

**Laurium Village Council
Regular Meeting Minutes
August 19th, 2025**

Meeting called to Order by President Sullivan 6:01 pm/Recite Pledge

Roll Call:

Present:

**John Galbraith
Andrew Erickson
John Sullivan
Jeff Erickson (By Zoom)
Wesley Pietila
Krista Carlson (Late)**

Absent:

Jen Jenich-Laplander

Also Present:

**Ian Lewis, Village Manager
Mary Pat Crampton, Village Clerk
Kurt Erkkila , LVPD chief**

Approval of Regular Agenda

Motion by Galbraith Second by A. Erickson
Call Vote: Yes: 4, No: 0
Motion carried.

Approval of Meeting Minutes of Regular Meeting June 17 minutes

Motion by Pietila to approve 07/15/25 Minutes Second By AErickson
Call Vote: Yes: 4, No: 0
Motion carried

Submission of Bills

Moved down the agenda to allow for members to review.

Communications to the Council - None

Public Comments - None

Reports from Council Committees

Finance - No Report

Recreation/Parks/Beautification – J Erickson reported that the Men's League baseball has requested to expand to a second field. They would help pay for Gipp 3. It is the best field for drainage, but currently in the worst shape. The propose to have two double headers every Monday and Wednesday throughout the season and could host tournaments as well.

Sullivan noted that we will have to look at the financial aspects of it and have a meeting with the committee to discuss.

I Lewis asked how much it would cost. J Erickson reported about \$1000. He said that we already receive \$500 from Men's League and \$500 from Little League for upkeep annually. J Erickson suggested we could make a better infield, get some dump trucks of dirt for \$100/truckload and put up temporary fencing.

Sullivan mentioned that there is some fencing that is rolled up out there. Check on the condition of that fencing. Just need posts.

Lewis suggested that Gipp 3 is perfect for a redo. He'd like to see it done right, dug down and done the proper way. There has been discussion about starting to upgrade the fields anyway, and Gipp 3 could be the first, while we continue to work on the others over time.

J Sullivan stated that Delta Fence and Marquette Fence are coming to give estimates for other projects and could give an estimate on fencing for that field as well. That will happen in early September. He suggested they all get together at the fields and do an inventory of the needs.

JErickson reported that Bassett will be here to work on the Ice Arena the week after Labor Day. The plant is built and sitting on skids, they'll run pipe, and hook it up. Erkkila will do the wiring and get it up and going and tested.

The DPW will need to get the glycol out before Bassett gets here. It has to be dry when they come. AErickson asked if we have the equipment to complete the job. I Lewis stated that we do. Kalcich said we can use a transfer pump, and it will be put into barrels. I Lewis stated that we got the barrels free.

JErickson said the Village has accepted the price for Erkkila to run the electric for the Splash Pad. The shed is ready, and holds the pump room and a future concession stand. Cameras could be run in the summer. Sullivan agrees with the cameras for the safety of the Village and to guard against vandalism. AErickson asked about digging a trench now to put in internet cable. JErickson said that will be done. Lewis stressed that we need to protect this investment in the community.

(Carlson joined the meeting.)

JErickson stated that the concerts in the park are going well.

J Sullivan got a quote from Tamarack Tree service to trim hedges at Gipp Memorial. \$2700 to do it in the fall. I Lewis talked about doing it after the fountain is again operational. JS will bring questions back to Tamarack.

Motion by W. Pietila to accept the quote. No second, discussion followed. Tabled the vote until the next meeting.

Submission of Bills

John Galbraith reported merchant account bills of \$41,137.27 and Prepaid bills of \$111,509.28

Motion by Carlson, Seconded by A. Erickson

Call Vote: Yes: 5, No: 0

Motion carried

Public Safety/Fire Department

K Carlson – nothing to report. Kurt Erkkila reported that the department has

received the vests. Our new recruit graduated from the academy on August 15th and is currently out doing ride alongs. He did some prior to the academy so we are about 2 weeks ahead of schedule. He will do 4 – 6 weeks of training before going out on his own..

Carlson -Nothing to report on the Fire department.

I Lewis reported that pictures were received of the outer piece of the box of the new truck. Delivery is still expected by the end of the year.

Lewis also reported that he has been doing a lot of research on contracts for a proposed Fire Authority. The township and Cal village have been busy with events going on. Lewis says they will meet in September to discuss the potential of a Fire Authority. He would like to go to the meeting with as much prior knowledge as possible. He believes ours would be simpler than many contracts he has read because it is only 2 Villages and 1 Township. Copper City will also fall under it, though they have nothing to bring to the table but are part of the township.

J Sullivan asked for feedback following the initial discussions. Lewis expects to have some information for the next meeting.

Streets/Equipment/Sanitation Committee

Garbage pickup is going well.

J Erickson asked about remaining equipment needs. Lewis stated that we did not get the dual purpose vehicle that we were bidding on but that seems to be the way to go. With an uptick in dumpster usage (4 times last year's) we will need the bigger truck. Also, we will need a bigger truck to handle the hospital's garbage. We can get through the winter with the sander that we have . Lewis believes that our needs are met.

