## February 8, 2023 Regular Meeting

Present: Mayor Allen, Deputy Mayor Bob Ryan, Tr. Deb Alter, Tr. Bob Decker, Tr. Dan Schuttig, Tr. O'Malley. Village Attorney Alaina Finan.

Absent: Tr. Megan Walraed

Mayor opens meeting with Pledge of Allegiance and moment of silence.

MAYOR ALLEN announces appointment of Jasmine Salgado of Carey Avenue to the Hoosick Falls Police Dept and reads resolution aloud. Mayor and Board are very pleased with Jasmine's desire to become a law enforcement officer and welcome her to the Village.

RESOLUTION (attached) hiring Jasmine Salgado as a part time police officer for the Hoosick Falls Police Department by Tr. Decker, seconded by Dep. Mayor Ryan. ROLL CALL VOTE:

Tr. Decker: Yes
Tr. Alter: Yes
Dep. Mayor Ryan: Yes

Tr. Schuttig: Recuses himself

Tr. O'Malley: Yes Mayor: Yes

DEPUTY VILLAGE CLERK VANDERKAR swears in Jasmine Salgado by reading her the Oath of office.

MAYOR welcomes new Village Attorney Alaina Finan.

MAYOR announces Village election will be Tuesday, March 21<sup>st</sup> 2023 from noon to 9 p.m. at the Ann Bornt Municipal Bldg. Seats to be filled are 2 (2 year term) trustee seats, 1 (1 year term) trustee seat and 1 Mayor seat (2 year term). January 3<sup>rd</sup> was the first date individuals could start gathering signatures, the earliest the petitions could be filed was February 7<sup>th</sup> and the last day they can be filed with the Village clerk at the municipal building is February 14<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 p.m.

MAYOR announces Route 7 by Curtis Lumber has reopened after several weeks of round the clock construction. Mayor thanks all various DOT officials who took calls, answered questions, and gave us detailed progress updates. Specifically thanks Bryan Viggiana (Regional Public Information Officer) and Pat Barnes (Regional Director, Region 1) for availability and information. Also thanks Jay Wilson and Rich Crist both from Rensselaer County, the Hoosick Falls Police Department and NYState Police and RC Sherriff's office for assistance in traffic on the Hill Road. Also thanks JC Tractor and Doug's Oil for offering parking for local residents who los their on street parking.

MAYOR announces that the Village officially joined with Jasen Von Guinness to submit an application to Round 7 of the Restore NY Grant Program. Mayor thanks Jasen, Samantha Graves, Richard Brownell in submitting the grant as well as County Executive McLaughlin, RC Atty CJ Kempf, County Operations Director Rich Crist, and entire Rensselaer County Legislature, including local Jeff Wysocki and Bruce Patire.

MAYOR Updates on Woods Brook Flood Remediation Programs. We received a \$1,000,000 Buyout Grant program, also received a joint grant with the town for \$900,000 for remediation of the upstream waters, and the State (DEC) has allowed \$182,000 to design a flood plain restoration project. Buyout grant is all but closed out after the decorative (safety) fencing was installed today at 115 Main Street. We are working on the closeout currently. We have had our exit conference for the joint town/village grant which as been completed. Next step: we had a meeting with DEC/SLR Consulting to hear updates on the design work going on for possible next steps for flood plain improvements to the Woods Brook Area. New focus includes the Woods Brook area between Elm Street and the Army Corp of Engineers culvert, along Spring Street. Focus will be to apply for funding through the CFA program using the completed design work; applications are generally due in July.

MAYOR thanks DPW staff for installing the stop signs at the intersection of Elm Street and Railroad Avenue. Citizens had been concerned over the lack of stop signs and thank you to the research done by the board of trustees and getting it done.

MAYOR updates new water source/ROD update. We are still waiting for the companies and NYS to finalize their agreement and we are waiting for next step procedures. The companies and the village and their attorneys have already begun working on the design in the background while we wait for agreements to be final and in place.

## PEOPLE TO BE HEARD:

RICK TINKHAM: read things recently on Face book regarding \$450,000 financing for PFOA attorneys, asks for clarification of the actual situation around this. Tinkham is in real estate and states that people love Hoosick Falls but water and sewer bills are a concern.

