

Regular Meeting 11/19/24
Laurium Village Council

Meeting called to Order by President Sullivan 6:03 pm

Roll Call

Present:

John Galbraith

Dale Ninko

Jennifer Jenich-Laplander

John Sullivan

Krista Carlson

Jeff Erickson

Wesley Pietila

Absent:

None

Also Present:

Ian Lewis - Village Manager

Mary Pat Crampton - Village Clerk

Jon Koskiniemi - Treasurer

Kurt Erkkila - Chief of Police

Approval of Regular Agenda

Motion by Erickson, 2nd by Jenich-Laplander

Call vote - Motion carried unanimously

Approval of Council Minutes

Regular Meeting 10/15/24

Call vote; 5 affirmative (Galbraith, Ninko, Jenich-Laplander, J Erickson, Pietala); 2
abstained (Sullivan, Carlson)

Motion carried

Submission of Bills

Carlson recommended the Village pay monthly bills in the amount of \$36,078.16
and Prepaid bills of \$89,039.20

Motion by Jenich-Laplander, 2nd by Erickson

Call vote: Carried unanimously

Communications to the Council

Manager Lewis reported that a new admin was hired two weeks ago, Megan Jackman. Megan has a bachelor's degree with an accounting background. She will work M - Th, and Paige will work T - F.

Treasurer Koskiniemi reported that due to the retirement of his deputy treasurer who also acted as deputy clerk, Megan Jackman is appointed Deputy Treasurer and Paige is appointed Deputy Clerk.

Sullivan questioned whether this would be a conflict, but it was by suggestion of the auditor to add more checks and balances.

Mary Pat Crampton has been sworn in as the Village Clerk; other new members will be sworn in later in the meeting. Bank cards will be signed in the next few days to ensure payment of bills on time.

Public Comment

Amy Schneiderhan requested that the Village include \$2000 for beautification. That amount will cover the cost of flowers on the poles. If more money is raised, other beautification options can be considered. Amy does not want to be the designated fundraiser for the project. Discussion of facebook goFundme type of campaign be instituted. \$2000 includes pole flowers down Lake Linden Avenue. Lewis suggested opening up the fundraising to reach people who don't live here but want the Village to remain as they remember it. The council thanked Amy for her years of assistance. The funding will be part of the general fund per the auditor. The Beautification committee no longer exists.

Reports of Council

Finance - Johnson reported the audit is complete. Sullivan requested a brief by the Auditor. Lewis stated that the auditor is incredibly busy with her schedule and behind on other audits, so doesn't have much time. She is willing to come if needed. Lewis will provide a summary later in the meeting.

Recreation/Parks/Beautification - JErickson stated that the ice is in process at the Gipp. They are lining up Zamboni drivers, lines are being painted. Plumbing issues were found throughout the building. Patrick's Plumbing gave an estimate to complete work by Friday, November 22nd for under \$1000. Work will be completed on a sink, two toilets, and general plumbing maintenance will be done.

Discussion around contacting the Ladies Auxiliary of the VFW to volunteer at the concession stand. Ninko will get contact info from Jenich-Laplander and talk with them about getting involved. JErickson discussed prepackaged food not requiring a Health Department Food License. Someone will still have to oversee the concessions even with it manned primarily by volunteers.

JErickson reported that Superior Sand and Gravel donated 3 tons of infield mix. It is dumped on the Men's softball field and Gipp 1. Once it is scraped, built, sifted the weill be more available for the other areas.

Paige reported that she has received calls regarding businesses putting up banners at the Gipp. Banners for this year and painted on the boards under a 3 year contract once the new boards are in place.

JErickson brought up offering a season's pass for individuals at \$75 for the season. The amount was based on the cost of \$3 per skate, 16 weeks available, with 32 sessions over that time. Discussion followed about family passes but it was decided to start this year with individual passes, look at family passes for next season.

Motion by JErickson to adopt the individual season pass at the cost of \$75
Second by Carlson
Call vote - unanimously carried

Public Safety (Police/Fire) - Nick Olson is in the final stages of background checks and paperwork to become a full time officer. He comes from the Keweenaw County Sheriff's Office. He is under obligation to them for the holidays and will work part time for Laurium in December, starting full time on January 1, 2025.

The Department will participate in Taser 10 Training for officers. The training is sponsored by Houghton with no cost to the Laurium Village Department. The new patrol car will be fully equipped in December.

Fire - Equipment - the new truck is ahead of schedule after the decision was made to accept the 2024 chassis that is currently available instead of waiting for the 2025 to come in. It is getting built out right now and will be here in less than a year.

Street/Equipment/Sanitation - JErickson reported that the goal of the council has been to maintain a balance in the maintenance fund at \$25,000. Currently it is well below that mark. He has recently found a 2003 Tandem Dump Truck with no engine or transmission that could be acquired for approximately \$4500. Discussion ensued about negotiating the ability to buy it later, get the amount reduced as it is from another municipality. Other trucks are in the \$15k range. The department is in good shape right now with trucks, and trucks used for parts. The Village currently operated 2 loaders, 2 snow blower attachments, 3 with plows, 2 graders. More equipment than manpower. Staffing adjustments were made due to injury of one employee. Discussion to contact Gary Bracco to work

as seasonal driver as he did last season. The Village had someone lined up but he took a job with Houghton County Road Commission..

