

Village of Hoosick Falls Board of Trustees
Minutes – June 15th 2023 Regular Meeting

Location: New Highway Garage – 7 Waterworks Road

The meeting was called to order at 6:05PM with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

Roll Call was conducted by Mayor Allen. Present: Mayor Allen, Deputy Mayor Ryan, Trustee Alter, Trustee Decker, Trustee O’Malley, Trustee Sauer, Trustee Schuttig. Also present: Village Attorney Alaina Finan.

A public hearing was opened for Proposed Local Law A of 2023 - a local law establishing a vacant and abandoned building registry, and discussion commenced. Kay Powers and Barbara Ziel asked some questions about the proposed Local Law. Trustees Decker, Schuttig, and Ryan and Attorney Finan explained details of the proposed law further. Trustee O’Malley asked about some possible scenarios of concern, and Attorney Finan and CEO Surdam addressed how the law would work and would catch many scenarios, but not all.

Mayor Allen explained the public notice error with noticing it for 6/14, switching the meeting to 6/15 due to some availability issues for members, and requested that the public hearing remained open until next meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & CORESPONDANCES *(The Mayor moved this up ahead of Executive Session discussions)*

1. Kay Powers, Trustee of the Cheney Library: she discussed some of the recent history and had an annual report for the Board. Items she highlighted:
 - October 21st, 2023 - \$15 person/\$25 couple celebrating the 100 year anniversary.
 - She talked through the constant evolution of the Library, including before and coming out of the Covid-19 pandemic. They have been successful with many grants they have obtained.
 - They have a great librarian who is very adapt at technology.
 - Their Website and Facebook page are available for info, and the Facebook page in particular is updated quite a bit.
2. Barbara Ziel from Cheney Library brought some requests to the Board.
 - They are in the middle of a 3-4 year garden project.
 - The Library’s tax-based money covers programming, staff, and operating incomes. This is separate.
 - Throughout Covid, their programming has suffered greatly. Young children programming is increasing now, but most others remain low.
 - Last fall, they came up with a 3-4 year plan/program to upgrade the yard and exterior beauty.
 - Annual \$4k budget for garden. Great fundraising and donations of supplies. This year has been about getting excess outdoor things cleared out.

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- Aside from the garden, there are issues with the hill and drainage. The \$4k has gone to addressing this.
 - Upper Hudson Library Program has a grant that they are going for – not for gardening specifically, but for other items, such as safety, susceptibility, sustainability, and programming. Focus on the garden project is a storage shed (instead of downstairs storage) and outdoor programming that can later shift into interior programming. Another focus is lighting improvements. Final item is 2 wireless security cameras. Deadline for grant is August 1st. 75% match maximum; 25% is on Cheney. Total bill for brick shed, programming space, new lights, and security cameras is around \$35k. 25% of that would be \$8,750, with hope of \$26k coming from the grant.
 - Any additional funds raised for this will go to more stabilization on the hill.
 - Some questions and discussions from the Trustees about projects, grant writing, and future plans.
3. The Mayor and Board thanked them for coming to share with the Board, and commented on the great work being done there, particularly outside.
 4. The Mayor shared an announcement regarding an event the Alliance Church is holding in Wood Park on July 23rd, 2023, as noted on the agenda.
 5. The Mayor noted with apologies that he neglected to include the resolution for appointing the Village Clerk from the agenda, even though it was addressed in the Mayor Updates.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Motion by Trustee Sauer, seconded by Trustee Decker to move into Executive Session. **Unanimous.** Entered Executive Session at 6:45PM.

Motion to end Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter by Trustee Ryan, seconded by Trustee Schuttig to end Executive Session. **Unanimous.** Executive Session ended at 7:30PM.

One additional announcement – the Mayor thanks Hoosick Falls Central School for the donation of some wooden chairs that the school was excessing, and thanks Kenny and his crew for his work on the chairs.

