

Village of Laurium  
Regular Council Meeting  
Tuesday, May 16, 2023

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

**Guests:** Kurt Erkkila, Thomas Fournier, Jon Jaehnig, Bethany Jalkanen, and Ian Lewis.

The meeting was called to order in the Village Council Chambers by President Sullivan at 6:00PM.

A motion was made by Erickson and seconded by Pietila to approve the **agenda** as presented. Carried 7-0.

A motion was made by Galbraith and seconded by Erickson to approve the **minutes** of the April 18, 2023 regular council meeting. Carried 7-0.

A motion was made by Carlson and seconded by Hrebec to approve the **prepaid bills** in the amount of \$87,828.53 and approve payment of the **merchandise accounts** in the amount of \$24,110.40. Carried 7-0.

### **Communications to the Council**

The **website** designers were not able to attend the meeting but reported to Manager Lewis that they are almost ready to go live. Some spring pictures, history and other information needs to be added. There is an option to go to utility websites and make payments.

### **Committee Reports**

**Finance:** The committee will be meeting with Lewis to assure that all of the audit findings have been or are in the process of being corrected.

**Recreation/Parks:** The ballfields have been cleaned up as Little League baseball will be starting next week and running until the end of June. Some fencing issues need to be addressed at Billy Miller Field (Slo-Pitch). The DPW will provide the labor and the slo-pitch league the material. Before next season starts, a meeting will be held with the hockey association regarding the staffing and sales at the arena concession stand.

**Public Safety – Police:** The new police recruit has been at the academy for a week now. The grant will cover the equipment she will need when she starts the job in August.

**Public Safety – Fire:** Manager Lewis, Galbraith and Fire Chief Zubiena met at the fire hall for a tour. Some of the fencing will be removed by the DPW.

**Streets/Equipment/Sanitation:** The DPW employees did evaluations on each other and the next step will be to meet with them to discuss the results. Erickson reported that there are upgrades that can be done for energy projects with funding through Michigan Saves and Efficiency United. Erickson will resubmit the quote for the fire department lights. There is the possibility of getting into a pilot program with Semco Energy. Erickson will start the application

paperwork which could get 20-30% funding for boiler replacement and rebates and savings on bills should we be approved for the pilot program. Finlandia University will be auctioning equipment and furniture that may be useful for the village.

**Property/Building/Ordinance:** The garbage ordinance needs further DPW input which will be reported next month. The deadline for the Rental Registration has expired. Those landlords who did not register will need to be tracked down and the ones that have registered will need to receive confirmation of such. With spring, blight issues are surfacing. Enforcement will begin but residents will also be encouraged to help neighbors to improve neighborhoods. The committee will review the outside "burn barrel" ordinance.

**Beautification:** Donations are being requested for the flowers. Amy Schneiderhan is still willing to help with the hanging baskets. Park flower bed cleanups are being scheduled for the beginning of June. The murals will be put back up on the fence at 41 Lumber.

**Community Relations:** No report.

### **Manager Report**

A grant from the **Portage Health Foundation** was awarded for park equipment. Everything but the use of equipment for installation will be covered by the grant.

The Michigan Department of Treasury's grant award for **BS&A software** implementation will need to be accepted tomorrow. The cost of the implementation will be \$51,000 (of which we would be reimbursed after proof of payment) and includes training, setting up the required chart of accounts. This software will replacement our current accounting software and utility billing and gives us the ability to do the payroll in house. There is an annual fee of \$15,850 which is about what we pay now for these items separately. It will take a year to a year and a half to complete. A motion was made by Erickson and seconded by Jenich-Laplander to move forward with the new software. Carried 7-0.

Manager Lewis will handle **grant** applications but will draw on committee members for input. A spreadsheet will be used to track the grants. If anyone finds a potential grant, they are to pass it along to the manager.

The approximate cost is \$6.00/sq ft for materials (concrete, sand & mesh) for **sidewalk replacement**. The village will provide the labor. The cost of replacing a 4 ft wide sidewalk will be about \$1600, 6 ft sidewalk - \$2200 and 8 ft - \$2800. Manager Lewis will start contacting the residents on the list for replacement prioritizing those that need immediate attention.

The **CEDAM Fellow** is expected to be onsite by the end of the week.

### **Unfinished Business**

Manager Lewis is working on a draft to repeal **Ordinance #154** Prohibited Marihuana Establishments. This draft will be sent to the committee for review.

### **New Business**

The **lead pipe survey** that needs to be completed by 2025 will begin this summer. A random sample of residences with unknown piping, per the water company report, has been done. There are approximately 90 homes that need a determination of whether lead pipes are present

or not. There is no state funding and several details are still not clear. The DPW will do the work, hopefully 20 this year. Residents will be given prior notice.

A motion was made by Erickson and seconded by Pietila to post for a **full time DPW employee** now with the employment starting by fall, sooner if needed. Carried 7-0.

The most needed **DPW equipment** are a loader, double axle dump truck and sidewalk plow/sweeper. There is about \$75,000 in the equipment bond fund and the cost for a loader would be \$50,000, dump truck \$30,000 and sidewalk plow/sweeper \$20,000. The committee would like to keep \$25,000 in reserve for emergencies. A motion was made by Hrebec and seconded by Carlson to authorize the committee, with the manager's approval, to purchase at an auction when any of these items, within the monetary constraints, are available. Carried 7-0.

A motion was made by Erickson and seconded by Galbraith to hold the **millage public hearing** on Tuesday, June 20, 2023 at 6:00PM. Carried 7-0.

### **Old Business**

The final draft of the **Master Plan** is available. The plan is now ready for distributing to other municipalities. Beckett & Raeder will supply a URL link to access the plan. There will be 63 days for community review. Following that period, any changes based on comments received will be sent to Beckett & Raeder. A motion was made by Pietila and seconded by Hrebec to take this next step in the process for the Master Plan. Carried 7-0.

The meeting adjourned at 7:15PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia M. Golus, Clerk