviewed and questions answered.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Doll, to approve the Accounts Payable of June 8, 2026, in the amount of \$556,766.82.

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

Council members reviewed and discussed Straubel's memo regarding IT Services, as well as a proposed contract with Belding Housing Commission for IT services.

Straubel's memo highlights multiple reasons for retaining IT services. Council members discussed the two options provided in the proposed contract; \$1,100 per month which includes mileage, or \$88 per hour plus mileage. Straubel made a case for choosing the \$1,100 per month option, based on a long to-do list pertaining to information technology. Council members agreed with Straubel's rationale, but would like to reevaluate Village IT needs in six months.

Motion was made by Mulnix, supported by Doll, to enter into a contract with Belding Housing Commission for IT services at a rate of \$1,100 per month including mileage, and to revisit the contract in six months to evaluate Village IT needs.

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

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

Straubel provided council members with a copy of an anonymous letter which was sent to the Village Office, to the attention of Jeanne Vandersloot, Zoning Administrator for the Village.

In the letter, the anonymous individual states, "To whoever is in charge of the zoning. All day every day I deal with loud commercial equipment coming in and out of 235 Parsonage Street, commercial equipment is parked on the property and always worked on. It's like a gravel pit with rocks and equipment being loaded and unloaded. Banging and beeping goes on all day. This is a residential zone and I am sick of it being used as a commercial business. I have to abide by the rules and so do they. Do your job and make it stop."

Straubel shared the letter with Vandersloot and she promptly visited the location and did not hear any equipment. Vandersloot then called the property owner at 235 Parsonage Street and explained the reason for her call. The property owner denies the statements that the anonymous individual made. The business that he owns was relocated to property outside the Village limits, quite some time ago. Both Vandersloot and the property owner believe that the anonymous individual who wrote the letter, is hearing the mine at the gravel pit off Riverside Drive. The owner of 235 Parsonage Street stated that he hears it too, and when the mine is active it operates from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

To the anonymous person who sent the letter, please be advised that the gravel pit is not located in the Village, therefore the Village is unable to take any action.

Also to the anonymous person who sent the letter and to any others who may have a concern or complaint, please provide your name and number so we can contact you about said concern or complaint and work together to find an agreeable solution.

The Planning Commission's regular meeting for the month of June was cancelled due to lack of business.

Straubel informed council that the business located at 75 Bridge Street is looking to relocate within the Village. In order to do so, the business will be required to complete an amended Special Use Permit and site plan, and the Planning Commission will be required to hold a Public Hearing on the topic.

#### Committee Reports

Budget – No report

#### Personnel

Darby requested that DPW Koster keep council apprised of his thoughts regarding the current DPW schedule and work load, and on hiring a part-time employee.

Darby reported that the Personnel Committee will be meeting on Friday, June 12<sup>th</sup>. They will be discussing Straubel's compensation for hours worked on the Homeowner Rehabilitation Project, as the grant reimburses the Village for her time.

#### Public Safety

Chief Koster reported that he has been busy preparing for ISO's visit to the Fire Department next week.

Darby inquired whether the 2013 mini-pumper has been listed for sale yet. Chief Koster stated that before listing it, EVS will be performing a pump test and servicing the engine.

Koster will also be doing some small paint touch-ups prior to listing it. Koster also noted that the Fire Department has been made aware of a potential buyer.

#### Parks & Recreation

Straubel shared with council members, the status of the MDNR grant application that the Village submitted earlier this year for improvements to Scheid Park. An email Straubel recently received stated that the application is administratively complete and has moved to the next stage of evaluation. Preliminary scores will be posted in late summer/early fall, followed by the supplemental period when additional documentation can be submitted.

Mulnix informed council members that next Tuesday, twelve volunteers from Impact Church will be clearing out vegetation along the Riverwalk, from the Depot to the first fishing pier.

Day reported that each year, 4<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders from Saranac Community Schools release salmon that they have raised, into the river near the boat launch. During that time, the students also clear away vegetation and pick up debris.

Straubel provided a recap of her communication regarding the DPW Facility project. The Village applied for an Appropriations grant to assist in funding the development of a new DPW Facility. Last week, Straubel received an email stating that Congressman John Moolenaar would like to call her to share some good news regarding the DPW Facility CPF (Commun Project Funding). Congressman Moolenaar called Straubel the next day to inform her that the Village's project is included in Bill H.R. 8646, which was being voted on that day. Straubel confirmed the next day via email, that the bill passed and is now with the Senate. They will review, make changes and pass their version of the bill. After that, the House and Senate will come together to negotiate differences, followed by final passage. At that point, the President will sign the bill into law. Following that, the Village will work with the USDA state office to finalize the application and disburse funds.

Darby reported that there was a large group of people using the trailhead and the Fred Meijer trail last Saturday. The Village had no knowledge that an event was taking place. Per Darby, if this was an organized event, the group should have applied for a MDNR permit. If they had done so, the Village would have been notified and could have approved it and been prepared. As it happened, there was also a bike race event, which the Village did know about, which passed through Saranac the same day. The two events made for overcrowding and general confusion.

Mulnix reported that he has been approached by several individuals who would like to form a "Friends of Scheid Park" group. They would like to become more involved in the planning process of Scheid Park improvements. Council members concurred that this is a good idea.

Streets – No report

Buildings & Grounds – No report

Water & Sewer

DPW Koster reported that he recently received a letter/report from EGLE, detailing the results of the Sanitary Survey. The letter/report lists minor items for the Village to address, which Koster is already working on.

Public Comments – None

Additional Business

Straubel provided council members with a spreadsheet listing current grants that the Village has in the works. The Village has applied for six grants, three of which have been secured by contract. If the Village is successful in securing all six grants, the total grant dollars coming into the Village would be approximately \$3,248,200, with Village matching funds of approximately \$653,500 (16.75% of project totals). The projects to be funded with grant proceeds, would take place between now and the end of 2028.

Meeting adjourned at 8:02 p.m.



Becky Straubel,  
Village Treasurer/Deputy Clerk