

VILLAGE OF SOUTH RANGE  
REGULAR MEETING  
February 05, 2026  
6:00 pm

The Regular Meeting of the Village of South Range Council was held on Thursday February 05, 2026 at the Village of South Range Community Hall; 45 Trimountain Avenue; South Range, MI 49963

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM. The following council members were present: President Eakin, Trustee Marier, Trustee Hill, Trustee Korby, Trustee Harkonen & Trustee Balma. There were 5 guests in attendance. Others present: Clerk Dorsey

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

There was not a public hearing at the meeting.

K Aho. further expressed her concerns with the current snowmobile route going through South Range on Trimountain Avenue. Future route plans are still in discussion but the South Range Council wants to help build a plan that will work for businesses and residents. Current upgrades and development are on hold. KEDA mentioned downtown development authorities that can assist communities to be better prepared at development projects and offer resources.

**MEETING MINUTES:**

MOTION made by Trustee Marier, with support from Trustee Balma to approve the January 08, 2026 Regular Meeting Minutes.

Roll call: Ayes: President Eakin, Trustee Hill, Trustee Harkonen, Trustee Korby

Nays: None. Abstain: None. MOTION CARRIED.

**STREET COMMISSIONER REPORT**

President Eakin presented the street commissioners report for February 2026. President Eakin reported that public works had been working extensively on snow removal and clearing all of the streets to maintain operations. Furthermore, a major water main had broken during the month of January. Public works worked extensive hours on the project to fix it.

**PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

President Eakin reported that Jenniffer Kelly from the Houghton County Courthouse had contacted him regarding who will be running for council at the next election. The South Range Council will have to discuss who wants to re-run and notify the courthouse with signatures by July 2026. Furthermore, the snow policy was updated. Trustee Korby motioned to change the snow policy. Trustee Hill seconded the motion.

Roll call: Ayes: President Eakin, Trustee Marier, Trustee Harkonen, Trustee Balma

Nays: None. Abstain: None. MOTION CARRIED.

#### CLERK REPORT:

Clerk Dorsey reported that the office has been working on end of the year taxes and finalizing amounts for the preliminary budget. The Village of South Range will have their new Auditors coming to the office in the summertime to replace the retired auditor. Checks payable were adjusted to a new format. Lastly, current CD's will have to be updated at the bank for future investments.

#### FIRE REPORT:

Chief Balma stated that the fire department had received a fire call that resulted in a 15 hour dispatch to Painesdale, Michigan. The home suffered a major loss. Nobody was hurt in the fire. A second call happened in South Range, Michigan. No fire was reported on scene. Chief Balma reported that the department will be replacing their current radio equipment with new equipment. On January 13 2026, SRFD had a meeting with the City of Houghton Fire Department involving UPPCO and procedures to handle electricity when fires happen. Lastly, the newest member of SRFD passed their firefighter 1. All members now have their qualifications.

#### FINANCIAL REPORT:

President Eakin inquired if there were any questions or concerns regarding the January 2026 bills. Trustee Harkonen motioned to approve payment of the bills, seconded by Trustee Balma. Bills totaling: \$52,661.73

Roll call: Ayes: Trustee Marier, Trustee Hill, Trustee Korby

Nays: None. MOTION CARRIED.

#### BUSINESS-UNFINISHED/NEW:

Future development for apartments and retail rebuild were discussed at the meeting. The Houghton County Brownfield Redevelopment Authority, along with FEDA, presented a Brownfield plan that will help assist the future project in finance and development at 37 Trimountain Avenue. Trustee Marier Motioned to approve the Brownfield plan, seconded by Trustee Balma.

Roll call: Ayes: President Eakin, Trustee Hill, Trustee Korby, Trustee Harkonen

Nays: None. Abstain: None. MOTION CARRIED.

Vacation Benefits were discussed at the meeting. It was stated that employees with over 15 years of service were originally offered 4 weeks of vacation time. It was observed that current employees with 15 years only receive 3 weeks. These current terms will be reviewed and addressed at a future council meeting.

A SEMCO franchise agreement was presented at the meeting. The agreement would grant SEMCO a franchise to conduct business in the Village. A franchise provides authorization for SEMCO to provide natural gas to Village residents. SEMCO currently provides natural gas service to the Village pursuant to a franchise granted approximately thirty years ago, but that franchise is expiring. SEMCO would like the Village Council to approve the new franchise that will take effect when the current franchise expires.

MOTION made by Trustee Korby, with support from Trustee Harkonen to approve the SEMCO franchise agreement.

Roll call: Ayes: President Eakin, Trustee Hill, Trustee Marier, Trustee Balma

Nays: None. Abstain: None. MOTION CARRIED.

CD renewal was discussed for the Village of South Range. Two CD's will expire in February. The village council voted to renew both CD's with the Miner's State Bank for 18 months at an interest rate of 3.71% and APY of 3.76%

MOTION made by Trustee Korby, with support from Trustee Balma to renew both CD's at the Miner's State Bank for 18 months at 3.71%

Roll call: Ayes: President Eakin, Trustee Hill, Trustee Marier, Trustee Harkonen

Nays: None. Abstain: None. MOTION CARRIED.

The preliminary budget was discussed at the meeting. The council requested an accounts balance sheet for the next meeting to review and vote on the budget.

Employee wages were discussed at the February meeting. The council voted to approve a 3% wage increase to all current employees beginning February 02, 2026.

MOTION made by Trustee Marier, with support from Trustee Balma

Roll call: Ayes: President Eakin, Trustee Hill, Trustee Korby, Trustee Harkonen

Nays: None. Abstain: None. MOTION CARRIED.

The meeting went into a closed session at 8:00 P.M.