MAYOR UPDATES (*italics come directly from Agenda*)

1. **Appointment of new Village Clerk** – *For the past couple of weeks, the Village has been without a Village Clerk, as our former clerk Marie O’Neil retired from the position at the end of May. On the agenda this evening is a resolution to appoint the new Village Clerk. The Board has chosen **Clarissa Mango** as the new Village Clerk for the Village of Hoosick Falls. Clarissa will officially start in her role on July 10th.*
 - a. *The Board wants to extend their thanks to Treasurer Denise McMahon and Deputy Clerk Judy VanDerKar for keeping the Village Office working without a Village Clerk and taking on the additional workload for the past couple of weeks, as well as our part-time data entry clerk Janet Davendonis, who has been (and will continue to) assistance in the office when available.*

Trustee O’Malley additionally thanks Marie O’Neil not just for her work for the Village, but for her community, organizing the parade, Toys for Tots, and more.

2. **Appointment of a new Chief of Police for the Hoosick Falls Police Department** – *On the agenda tonight is a Resolution to appoint Tim Colaneri as the new Chief of Police. Tim, Colaneri, a*

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recently retired Detective from the Troy Police Department, brings a great deal of experience and a passion to serve the community to his role as the Chief of Police.

- a. The Board wants to thank **Officer-In-Charge Paul Aleksonis** for leading the Hoosick Falls Police Department for the past 18 months. We are grateful for his leadership and commitment to the Police Department and our community.*
- 3.** *Water Improvement Grant Pursuit: For over a year, the Village has worked with Delaware Engineering to pursue multiple avenues of state and federal grant monies for water infrastructure improvements. The full scope of the project would, among other things, include water storage improvements, replacing older water lines, and installing new water mains. Most of the requirements for funding for water infrastructure improvements include an Engineering Report (which is complete) and a Bond Resolution (on tonight's agenda) for the maximum estimated project cost (\$7M). By moving forward with this Bond Resolution the Village is not setting a requirement to definitively take on a \$7M Bond, but merely setting up the possibility to do so. It is not the Board's intention to move forward with substantial debt, nor are we setting a requirement to do all aspects of this project. On the contrary, we are moving forward with a path that would qualify the Village for substantial state and federal financial awards to fund these improvements.*

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

No one wanted to address the Board.

REPORTS

- Police Report – initially skipped due to OIC Aleksonis being out on a call.
- Code Enforcement Report
 - Deputy Mayor Ryan asked about a permit for a particular location that has been doing work.
 - Trustee Decker asked about 15 Spring Street, which CEO Surdam mentioned is likely bank owned.
 - Trustee Alter talked about 18 John Street. After discussion about the Village's previous approach to demolish unsafe structure, **a MOTION was made by Trustee Alter, seconded by Trustee Decker to put out to bid demolition of 18 John Street, based on Engineer Cottrell's reports and the lack of work since the previous Engineering report.** Discussion ensued about the negative state of the building as well as the items that are in it. **Unanimous.**
 - Trustee O'Malley thanked CEO Surdam for getting a lot of unmaintained lawns taken care of and some cars removed.
 - Deputy Mayor Ryan brought up a property on the corner of Waterworks Road. Trustee Decker brought up a property on Church Street.
 - Trustee O'Malley asked about a previous property the Village sold to an individual and if there were stipulations on the repair. Mayor Allen said he would review the record and follow up.
 - Lots of discussion about several other properties.
 - **Motion** to approve the report by Deputy Mayor Ryan/Trustee Decker. **Unanimously approved.**

