

Village of Laurium  
Regular Council Meeting  
Tuesday, December 19, 2023

**Present for Roll Call:** Carlson, Erickson, Galbraith, Hrebec, Jenich-Laplander, Pietila and Sullivan.

**Guests:** Kurt Erkkila, Erik Lee, Steven Lanctot and Ian Lewis.

The meeting was called to order in the village council chambers by President Sullivan at 6:04PM.

### **Public Comments**

**Erik Lee** addressed the council regarding the alley that was paved over at the Shining Light Church on Third Street between Pewabic and Tamarack Streets. The council was presented plans by the engineer for the church & voted to approve pavement. A claim was made that a neighbor gets water in the basement from the snow that gets pushed against the wall. The church no longer plows by this fence and drainage is designed to slope to the street. Mr. Lee sent a FOIA request for documentation regarding snow contracts and how often hauling is done for someone who has one. Mr. Lee is concerned about parking for the driveway at his building near Hecla and Third Streets. MDOT will be studying this intersection for traffic flow, signage and parking from the intersection.

Jenich-Laplander left the meeting from 6:16-6:20PM.

A motion was made by Erickson and seconded by Pietila to approve the **agenda** as presented. Carried 6-0.

A motion was made by Hrebec and seconded by Galbraith to approve the **minutes** of the November 13, 2023 regular council meeting and the December 4, 2023 special meeting. Carried 6-0.

A motion was made by Hrebec to approve the **prepaid bills** in the amount of \$124,777.90 and approve payment of the **merchandise accounts** in the amount of \$69,779.33. Carried 6-0.

### **Committee Reports**

**Finance:** Budget information will be discussed at the January and February meetings.

**Recreation/Parks:** The arena is up and running. Some plant repairs were necessary. The Skate with Santa event was well received. A motion was made by Erickson and seconded by Jenich-Laplander to give a **gift certificate** to "Santa". "Santa" has spent at least 2.5 hours annually at this event for the last few years. This gift certificate would be a reasonable amount for his service. Yes – Erickson, Galbraith, Hrebec, Jenich-Laplander, Pietila and Sullivan. Abstain – Carlson. Carried 6-0.

**Public Safety – Police:** Officer Dostaler is still on probation but is on a shift by herself. Retired Chief Robert Kyllonen passed away last month. He had been on the police department for 32 years.

**Public Safety – Fire:** With the help of grants, the fire department should have updated almost all of their gear. They are recruiting new volunteers.

**Streets/Equipment/Sanitation:** A new full-time mechanic was hired. Two seasonal part time employees were also hired and a full-time employee will be needed in the spring. A new computer will be purchased for the department. A local company will be coming to either the January or February meeting to give a presentation on a program they are developing for fleet maintenance, tracking and other features. If we agree to be their test company, we could get this program at cost. The police and fire truck vehicles could utilize this program as well.

**Property/Building/Ordinance:** The marijuana ordinance has been reviewed by the committee and Manager Lewis will do the same.

**Beautification:** No report.

**Community Relations:** No report.

### **Manager Report**

Several **grants** are being pursued through various sources for playground/recreation updates and a new pavilion. A 25/75 grant for a new police vehicle from USDA RD is in the works. Paperwork for a fire equipment vehicle and lead pipe testing have been submitted from another round of FDCVT grants. In the **General Fund**, due to \$15,000.00 grader repairs and more sidewalk replacement materials than anticipated, a motion was made by Erickson and seconded by Hrebec to increase these line-item budget amounts and bring the DPW activity budget to \$252,100.00. Carried 7-0. In the **Sanitation Fund**, a motion was made by Hrebec and seconded by Erickson to include \$22,000.00 additional funds for transfer station costs, operating supplies, parts & wages and fringes line items. Carried 7-0. Notices of increases in quarterly garbage rates effective January 1, 2024 will be posted.

### **Unfinished Business**

A motion was made by Hrebec and seconded by Jenich-Laplander to approve the **garbage ordinance**. Carried 7-0. A motion was made by Erickson and seconded by Galbraith to increase **business garbage rates** to \$54.00/quarter for 2 cans and \$27.00/quarter for each additional can. Additional weekly pickups will increase this amount i.e. 2 pickups, double the cost, etc. Carried 7-0.

### **New Business**

**Riley Powers, CEDAM Fellow**, has been working on the RRC documents. Input collected from the blight forum will be used to develop a new ordinance. Preliminary work is being done by the Laurium Planning Commission for a Parks & Recreation 5-year plan. Information for historical preservation tax credits is available. Website data is being input. Council appointment procedures have been drafted and will be discussed at the January meeting. A motion was made by Carlson and seconded by Pietila to pay in full the \$100,000 **internal loan** from the Water Fund to the General Fund for operations. Carried 7-0. A motion was made by Erickson and seconded by Carlson to approve the recommendation of Police Chief Erkkila to **promote** Aaron Hainault to Sergeant effective January 1, 2024.

At 7:14PM, a motion was made by Erickson and seconded by Pietila to go into executive session to discuss DPW Union negotiations. Carried 7-0.

The meeting returned to regular session at 7:22PM.

**Present for Roll Call:** Carlson, Erickson, Galbraith, Hrebec, Jenich-Laplander, Pietila and Sullivan.

A motion was made by Hrebec and seconded by Pietila to authorize Manager Lewis to sign the DPW Union Contract with the change in the Aramark uniform contract. A monthly phone stipend will be paid to DPW Group Leader Jeff Kalcich and payment of Ed Vertin's monthly phone stipend will continue. Carried 7-0.

Paperwork for filing for office for the 2024 general election is now available from the clerk.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Golus, Clerk

Village of Laurium