

**Laurium Village Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
October 21st, 2025**

Meeting called to Order by President Sullivan 6:00 pm/Recite Pledge

Roll Call:

Present:

**John Galbraith
Andrew Erickson
John Sullivan
Jeff Erickson
Krista Carlson
Wesley Pietila
Jen Jenich-Laplander (late)**

Also Present:

**Ian Lewis, Village Manager
Mary Pat Crampton, Village Clerk
Kurt Erkkila , LVPD chief
Steve Eskola, LVPD Officer
Ian Raymond, Planning Commission**

Approval of Regular Agenda

Motion Pietila Second by AErickson
Call Vote: Yes: 6, No: 0
Motion carried.

Approval of Meeting Minutes of Regular Meeting September 16th

Motion by JErickson to approve 09/16/25 Minutes Second by Galbraith
Call Vote: Yes: 6, No: 0
Motion carried

Submission of Bills

John Galbraith reported merchant account bills of \$93,463.99 and Prepaid bills of \$213,753.25

Motion by Jenich-Laplander, Second by Pietila

Call Vote: Yes: 7, No: 0

Motion carried

Communications to the Council - None

Public Comments

Liz Siivola 338 Iroquois Street

Liz proposed that there be an amendment to the pet ordinance in Laurium. She has experienced difficulty with cats in her yard killing birds and chipmunks. The cats belong to her neighbor. She is not comfortable talking directly to them and has not contacted LVPD because the current ordinance does not address cats but is more specific to dogs. Ms. Siivola provided the council with several examples of other municipalities' ordinances for review and suggested that we add cats to the existing ordinance. Ian Lewis suggested that we use a general term such as 'animals' or 'pets' to encompass all.

Krista Carlson added that she had noticed the cat problem last summer and Wes Pietila agreed. Jeff Erickson suggested that we make an amendment to the current policy and how we go about doing that. Ian stated that we will have to make changes, hold a public hearing, bring it to the Council for a vote. JErickson asked what would put teeth into our ordinance. Ian responded that the prosecutor is willing to take on these cases once we have gone through the process of ticketing and fining if the problem continues. One resident has gotten 2 tickets in 5 days and the prosecutor is reviewing the case. Those who remain non-compliant will face the Judge. It will take approximately 90 days to go through the steps of changing the ordinance from subcommittee to rewrite, submission for approval and public hearing.

Motion by JErickson to begin the process, Second by Krista Carlson

Call Vote: Yes – 6; No – 0; Jenich-Laplander abstained as she came in during the middle of the discussion.

Reports from Council Committees

Finance - No Report

Recreation/Parks/Beautification – J Erickson reported that ice plant has been started and some training has occurred. He is hopeful that the DPW will be able

to put some kind of roof over it to protect it from the elements. If not, Moyle may be able to provide some concrete barriers to put around it to keep cars/trucks away from it. They will upload training videos to QModo. Our new FT Rink Manager, Bryce, had not yet started when the training took place but more will follow. Bryce has replaced the ceiling tiles in the Gipp with new ones donated by Celotex. He is working on the boards to improve them for the season. JEricksen also mentioned that they are looking at traffic flow around the Gipp Arena. Third street will be closed for a laydown area for materials for the new DPW building. He is proposing people go in the 2nd street entrance and drop off and go around and come out the same way. Sullivan asked how bad the road was and Kurt Erkkila stated that it is solid.

JEricksen also reported that pressure testing went very well. We have a surplus of glycol mixture that we could sell to other arenas that use it.

For Halloween there will be trick or treating in the Gipp with hotdogs purchased half off from Vollwerth's and Pat's donating the buns. Mercy will donate bottles of water. Ian's wife is donating 1000 pieces of candy, but we will accept other donations of candy. It will be held from 5 – 8.

Pietila asked about the SW end of the arena that ices up and makes a falling hazard. Discussion followed about insulating underneath where the pips are and adding rugs to eliminate the issue along with designating a walking path.

J Sullivan asked about building some protection for the planter at the corner. He suggested building a 4 x 8 barrier so that we can preserve it rather than replanting every year at a cost of at least \$600/year. Ian suggested that Bryce could take that project on. He has been doing some woodworking projects. Discussion followed about Bryce getting trained to drive the Zamboni. Ian has already contacted the Colosseum and Roger is willing to work with him there next week.