MAYOR states that in early 2017 village had done work with Fitzgerald Baker Morris on PFOA situation, parted ways, they billed us in excess of \$600,000. The Village disputed these bills; we had a victory in court that was overturned which led to further litigation. Agree to settle and pay FMBF \$450,000. Mayor states he will do all that he can so that it won't be in the form of bond payments to the residents.

TR SHUTTIG states that there was a risk if we litigated that we may be possibly looking at a payback of \$1,000,000+ and also more legal costs, etc. and board did not want to chance that which is why we settled at the \$450K mark.

MARK SURDAM asks mayor as a resident and taxpayer in the village, that over the years the village has incurred a huge amount of legal debt and is the village going to go after the companies for reimbursement for these costs as PFOA was not the fault of anyone but the companies.

MAYOR and BOARD all in agreement that talks and litigation are always still ongoing with the companies as well as final numbers for the new water source and they are hopeful that something may be done to be reimbursed for legal fees. Through this whole process we have maintained legal rights to sue, as part of the ROD and are waiting to see numbers that they come up with for the next 30, 50, 100 years. Constantly consulting with environmental Atty. Dave Engel on this.

TR SHUTTIG also remarks at an article in newspaper regarding the small village of Cambridge NY recently doing an entire village wide septic system project. Cost was huge and is going to cost their approximate 700 taxpayers around \$1488/year each for a VERY long time and that doesn't include water. Village water/sewer bills are on avg \$300 to \$400 per qrtr which is only \$1200 per year for EVERYTHING. All communities have debt it is not just Hoosick Falls

TR ALTER states that people are confused because of the misleading statements and comments on Face book by people who don't necessarily know what is going on with the situation.

POLICE OFFICER IN CHARGE PAUL ALEKSONIS states that he has nothing further to add than his written report (attached) unless someone has questions.

DEP MAYOR RYAN asks how the ticketing for snow emergency has been going. Paul Aleksonis states that letters were handed out to people who were illegally parked this past storm explaining in detail how the law works. No tickets this time but there will be from now on now that they have been advised and know the expectations of the snow emergency law.

MOTION to accept police report by Dep. Mayor Ryan, seconded by Tr. Decker; all in favor, none opposed.

MARK SURDAM CODE ENFORCEMENT states he has nothing further to add to his written report (attached) and asks if there are questions. States met with new Village Attorney Alaina Finan and they will be working on updating cases, etc.

MOTION to accept Code Enforcement report by Tr. Decker, seconded by Tr. Alter; all in favor, none opposed.

MOTION to accept Treasurer's report by Tr. Alter, seconded by Tr. Decker; all in favor, none opposed.

MOTION to accept Clerk/Deputy Clerk report by Tr. Alter, seconded by Tr. Decker; all in favor, none opposed.

MOTION to accept Highway/DPW report by Dep. Mayor Ryan, seconded by Tr. Alter; all in favor, none opposed.

MOTION to accept Sewer report by Dep. Mayor Ryan, seconded by Tr. Alter; all in favor, none opposed.

MOTION to accept Water report by Tr. Decker, seconded by Tr. O'Malley; all in favor, none opposed.

MOTION to approve 1/3/23 special meeting minutes by Dep. Mayor Ryan, seconded by Tr. Decker; all in favor, none opposed.

MOTION to approve 1/4/23 special meeting minutes by Tr. Decker, seconded by Tr. Alter; all in favor, none opposed.

MOTION to approve 1/10/23 regular meeting minutes by Tr. Decker, seconded by Dep. Mayor Ryan; all in favor, none opposed.

MOTION to approve 1/11/23 special meeting minutes by Tr. Decker, seconded by Tr. Alter; all in favor, none opposed.

Special Meeting on 1/24/23 minutes will be approved at next regular meeting on March 8, 2023.

## TRUSTEE/COMMTTEE REPORTS

TR. DECKER submits a tentative plan (attached) on vacant storefronts to improve growth and improve property values for board review and discussion and input. Outlines a possible registration fee for vacant storefronts as an incentive to fix up properties and rent or sell instead of letting sit idle and deteriorate.

JOE LEVA comments that there is a lack of businesses and business storefronts, etc. to rent. Some plan would be good.