Sullivan asked about a plan for potholes. Lewis reported that he is going out and keeping a list of potholes' locations and they will begin hot patch in September. The DPW guys have asked about possibly purchasing a crusher to break up the old asphalt. There is money left in the equipment fund and the idea will be brought to committee.

Property/Building/Ordinance Committee

W. Pietila and A Ericson – Nothing to report

Ian Lewis reported that the DPW needs a quote for a larger door in the 6-door garage to move some equipment around. They need a 14-foot door that will cost between \$8k and 10K. W Pietila asked if it is just temporary and Lewis stated that it is. Lewis, Erickson, and Sullivan suggested that it is an improvement to a building that we own so there will be a return on investment for the Village.

Lewis also suggested that we get a quote to run gas to the building as we have heated it with electricity up until now. That will be too expensive in the future so he will work with Semco and reach out to the DPW and RC Mechanical to get the exact specs on what we will need.

Community Relations Committee – No Report

Manager's Report - Grant Update

Grants and other fundraising for the Splash Pad came in at about \$93,000. That should cover everything except the wages for the DPW, which we are paying anyway. It is more than expected. Numbers for the concrete are not in yet. The Parks and Rec budget was about 55k with 30k set aside for materials. We are spending the grant and donated funds first.

This will leave us with funding available for other projects.

Lewis is also continuing to work on ordinances – dangerous buildings and blight enforcement. From 50+ properties only 6 were actually issued tickets, and three of them have been cleaned up. The other three are out-of-state owners that we will have to track down.

There will be a hearing on one property on Lake Linden Avenue in September or October. The homeowner has neglected to do what he said he would do. There is a demo permit issued that is good until 10/2026.

Budget amendments were handed out to Council.

The Splash Pad line item of \$93,000 will offset revenues and expenditures

Sanitation - \$91,000 capital outlay (R) and Transfer from Sanitation Proceeds (E)

Sanitation - \$44,000 Garbage Cans – Changing line item from inventory to Expenditure

DPW Proceeds \$91,000 transfer to Sanitation

Motion to approve budget amendments by: W Pietila Second: J Galbraith

Vote: Yes – 5; No – 0

Motion carried

Unfinished Business - None

New Business

I Raymond reported on the Zoning Board of Appeals. They are looking for members to fill the positions. The positions needed are one member of the Council, one member of the planning commission which Sean Gohman has agreed to do, and one from the greater community. There is also a need for a second community member to act as an alternate.

Motion to accept S Gohman by W. Pietila Second by: J Galbraith

Vote: Yes – 5; No – 0

Motion Carried

Following further discussion Andrew Erickson volunteered to be the council member who sits on the ZBA.

Motion to accept A Erickson to ZBA by J Galbraith Second by K Carlson

Vote: Yes – 5; No – 0

Motion carried

J Sullivan reviewed the Capital Improvement Plan which was emailed to Council. Projects have been identified to be targeted within the next five years. They include Gipp Ice Arena/ Concession stand, recycling, moving the salt shed, upgrading the ball fields, redoing sidewalks, Public Safety vehicles. If you have ideas for more projects, please send them to I Raymond who is consolidating that information. Pietila asked about the pickleball courts and upgrades to the tennis courts.

Raymond reported that the Capital Improvement Plan is looking at projects within the bounds of \$10k.

Ian Lewis reminded the council that we are still in need of a community member to join the Planning Commission.

Rental Application Review – Raymond reported that the date for completing the rental apps has been changed from October 31 to June 1 when applying for a permit. Applications are capped at a percentage of the total housing units in the community.

We are still in need of a list of licensed contractors to do inspections, the fire chief will also inspect, and we will use the Houghton County Building inspector. Lewis reported that the goal is to get folks to comply, as they will not want to lose their additional revenue stream.

A Erickson asked what the avenue is for making STR's comply. Lewis stated that in many cases the Village can contact Vrbo or Airbnb and they will be delisted. If necessary, a civil suit can be filed against the owner. It is assumed that most often, only a letter from our attorney will be necessary.

Sullivan stated that the goal is to make all of them safe for everyone. Raymond stated that discussion will continue.

Sullivan asked a question about how long a permit would be revoked as the current application states 24 months. Lewis stated that within a certain period of time, if the upgrades were completed, it would be dropped.

This issue will be tabled until the September meeting to give council the opportunity to thoroughly consider it.

Old Business

An estimate has been submitted for trimming the trees at the Gipp Memorial in the amount of \$2600 by the Tamarack Tree Service. Lewis stated that in light of the budget for the Parks and Rec that won't be needed for the splash pad, there is money available to have the cedars trimmed.

J Sullivan will work with the tree service on a contract.

Motion by Pietila to enter into agreement to trim cedars Second by: A Erickson
Vote: Yes – 5; No – 0
Motion Carried

Announcements: None

Public Comment: None

Meeting adjourned at 7:00 pm

Respectfully Submitted,

**Mary Pat Crampton, Clerk
Village of Laurium
August 20th, 2025**