Lewis suggested for the future that we look at Tri Axles that can carry the load of two tandems. We are also able to bill the State nearly double for use of them on the roadways.

JErickson also suggested that we sell the old Zamboni for the Best Offer. Lewis also suggested selling the sweeper for \$1000 OBE by closed bids.

JErickson Motion to sell sweeper, Second Wesley Pietala
Call vote - carried unanimously.

Property/Building/Ordinance - Lewis reported that an estimate to have UP Engineering come out to evaluate the basement of the Village Hall will cost \$3900.00 There will be an RFP Grant coming available that we can apply for. They are looking for communities within a lower income threshold and with historic properties. Projects are in the \$1m range and could be used to fix the entire building.

Motion by JErickson to increase the Village Hall Repair Fund by \$3,900.00;
Seconded by Pietila
Called vote - passed unanimously

Community Relations - No Report

Manager's Report

Grant Updates - Lewis has spoken with the Incredible Bank Foundation. They are very interested in Phase II of the Gipp project but not at all in phase one. There is still a grant available from Dick's Sporting Goods Foundation. A decision is expected sometime in November.

Another grant may be available from the Great Lakes Sports Commission for \$25,000 It is for low income communities and is due in December. Sullivan suggested that the Recreation plan could open up other avenues for grant funding.

A grant was used to purchase the Taser 10 in the first year. Lewis will likely reach out to the Keweenaw Community Foundation next year for \$1000.

Audit - Lewis reported that the F65 has been submitted. Revenue was \$511,000 with \$40,000 deferred revenue. The Village is in great shape. Only one account shows a loss, ub that is due to depreciation. All others are on the positive side. Three things were mentioned by auditor Susan Sanford:

1. Increased checks and balances
2. Audit report was late (due to the auditor's schedule)
3. To be reported

Jenich-Laplander suggested that the Village employ a different auditor in coming years due to Sanford's failure to submit the F65 on time. Lewis reported that the past year was a challenge due to the BS & A transfer and Sue also got the Village out of a bind. She has apologized for her lack of professionalism and suggested that if she is contracted next year, that the contract include penalties for each day beyond the due date for submission. Sullivan suggested that Sanford has been effective. JErickson suggested we owe her a chance. Suggested to try one more year with the contract and built in penalties. Lewis has requested she come earlier to start. Sullivan concurred on developing a contract that Sue is aware of. When the report is received by Lewis, he will send it out to council members.

Unfinished Business

Discussion on Pursuing Cityhood and the Next Steps - Lewis reported that he sent out pros/cons from the attorney with regard to cityhood. The first step will be to put out a facebook poll to gauge interest of Laurium residents. The council would also like to ask Florida Location residents to annex with the Village/city. Lewis asked if Mr. Letzman should be hired as our attorney. Discussion continued on holding a public meeting to invite residents in to share their thoughts and to explain what changes would come about by becoming a city. The next step will be to put together the facebook post, and ask Mr. Letzman to start drawing up a contract so by January 1, we will have a draft.

New Business

Skate with Santa and Holiday Light Show Contest- December 21. JErickson stated that we are working with Main street Calumet to develop the Christmas Parade, Business window decorating contest, and residential decorating contest. Local businesses are supplying prizes. There will be a \$10 registration fee. The parade will begin at 41 Lumber and end at the Family Dollar in Calumet. Discussion to approach Dollar General. Jenich-Laplander said there is online request form from Dollar General Corporate Office.

Discussion and Reveiw of the 5-Year Parks and Recreation Draft - Lewis reported that new fellow from NMU added some things to the current document including edits of typos and summary of the Village. Also included in the plan are the phases - ice plant/Gipp, beautification, survey results from residents. The DNR grant is due on 02/05/25. The commission is moving forward with the plan. Discussion followed on possibility of trail system Lewis suggested a walking path and talked about declaring area near Gipp as a road, applying to the State of Michigan, and next steps. Could extend 2nd and 3rd. Could be a 2 month process.

Students are designing a recreation logo. Best design should be used as cover of the plan.

JErickson made a motion to approve the plan with noted adjustments. Seconded by Pietila

Called vote - passed unanimously

Swearing in of Elected Officials

The following members elected to new terms were sworn in by Village Clerk

Crampton: Andrew Erickson, Jennifer Jenich-Laplander, Jon Koskiniemi, Wesley Pietila. Appointed Megan Jackman (Deputy Treasurer) , Paige

Blain (Deputy Clerk). Both will act as signers on the accounts in the event that either the Clerk or the Treasurer are unavailable.

Old Business

None

Announcements

A special meeting will be scheduled for December 3rd at 6:00 pm at the Village Hall. Agenda items will include review of wording for discussion of change from Village to City, appointment of 2 year position on the council, and review of the recreation plan.

Adjournment

Meeting was adjourned by President Sullivan at 7:29 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Mary Pat Crampton
Village Clerk