ATTY FINAN states spoke earlier with Mayor and Mark Surdam regarding the same and she is checking in to some things that she has been involved with in other communities regarding vacant/abandoned property registry (local level) she will get back to the village on that. States that there are some programs for tax exemption for business improvements and will let us know on that as well.

RICK TINKHAM state that NYSERDA and National Grid also have incentive programs that benefit businesses that do improvements.

MAYOR state that he is working on new village website and would like the website to allow an educational/informational section that would educate taxpayers on such programs and other information

BOARD thinks it is a great idea and starting point, will do further discussion

TR SHUTTIG asks Mayor Allen if 114 Church Street is a property up for foreclosure auction for Rensselaer County.

MAYOR ALLEN states that it is, it was not on the original list of properties to be auctioned but it is on the list currently to be auctioned.

TR SHUTTIG no new business to report

TR O'MALLEY speaks about parking study, old study no longer valid, needs to be redone, board will work with Atty. Finan to get her ideas and keep moving forward on parking study plans.

TR. ALTER asks if sidewalks in the downtown commercial could be plowed by village DPW staff as some property owners do not shovel their sidewalks as they are supposed to making it difficult for foot traffic to visit the neighboring stores.

DPW SUPT KEN HOLBROOK states that Paul Baker from HFCS comes with their sidewalk plow and starts at River Street bridge and progresses into the village and does certain sidewalks that will allow the size of the machine. Certain sidewalks are deteriorated or too small for the equipment to fit to plow. Shared services with the school has worked out great and I am waiting to try the equipment on various upcoming storms but we can't get to every sidewalk in the commercial area, do not have enough manpower or equipment.

BOARD discussion regarding possible Local Law mandating Sidewalk cleaning that is enforceable for everyone.

BOARD states that Tr. Alter, Tr. Walraed and Tr. Shuttig are overseeing reviewing and making suggestions on village local laws so they will be involved going forward in implementing and working on laws.

TR ALTER states she had one person come in to her business regarding her proposal to lower speed limit to 25 MPH and they were not for it and they lived in the town. Not much support for lowering the limit to 25 MPH.

MAYOR ALLEN will remove 25 MPH speed limit from future agenda.

DEP MAYOR RYAN updates on Real Term project. We did receive the evaluation report and they have started the bidding process. We need to set up a time to meet with Nadera to discuss the sensors and products we want to purchase in near future. LED

project may take a total of 2 years but at that point we will save approximately \$50,000/year on our street light electric bill, very worth it. Will have updated technology to dim certain lights, receive notifications when lights are out as well as many other features.

DEP MAYOR RYAN asks DPW Holbrook about repair bill from Family Danz asking if the rather large bill is to fix the dehumidifier in the Water Treatment Plant. Also, would it be possible to put sand on the Greenway Trail specifically at the end of the High Street Hill area?

DPW SUPT HOLBROOK says yes and invites the board to tour the plant to view the dehumidifier in the plant as well as look at the highway department trucks and equipment for ideas in the future of what needs to be replaced. Ken states he will get some sand put down at that location on the Greenway trail.

MOTION to appoint Election day poll workers: Joan Rogers, Marybeth Dickinson and Susan Coons with a gross payment of \$132.00 each for the day by Dep. Mayor Ryan, seconded by Tr. Alter; all in favor, none opposed.

RESOLUTION (attached) authorizing Mayor and Deputy Mayor to execute grant agreement extension on behalf of the Village of Hoosick Falls SAM Grant in amount of \$1,000,000 (WOODS BROOK BUYOUT grant) until April 28, 2023 by Tr. O'Malley, seconded by Tr. Shuttig.

ROLL CALL VOTE:

Tr. Decker: Yes
Tr. Alter: Yes
Dep. Mayor Ryan: Yes
Tr. Schuttig: Yes
Tr. O'Malley: Yes
Mayor: Yes

MOTION to enter Executive Session to discuss personnel and legal matters (with no business to be conducted at the conclusion of Executive Session) by Tr. Decker, seconded by Tr. Alter; all in favor, none opposed.

MOTION to end executive session by Tr. Decker, seconded by Dep. Mayor Ryan; all in favor, none opposed. Executive session ended at 8:45 p.m.

MOTION to adjourn by Tr. Decker, seconded by Dep. Mayor Ryan; all in favor, none opposed.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted: Judy VanDerKar Deputy Village Clerk