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- Treasurer – **Motion** to approve by Trustee Decker, Seconded by Trustee O’Malley. **Unanimously approved.**
- Clerk/Deputy Clerk – **Motion** to approve by Trustee Decker, Seconded by Trustee Alter. **Unanimously approved.**
- Highway/DPW –
 - Trustee O’Malley asked about sidewalks that were left undone by the culvert on Main Street that needed to be repaired. Kenny says it is on the list of things Pat is going to be in to take care of. Had hoped to do it soon. Trustee O’Malley asked about a sidewalk near the Town Park in front of the old ice cream/pizza location. Kenny said he would look into that situation.
 - Deputy Mayor Ryan asked about the Excavator purchase. Mayor Allen said we were fairly certain that wasn’t purchased as part of the Woods Brook Buyout program, meaning the Board would be able to decide. Trustee Decker said he would get into it.
 - **Motion** to approve the report by Trustee Decker/Trustee Alter. **Unanimously approved.**
- Sewer – **Motion** to approve the report by Trustee Decker/Trustee Alter. **Unanimously approved.**
- Water – Trustee Decker discussed the results of the county inspection.
 - Trustee Decker also talked about the community garden and how to manage giving water to them without leaving things on or causing issues. DPW Superintendent suggested that there is an unused 500-gallon water tank that could be used. Additionally the Water Operators wanted to thank Kenny and Bruce for the hydrant flushing assistance.
 - **Motion** to approve the report by Trustee Decker/Trustee Ryan. **Unanimously approved.**

MINUTES – Mayor Allen said that there were no minutes ready due to the changeover in the office, and we will have the Minutes ready for review soon and on the agenda for the next

TRUSTEE/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Trustee Sauer:

- **NY Forward Grant update:** Application info isn’t out yet, but they are moving on it. Deb and Doug met to discuss items they noticed on the winning applications. They will continue to meet regularly. Doug brought up the strong consensus to go after the Oak Mitsui property. Mayor Allen would follow up with Dave Engel on the property.
- A lengthy discussion occurred regarding the Cataneo Properties along lower Classic Street as a target for Eminent Domain, due to safety concerns and as a positive for a future NY Forward Application. Alaina said she would pursue this direction and get back to the Board.

Trustee Decker: Question about unused Vacation time due to unforeseen circumstances. General approval from Board but we need details for the motion and will look to do it next week/next meeting.

- Bobby Decker discussed an issue with a pump, and an \$11,000 repair.
- Bobby Decker also discussed the need for the humidifier. We’ve repaired it twice over the past two years. Possible approaches for \$17k or \$22k.

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- Backwash water pump for WTP wastewater from skids – looks like another \$18k.
- Priorities are the backwash pump. Bottom line - \$55k in maintenance costs that were unforeseen.

Trustee Schuttig – reviewed some of the local laws. Also stressed the importance of getting the word out on a lot of this discussion. The Employee Handbook is making progress. Trustee Sauer stressed that these types of law improvements will translate well to the NY Forward Grant.

Trustee Alter – Good progress with older local laws and looking forward to digitizing with the new Clerk. Saturday is the dedication of new windows at the Wood Block. Hoosick Rising is looking to add metal grates where some do not exist at the base of some of the small trees on John Street. Café tables are out and look great.

Trustee O'Malley – Parking study is under way. Discussed the point/intersection at Church Street/Main Street. Kevin also thanked Terri Burdick, the American Legion, the Community Band, all Scouting groups, and all involved in Flag Day.

Discussion from many about some citizens who do great things for the community, whether it be community service, doing great things for the community, etc.

Deputy Mayor Ryan – everything he was going to bring up has already been discussed.

OLD BUSINESS

Discussion/Review of ARPA fund status. Reviewed status of funding, including addition of Parking Study and discussed WTP repairs from last month's meetings. Looking to discuss this further with a full list of items, needs, and/or quotes, including repairing the handicapped ramp to the Municipal Building, redoing the Municipal Building bathrooms, etc.

CEO Surdam reminder the Board about the need to act on correcting a survey of Burgess Hills Estates Lots 5, 6, & 7 as provided to the Village by Attorney Donald Tate, and reviewed by Village Attorney Finan. **Motion to approved the corrected survey of Burgess Hills Estates Lots 5, 6, & 7, by Trustee Sauer, seconded by Trustee Decker. Passed unanimously.**

NEW BUSINESS

Discussion regarding the Fourth Ward playground led by Trustee Alter. Kenny has taken care of some things but there remain safety concerns. The Board shared information about the history of the park and concerns. Trustee Alter agreed to meet with Kenny and the Mayor to discuss further items on site.

