

Village of Laurium
Regular Council Meeting
Tuesday, March 21, 2023

Present for Roll Call: Erickson (online), Galbraith, Hrebec, Jenich-Laplander, Pietila and Sullivan.

Absent: Carlson.

Guests: Deb Dlubala, Andrew Erickson, Kurt Erkkila, Josh Harju, Jon Koskiniemi, Ian Lewis, Alicia Roundtree and Ben Schuckert.

The meeting was called to order in the village council chambers by President Sullivan at 6:00PM.

Public Comments

Alicia Roundtree and Ben Schuckert are still interested in opening a retail marijuana store at 77 Third Street and a brief discussion ensued.

Josh Harju from UP Engineers & Architects revisited the EGLE grant to use for the inventory of lead pipes in the village. Based on the village's scoring, neither Harju nor Chris Holmes felt that the village would receive the grant. There are other places our funds could be spent and other grants available.

A comment was made that taxpayers of the village should get priority for services before outside communities and contracts.

A motion was made by Hrebec and seconded by Galbraith to approve the **agenda** as presented. Carried 5-0.

A motion was made by Jenich-Laplander and seconded by Pietila to approve the **minutes** of the February 21, 2023 regular council meeting and the February 27, 2023 special meeting. Carried 5-0.

A motion was made by Hrebec and seconded by Jenich-Laplander to approve the **prepaid bills** in the amount of \$81,753.40 and approve payment of the **merchandise accounts** in the amount of \$21,847.48. Carried 5-0.

Communications to the Council

The **CEDAM fellow** has been approved. The first round of interviews was held last week. Three of the candidates made it to the second round of interviews which will be held next week. The fellow will begin mid-May through August 2024.

There are several **grants** in the works at this time. The Congressional Spending Grant requires a match so that will not be pursued at this time but possible at a later date. A Keweenaw Community Foundation recreational grant is being written for sprinklers in the parks. A Financially Distressed Community, Township and Village grant through the State is due on March 30th. Grants for new windows, doors and a boiler for the village hall will be requested.

Hrebec prepared a master spreadsheet with categories and priorities for projects and cost estimates for future grant opportunities.

Committee Reports

Finance: The committee would like to review the bills prior to the day of the meeting.

Recreation/Parks: The arena is closed for the season. The hockey association would like to have a meeting to work out some details. The American Legion would possibly be interested in helping with the concession stand.

Public Safety – Police: John Gherna is applying to get into the police academy and has already had his interview. There are other tests that need to be passed before he is accepted .

Public Safety – Fire: No report.

Streets/Equipment/Sanitation: Another dump truck has gone down. Garbage rates for businesses need to be discussed. The committee will have a recommendation at the April meeting.

Property/Building/Ordinance: The garbage ordinance was discussed based on comments received after the first draft. Pet waste needs to be bagged and in a proper receptacle. There is an interest in providing garbage service in Calumet village. Our ordinance needs to be completed and approved by Calumet if this were to happen. The committee will meet over the next month regarding cardboard disposal, receptacle sizes, the number of cans allowed for pickup and pricing.

Beautification: Erickson will check on the status of the hanging baskets.

Community Relations: No report.

Manger Report

An **extension** has been authorized for the police department's First Responder grant. As part of the grant, John Gherna can attend the academy, provided he meets all requirements. An additional, small amount has been added for other costs as well. Office Clerk **Paige Blain** has been working about 28 hours/week, which has been allocated in the budget.

Unfinished Business

Keweenaw Solutions has been approved to begin work on the website. It should be completed within two months with additional pictures being added as the seasons change. Billing will be upon delivery of the website.

New Business

A motion was made by Pietila and seconded by Galbraith to approve the resolution approving amendments to the Articles of Incorporation of the **North Houghton County Water & Sewer Authority**. Carried 5-0. Manager Lewis will research what kind of options there are for a village issued **cell phone** or stipend. Previous Village Administrator Vertin will come off of the current village plan but can keep the cell phone.

Old Business

The revenue potential for **marijuana businesses** is appealing considering the village's financial position. The village has an ordinance in effect regarding marijuana establishments. Part of the master plan includes zoning. Marijuana businesses would need to be included. More information and research will need to be done prior to a business opening in Laurium.

The meeting adjourned at 7:48PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Golus, Clerk

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