The Village is looking for some Sunday coverage at the rink. They have been trying to adjust hours for coverage but may need to find one PT person to fill in the gaps.

JEricksen asked about the Splash Pad and discussion followed about the ridges in the concrete that are rough. Ian suggested we table that issue until Spring and see how it turns out when they begin the work on it again.

Public Safety/Fire Department

Krista Carlson introduced the new LVPD officer, Steve Eskola. He is fully trained and operating independently now. Carlson would like us to put out a fb post introducing him to the community. We should also add night parking ban and plowing info to that post.

Kurt reported that by the first of the year we will have laptops in the patrol cars. Currently officers are using pen and paper.

I Lewis reported that he has been receiving updates on the new fire vehicle. It should be done by December, possibly November. Ian is suggesting that we contract with a company to deliver it so that there are no mishaps in getting it here, and the company's insurance would cover it while in transit.

Streets/Equipment/Sanitation Committee

J Galbraith – Nothing to report

JErickson stated that a committee meeting was held. There has been clarification to the chain of command so that all DPW employees are clear. The chain starts with their supervisor and flows to the Manager/the committee/Council.

Also for clarification, all equipment still at the site of the old DPW building is available to sell for parts or trade. It has all been covered under the insurance and we are free to do with it what is best. It is not costing us anything.

JErickson also asked the question about lowering the amount of the emergency purchase power which was increased due to the fire and the need to make timely decisions.

Carlson is in favor of lowering the threshold, Pietila in agreement to lower to \$25k.

Sullivan suggested we get through the winter first and see how it goes, then drop it if it is feasible at that time. No action taken.

Discussion followed on the cost of a forklift /hook truck/mini roller/Lawn mower.

Jenich-Laplander asked if these are wants or needs. Lewis stated that the lift handler or forklift is a need, and JErickson stated that the roller is also a need to patch holes in the streets.

Property/Building/Ordinance Committee

JGalbraith – no report

W Pietila – no report

Ian Lewis – Ordinances are working well. The house that received its final notice has been torn down. Out of 66 complaints issued, only 3 are not resolved. There will be a final warning sent before they are referred to Court.

Community Relations Committee

Jenich-Laplender reported that she will reach out to the Gazette to possibly do a story on Roger Wetalainen retiring from the Laurium Village Fire Department. Ian stated that Representative Markkanen and Senator McBroom will do a proclamation.

JErickson asked about the Christmas Parade since Calumet Village has new leadership in their DDA. At this time, the Council suggests no parade.

Manager's Report

Ian Lewis reported that the audit is complete. We have one finding to be addressed, which is that we do not have a full-time accounting staff. Sue Sanford will act as our accounting staff.

The general fund grew by more than \$50k. There is currently \$2.6m in that fund, much of which will be used to build the new DPW building. The street funds have grown, and all funds are healthy. In the future, if funds continue to grow, the Village should consider decreasing millages, as that is the purpose. The general fund will fluctuate as the funds are spent for the new building. It is key to look at unassigned money – over \$500k, and the Village has added new features without decreasing our fund balances. We are no longer considered a 'financially distressed city' as we have had 3 positive years' worth of audits.

Ordinance Updates – There is one more property on Kearsarge street that needs to be demo'd. Ian is working with the owner who has run into some financial difficulties. The permits are valid for 2 years so Ian is hoping that the building will be down by summer. As long as the homeowner continues to communicate, he will work with her.

Fire Department Consolidation – Ian has met with Tim and Megan. Ian is working on a draft contract that can be reviewed by everyone involved. Everyone is on board – the managers will continue to meet and work on details.

Dan Zubiana is also in agreement. He has had some meetings with the Village and the Township departments regarding manpower. Calumet Twp will automatically come when the call comes in and will turn back if they aren't needed. If there is a structure fire, all three departments will respond. The officers of all three departments will come up with ideas that they'd like to see. They feel that they have a unique perspective and may know some things that councils may not. Eventually, the idea of having a consolidated department is very positive.

JErickson asked how this is being received by the volunteers. Dan Z stated that he had heard nothing negative.