Discussion regarding a request by Denise to make a correction on property tax bills. **Motion** to approve the application for correction of multiple-parcel errors on village property tax bills (*Rensselaer County did not calculate the cold war exemptions properly. The 12 bills were corrected and sent to the property owners along with a letter from Rensselaer County tax director Deborah McGrath*) made by Trustee Sauer, Seconded by Trustee Alter. Passed unanimously.

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Proposed Local Law B of 2023, a Local Law disallowing “junk vehicles” in the Village of Hoosick Falls under certain circumstances and establishing penalties for offenses.

- **The proposed Local Law was introduced by Trustee Schuttig, seconded by Deputy Mayor Ryan.**
- Trustee Schuttig and CEO Surdam spent some time explaining the details of the Local Law.
- **Motion to set a public hearing on the proposed local law for July 12th 2023 at 6PM** was made by Trustee Decker, seconded by Deputy Mayor Ryan. **Passed unanimously.**

Proposed Local Law C of 2023, a Local Law Establishing a Property Maintenance Code for the Village of Hoosick Falls.

- **The proposed Local Law was introduced by Trustee Schuttig, seconded by Deputy Mayor Ryan.**
- Trustee Schuttig explained the general details of the proposed local law.
- **Motion to set a public hearing on the proposed local law for July 12th 2023 at 6PM** was made by Trustee O’Malley, seconded by Trustee Sauer. **Passed unanimously.**

Water Storage and Water Main Replacement Project

- **RESOLUTION** authorizing water system improvements in and for the Village of Hoosick Falls, Rensselaer County, New York, at a maximum estimated cost of \$7,000,000 and authorizing, subject to maximum estimated cost of \$7,000,000 serial bonds of said Village to pay the cost thereof. **Resolution was introduced by Deputy Mayor Ryan and seconded by Trustee O’Malley.**
- Trustee O’Malley clarified details of the situation and made sure that, should we not get all of part of the money, we can decide what to cut back. Mayor Allen confirmed this, and stated that this is not a requirement to do any or all of this, but this step needs to be complete for the various grants we are pursuing.
- **Roll Call Vote; the resolution Passed unanimously.**

- **RESOLUTION** Approving a WIIA Funding Application regarding Lead Removal and Water Storage Upgrades. **Resolution was introduced by Trustee Schuttig and seconded by Trustee Sauer.**
- **Roll Call Vote; the resolution passed unanimously.**

RESOLUTION appointing a Police Chief for the Village of Hoosick Falls Police Department.

- **The Resolution was introduced by Deputy Mayor Ryan, seconded by Trustee O’Malley.**
- **Roll Call Vote; the resolution passed unanimously.** Timothy Colaneri is officially the new Chief of Police of the Hoosick Falls Police Department, effective July 1st.

RESOLUTION appointing a Village Clerk for the Village of Hoosick Falls.

- The Resolution was introduced by Deputy Mayor Ryan, seconded by Trustee O’Malley. Roll Call vote.
- The resolution passed unanimously. Clarissa Mango is officially the new Village Clerk, effective July 10th.

Discussion regarding Cheney Library was tabled until the next meeting.

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Motion to enter Executive Session to discuss personnel matters (with no business to be conducted at the conclusion of Executive Session) made by Trustee Sauer, seconded by Deputy Mayor Ryan. **Passed unanimously.** Executive Session began at 9:34PM.

Motion to end Executive Session by Trustee Decker, seconded by Trustee Ryan. **Passed unanimously.** Executive Session ended at 9:51PM.

Motion to adjourn by Trustee Decker, seconded by Trustee Alter. **Passed unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 9:51PM.