

Village of Hoosick Falls Board of Trustees

Minutes – August 16th 2023 Regular Meeting

Location: New Highway Garage – 7 Waterworks Road

The meeting was called to order at 6:03PM with the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silence.

Roll Call was conducted by Clarissa Mango. Present: Mayor Allen, Deputy Mayor Ryan, Trustee Alter, Trustee O'Malley, Trustee Sauer, Trustee Schuttig. Also present: Chief of Police Tim Colenari and Deputy Clerk, Judy VanDerKar. Absent: Trustee Decker and Village Attorney Alaina Finan.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & COORESPONDANCES

1. Jim Monahan of the Town of Hoosick Rescue Squad was present at the meeting and gave a positive update to the board. The meeting on July 27th with CVR was very productive. Going forward, they will be collaborating with all local squads for successful coverage, shared services and group purchasing. However, funding is, and has always been, an issue. Right now, 66% of EMS are volunteer and only 33% are actually paid by the town. It would be a very positive impact to see an increase in the paid percentage of rescue squad members – and to do so they would have to look in to more fundraising, donations and also insurance claims. Jim finished with a big thank you, and plans to return in the fall to let the Village Board know where the rescue squad stands. As always, he is open to any questions, ideas, improvements, etc.

MAYOR UPDATES (*Italics come directly from agenda*)

1. **Landfill Leachate** – LABELLA
2. *New Wells and Water Supply Update (OU-2 – as required by DEC's Record of Decision)*
 - a. *DEC Fact Sheet published today*
 - b. *Informational Update on progress made and the projected work/schedule*
3. *Former Oak Mitsui/First Street site – Village's intention to pursue acquisition of the property*
4. *Veteran's Banner's in the Village of Hoosick Falls – The Village is teaming up with Kevin Miller of Rensselaer County Veteran Affairs to work towards getting Veteran Banners hung within the Village. Trustee Bobby Decker is taking this on for the Village, with our thanks, and support.*
5. *Former Monolith Solar/now SunLight General Solar Panels – informational update*

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6. *Water Infrastructure Grant Applications with Delaware Engineering – the grant applications have been submitted to both the DWSRF (Drinking Water State Revolving Fund) and the WIIA (Water Infrastructure Improvement).*

7. *Murphy Building/Senior Center –*

a. *All correspondences regarding the situation are available for review at the meeting and remain available on the Village website, including the Inspection Report on the building that Rensselaer County leadership continues to misrepresent in social media posts.*

b. *Apart from any information that the County posts on their social media page, the*

Village has no further information or updates on the Murphy Building. The County has signaled via social media that they hope to reopen the downstairs as soon as next week, but that remains their decision. Any questions regarding the condition and a re-opening of the downstairs should be directed to Rensselaer County.

c. *The County has stated they are now focused on bringing a state-of-the-art facility to the newly purchased former Dollar Tree in the Town of Hoosick.*

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD

- Harold Stevens, who resides on Wilder Avenue, approached the board wanting to discuss the idea of having residents be responsible for maintaining (i.e., snow removal) their sidewalks during the winter. The board, in response, brought up having to look into the requirements/legality this would entail. Also discussed was the amount of equipment and personnel this would require.
 - A second topic of discussion that Mr. Stevens brought to the board's attention was cats. There is an abundance of free roaming cats around the village. They can be intrusive in people's flower beds and on their property; and also, they can be very smelly. Should Animal Control be notified?
- Marian Stevens, who resides on Wilder Avenue, approached the board about the concern of the rough road conditions on lower Wilder Avenue. Kenny Holbrook, from the Highway Department, was present at the meeting and informed Mrs. Stevens that he has done some patchwork repair. However, he has struggled to get black top because it depends on how much is produced. Also, weather conditions play a factor in street repair.
- Joe Leva, who resides on Main Street, approached the board about Local Law A, regarding vacant/abandoned properties in the village, and wanted to discuss the definition of vacancy.