Krista stated that she has heard negative comments. Some may be worried that they will not be accepted. Dan assured her that all firefighters must be certified and if they are, they will be welcomed into the new consolidated group.

Carlson asked what would happen if Laurium became a city? Ian explained that the contract that would be drawn up in such a way that would address that situation, meaning that as a city, Laurium would be required to continue to pay the same amount in taxes to support the Fire Department. Ian also stated that the draft agreement would state that anyone who is currently on the department will be on the new department. They are hoping to keep the number around 30.

Jenich-Laplander asked if we need to recruit, and are there resources out there? Dan stated that we really are looking for certain people. Not everyone can be a good firefighter. There is a lot of education and training involved and most of it doesn't have to do with actual fires. He feels that looking forward to a possible consolidation and eventual new building would be a recruiting tool.

Jenich-Laplander also asked if there are any in the UP. Ian and Dan suggested there are many in the state and some similar in the UP such as Franklin/Boston/Quincy and Iron River.

Lewis stated that they will continue to meet monthly and will report again in December.

DPW building – Ian reported that there was a glitch in the permitting of the new building. It was brought to the Village's attention by the county. The land for the Gipp Recreation area is owned by the Village but was never annexed so we are forced to follow Ho Co's zoning. There is a meeting on October 23rd that Ian will attend and asks as many council members as possible to attend as well, to as for a Special Use Permit. Then they can go on to get the building permits. Ian mentioned that there is \$60k in the contingency fund and it will all have to be used for the building/contents. Wes asked if they could create 'attic stock' and write it into the project. Ian will investigate the terms of the use of the insurance

funds.

Carlson asked if all of the new equipment has been entered into QModo. JERickson stated that it is not complete yet, but they have been tasked with it.

Sullivan asked if the dump trucks will be available when the time comes for snow removal. JERickson said they are done using them. Ian stated that the Village added 15k to the general fund for the hauling of dirt that the trucks were used for.

Unfinished Business

Capital Improvement Plan – Ian Raymond reported that the Planning Commission has been working on a Capital Improvement plan which includes projects that have a cost of \$25k or more and feasibility of 5 to 6 years. J Sullivan stated that each committee should meet and discuss any ideas they have that would fit that description. The Planning Commission so far has 4 projects: the ballfields, playground equipment, recycling which will be a mandate by 2031, a new police car. Questions came up about fiber optics, new turnout gear, electronic signage. The committees should fill out the application and return it to Ian L, Ian R, or John Sullivan and it will be submitted to the PC for scoring. The list will be maintained by the Planning Commission and as grants or other funding opportunities become available, etc. those plans will be available and may move up the list.

Sullivan explained that the PC does not go after the grants, they maintain the plan. It is a mandate for the PC to have the plan. I Raymond suggested that if anyone would like to have a planning group or bring the information for public input, that is possible as well. Pietila suggested trees for the park. I Lewis suggested that committee get together and submit.

I Raymond also mentioned that they are still in need of a ZBA member and there is a vacant seat on the Planning Commission for a non-resident. JERickson suggested Lorelei from Miller's who had been on the council before but had to resign when she moved out of the Village.

New Business

The plant will be turned on November 8th. They will spray on the 10th. It is a week sooner because we have a new crew and if we for some reason needed to redo the ice, we would still have time.

Jenich-Laplander asked about logos. Council is agreeable to logos on the ice.

Ice Rink Rental rates – Ian suggested an increase in the rental rates. He spoke with Jesse Patrick from the Hockey Association who agrees that they should be

increased. Ian proposes \$120/hour for hockey rental, Private rental \$150/hour, \$200 for 1.5 hours. Open skating will remain at \$3 with skate rental set at \$2
Motion by Jenich-Laplander Second by AErickson

Call Vote: Yes – 7; No – 0
Motion carried

A season pass for one person will be \$50 was tabled.

Old Business

The piece of float copper that was found during excavation for the new building can not be sold by the Village. We can not donate it. The third party who found it, can sell it and donate the proceeds back to the Village, which was his intent.

Announcements:

Trick or Treating at Gipp on 10/31. J Sullivan asked for a schedule to be sent out so Council members can sign up for a time to work. Volunteers are needed.

Meeting adjourned at 7:51 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

**Mary Pat Crampton, Clerk
Village of Laurium
October 22, 2025**