REPORTS

Police Report

- There was a meeting held at Hoosick Falls Central School. The chief, along with several officers, were able to meet with the new superintendent. The officers also took a walk through the school.
- The Police Department has joined with the Cambridge Police Department to provide mutual aid during emergencies. For example, if there is a lockdown at either school, the other village's Police Officers will provide aid to that school.
- Chief Colenari discussed the matter of the police vehicles. Two of the patrol vehicles are out of service. Upstate Auto currently has 12 cruisers, from a police department in Pennsylvania (2014/2015), that are in good shape. They were mostly used for highway patrol with regularly scheduled maintenance. He suggested to have Barber & Fricke check out the cars. They are listed for \$12,000 each, but we could negotiate a lower price. Compared to the cost of a new cruiser, which go for around \$56,000, this is something that would be worth pursuing.
- **ARPA** funds have been suggested for the purchase of new police vehicles. Also, the Chief brought to the board's attention Rensselaer's new evidence camera system that will be ready to go in January. The cost is free as long as we show our support. With this system, the officers will be able to keep a better log/track of evidence. It is also shared intel and evidence – everything is attached to one big document, so all departments would be working together. North Greenbush Police Department, Rensselaer City Police Department, and the Sheriff's Department are already on board. There is a plan B system that does cost money.
- There will need to be a letter of intent expressing support of this new system.
- Also discussed, the increase of VT plates on cars around the village.

Motion to approve the Police Report by Deputy Mayor Ryan, seconded by Trustee Schuttig.
Unanimously approved.

Code Enforcement Report

- The unsafe structure at 18 John Street, that has been declared unsafe, was brought to attention. Also, the matter of the abandoned car that sits adjacent to the building needs to be dealt with as well. Both are owned by the same owner. Mark Surdam will work with Attorney Alaina Finan to get a letter out regarding this matter.
- The bench warrant for Mr. Farrara, owner of 59 Classic Street, of which he has failed to appear, needs to be addressed. There are multiple layers playing in to this situation and it was suggested that Mark Surdam sit and meet with the Chief and Attorney Alaina Finan, to sort this issue out and collectively be on the same page.

Motion to approve the Code Enforcement report by Trustee Alter, seconded by Deputy Mayor Ryan.
Unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report – Motion to approve by Trustee O'Malley, seconded by Deputy Mayor Ryan.
Unanimously approved.

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Village Clerk/Deputy Clerk Report – Motion to approve by Deputy Mayor Ryan, seconded by Trustee Alter. **Unanimously approved.**

Highway Department Report:

- Trustee O'Malley expressed his thanks and gratitude for the continued work of the department and the summer help. It means a lot to the village, the park and the aesthetics around the village look great! Trustee Alter also stated that Jackson Street Park looks beautiful as well!
- Kenny has had trouble getting in touch with Pat Bakaitis regarding the sidewalks on Main Street.

Motion to approve the Highway Department report by Trustee Schuttig, seconded by Trustee Alter. **Unanimously approved.**

Sewer Department report – Motion to approve by Deputy Mayor Ryan, seconded by Trustee Sauer. **Unanimously approved.**

Water Department Report:

- The department is looking into additional water sold for the month of July.

Motion to approve the Water Department Report by Trustee Schuttig, seconded by Trustee Alter. **Unanimously approved.**

MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes from the July 12th Regular Meeting by Trustee Alter. Seconded by Trustee Sauer. Deputy Mayor Ryan abstained due to the fact that he was not present for July's meeting. **All other present board members approved.**

Motion to approve the minutes from the emergency meeting held August 7th by Deputy Mayor Ryan. Seconded by Trustee Alter. **Unanimously approved.**

TRUSTEE/COMMITTEE REPORTS

Trustee Sauer

- The NY Forward Grant letter of inquiry is due by Friday, August 18th, 2023. The proposal for the grant is due September 29th. The new contract will cost \$2,000, and will come out of the Economic Fund.
- The first Local Planning Committee meeting will be held August 29th. There has been a lot of interest expressed in this committee. Other members of the board suggested the idea of appointing 3 or 4 people without a conflict of interest (i.e. their properties aren't affected) as a sort of a review board for the committee.

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- There also needs to be a community meeting scheduled for input before the board can vote to finalize this.
- There are four areas to work on strengthening that could be included in the proposal for the NY Forward Grant:
 - Green emissions/climate change
 - Solar energy
 - Gardens/art/culture/open public spaces – Oak Mitsui and the Hall Street location were suggested as areas that could be used for this.
 - Lighting – there are many areas around the village that lack sufficient lighting, such as, the greenway and the street that many people walk at night, between the Sandbar and Unihog.

Trustee Decker – Absent.

Trustee Schuttig

- Discussed creating a Local Law regarding a loading zone for Hoosick Provisions on the corner. This will be introduced at the special meeting, August 30th.
- Curb cut/sidewalk law – will ask Attorney Alaina Finan regarding this matter. There has been an issue with residents removing part of the curb/sidewalk on their property. What are the specifications/regulations on how to go about this and get it approved.

Trustee Alter:

- The progress on Jackson Street playground is looking great!
- Megan Albert, head of the Historic Preservation Committee, has finally filed the last open seat on the committee. Their first meeting will be held in the board room, Monday, August 21st at 6pm!
- Christmas decorations – we should be thinking about what we will need to order soon because we don't want to wait to place and order. Trustee Alter will work with Kenny and Denise to see what is in the budget, and get back to us.
- Stewart's has already made arrangements to purchase a few properties for their desired new location between Main Street and Church Street, along Willard Street. The Board should possibly consider being proactive to try and stay in the loop for their future plans.
- Trustee Alter and the Mayor took the time to finally gather and organize the Local Laws!

Trustee O'Malley

- No Smoking Signs – Trustee O'Malley contacted the Capital District Tobacco Coalition; they have offered to send us 4 signs for temporary use until the board approves which template with the Village's logo they want to choose.
- Local laws regarding curb cuts and sidewalks.
- All summer events have been very well attended!

Deputy Mayor Ryan

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- Thanks for Kenny for always either being one step ahead or quick to respond when asked to do anything!
- Village Greenway – No motorized vehicles are allowed. There are signs posted that state this. It might also be worth discussing electric bikes not be permitted as well. We don't want anyone to get run-over!

OLD BUSINESS

- There was a discussion/review of ARPA funds, previously, during the police report.
- The discussion regarding Cheney Library's request for funding from the June meeting has been tabled until the next regular Village Board meeting, September 13th.

NEW BUSINESS

Water Supply Development

- **RESOLUTION** authorizing the payment of invoices through a third-party funded escrow account pertaining to the development of new water supply wells and associated infrastructure for the Village. **Motion** to approve by Trustee Sauer, seconded by Deputy Mayor Ryan. **Roll Call Vote; passed unanimously.**
 - *Note: this is the 2nd resolution using this approach to pay for Engineering and Legal fees specific to the Village's review and participation in the production of two new wells and a new water supply line required by DEC's Record of Decision. These payments come out of an Escrow Account funded by Honeywell and Saint-Gobain, as per an agreement between the Village and the companies from May of 2023. The previous resolution was at the 7/12 Meeting.*

Motion to authorize the Mayor to sign and send a letter to NYS Office of Cannabis Management in support of Loving Buds LLC, for a Cannabis Growers Showcase on August 26th in Wood Park as per the Cannabis Growers Showcase Guidance policy, retroactive to August 10th, 2023 (note: when the originally scheduled August 9th Board Meeting was moved, it was moved past the August 10th deadline for the letter to be received). **Motion** to approve by Trustee Sauer, and seconded by Deputy Mayor Ryan. **Roll Call Vote; passed unanimously.**

Motion to authorize the Mayor to execute an agreement between the Village, LaBella, and Sterling Environmental to authorize work on the Landfill Leachate pumps estimated to cost between \$15,000 and \$20,000, retroactive to August 9th, 2023 (*note: LaBella and Sterling Environmental were ready to move forward after the originally scheduled August 9th Board Meeting, and waiting to the newly schedule August 16th Regular Meeting week would have caused even longer delays*). **Motion** to approve by Trustee Alter, seconded by Deputy Mayor Ryan. **Roll Call Vote; passed unanimously.**

RESOLUTION authorizing the sale of certain surplus village equipment. **Motion** to approve by Trustee Sauer, seconded by Trustee Alter. **Roll Call Vote; passed unanimously.**

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MOTION to schedule a Special Meeting for Wednesday, August 30th at 6PM. **Motion** to approve by Trustee Sauer, seconded by Deputy Mayor Ryan. **Roll Call Vote; passed unanimously.**

MOTION to reschedule the public hearing related to the unsafe structure at 18 John Street to Wednesday, August 30th at 6PM at the Village Highway Garage. **Motion** to approve by Deputy Mayor Ryan, seconded by Trustee Sauer. **Roll Call Vote; passed unanimously.** (*This is a matter that was previously discussed during the July 2023 regular board meeting, pertaining to Local Law 1 of 2008*).

Motion allowing the Mayor to execute a letter of intent for the NY Forward Grant. **Motion** to approve by Trustee Sauer, seconded by Deputy Mayor Ryan. **Roll Call Vote; passed unanimously.**

Motion authorizing the NY Forward Grant proposal cost of \$2,000 to be taken out of the Economic Fund. **Motion** to approve by Trustee Alter, seconded by Deputy Mayor Ryan. **Roll Call Vote; passed unanimously.**

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 Trustee Alter. **Passed unanimously.** Executive Session began at 8:27PM.

Motion to end executive session by Ryan, seconded by Alter. All in favor. Ended at 9:18.

Motion to adjourn by Ryan, seconded by Alter. All in favor. Ended by 9:18.

*Respectfully submitted by
Clarissa Mango
Village Clerk
8/16/2023*