

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF BALLSTON SPA, NY held on April 10, 2023.

Present: Mayor Rossi, Trustee Kormos, Trustee Baskin Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, Trustee Raymond, Village Clerk O'Connor, Village Administrator Moskowitz, Attorney Davis

1) Call to Order

2) Pledge to the Flag

3) Public Hearing – FY2023-24 Tentative Budget (Limit of 3 Minutes per Speaker)

Jared Iacolucci, 24 Chapman Street asked why rezoning isn't being pursued more aggressively in the budget and thinks that now is not the time to increase event funding.

Donna Martin of 20 Chesterwood Court thanked the Board for not taking a pay increase.

Rory O'Connor, 90 Grove Street complimented the Mayor and Treasurer for their detailed budget. Mr. O'Connor pointed out that events not only benefit our children, but also create publicity.

There was no more public comment.

Motion made by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, seconded by Trustee Baskin to close the Public Hearing at 7:10pm.

Trustee Baskin-yes Trustee Raymond-yes Trustee VanDeinse-Perez-yes
Trustee Kormos-yes Mayor Rossi-yes

Motion Passed

4) Minutes

Motion made by Trustee Kormos, seconded by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez that the minutes of the 03/13/23 meeting be approved with a typo on Trustee VanDeinse-Perez's comment on motion "H" corrected.

Ayes All

Motion made by Trustee Baskin, seconded by Trustee Kormos that the minutes of the 03/27/23 meeting be approved.

Trustee Baskin-yes Trustee Raymond-abstained Trustee VanDeinse-Perez-yes
Trustee Kormos-yes Mayor Rossi-yes

Motion Passed

5) Mayor Announcements

There were none.

6) Liaison Reports

Trustees Kormos and Raymond met with CDTA regarding the possible changes to some of our bus stops. Public input will be sought at a later date.

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez reported that Chamber music will be added to Brookside Museum if the arts grant application is approved.

Trustee Baskin shared that Arbor Day will be celebrated with a tree planting on 4/29 in Kelley Park

The Park and Tree Board is looking for new members.

Trustee Raymond noted that the DPW has been busy preparing Front Street for milling and repaving.

7) Treasurer's Report (attached)

Mayor Rossi announced that Treasurer Bartlett will be leaving in early May, and we are in the process of looking for a new treasurer.

Deputy Treasurer Melissa McCann will be starting this week and will work 17.5 hours per week.

8) Presentations

a) Budget (Trustee Kormos)

Trustee Kormos has concerns about the use of funds from the possible sale of Woods Hollow, fund balance and the structuring of water funds.

Trustee Kormos proposed removing all funding for the sidewalk/apron needed at Union Fire Co. #2, reducing funding for Celebrations, our contribution to the seniors and Arts and increasing funding for Parks and Trees

b) Budget (Mayor Rossi)

Mayor Rossi thanked the taxpayers for helping to raise our fund balance.

Mayor Rossi explained that Former Mayors Romano and Woolbright worked with the Towns of Milton and Ballston to raise their funding contributions to the Fire Dept., so the Village no longer has to fill in the huge gaps.

Mayor Rossi disagrees with defunding the Union Fire Co. #2 repairs and is concerned that the Towns may cut funds if that happens.

Mayor Rossi shared the Village's accounting firm, EFPR's concerns with Trustee Kormos' s proposed budget amendments.

Mayor Rossi expressed his disgust at the Trustees' insistence on a 2.5% pay raise for themselves; the taxpayers should not have to foot the bill for this toxicity.

The Mayor stated that if the Trustees insist on raises, he will reduce his pay to cover them.

Trustee Baskin feels the Mayor is toxic.

Trustee Raymond brought up issues under previous administrations.

Trustee Kormos and Mayor Rossi disagreed on many budget items including the removal of Fire Department funding.

Addressing Trustee Kormos, Mayor Rossi said if you don't want to do the sidewalk, there's a list of 5 of other things that they need done.

Trustee Kormos said she didn't see the list and suggested that since the Village provides the firehouses and accounting services at no fee, we should discuss the Village paying a fee.

Fire Chief Mike Bashore confirmed the note was provided.

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez said it is the Boards responsibility to take care of their facilities.

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez encouraged the Trustees to reconsider as she feels this is shameful.

Trustee Baskin said he didn't see another needs list either and only saw the sidewalk/apron funds request and agrees it should be done.

Trustee Raymond feels the DPW can do the repairs.

Trustee Kormos said the Village puts funds into the Fire Dept. for repairs.

Kevin DuBois, of Union Fire Co. #2 said that's not true and chastised Trustee Kormos for taking a raise while he as a firefighter gets nothing for risking his life.

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez expressed frustration with Trustee Kormos stating they don't pay rent; The Fire Dept. provides free services to our residents.

The fact that the towns may reduce funding if the Village does not contribute to the repairs was stated again by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez and Mayor Rossi.

As for reducing the Events and Arts funds, Trustee Kormos feels the increased amount from last was too much.

Trustee Raymond stated that the number of people that attended Family Fun Day was pure speculation and feels tickets should be handed out.

Several people asked how he knew, he wasn't there.

Trustee Raymond said quality of life is different than using the events as marketing and feels the large funding increase is nonsensical.

Gina Marozzi, 10 Old Glory Lane suggested that the Trustees do the events themselves and noted that Mark Blech put in his own money.

Mark Blech of 10 Thompson Street said he did, and he donated many of his own supplies and uses his own shop.

Trustee Kormos suggested charging for the events.

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez read a text from business owners stating that these events are not only good for families, but they are also good for businesses because they bring people downtown.

Trustee Baskin feels the amount Trustee Kormos put in Family Fun Day is enough.

Stating he likes the Birdhouse Project, he thinks \$5,000.00 is enough and noted Trustee Kormos allotted \$8,300.00 for that program.

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez pointed out that people are coming to our community because we do so much. People come here to see the birdhouses and then spend money here.

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez stated that Mayor Rossi's budget is balanced and under the tax cap.

Rich Gorman, 125 Fairground Avenue said sometimes things need to be adjusted.

Kathy Eitzmann, a member of the Ballston Area Seniors and the Malta Seniors stated our Village is outstanding due to the businesses and events and everyone is excited about the birdhouses.

Kevin Krogh, Ballston Fire member of 37 years stated that the Fire Dept. is struggling now due to funds going to other things outside of the Fire Department in the last few years.

Pleading for the Boards support, Asst. Chief Krogh pointed out that Village residents do not pay fire tax and most of the work done to the fire houses is free labor, done by the volunteer firefighters.

Trustee Kormos would like access to an accountant to look at her budget amendments and make sure it's balanced, and we can look at fire.

Motion made by Trustee Baskin, seconded by Trustee Raymond to have a Special Meeting to resolve these amendments and vote on the amendments for this budget on Tuesday 4/18 at 7:00pm.

Ayes All

9) Old Business

There was none.

10) New Business

a) Reestablishment of Official Board Appointed Revenue Advisory Committee (Trustee Kormos)

Trustees Raymond, Baskin and Kormos prefer an official committee rather than an advisory committee.

b) Establishment of an Official Board Appointed Zoning Committee (Trustee Kormos)

Mayor Rossi said he received counsel that this would be premature,

Trustee Kormos wants the committee to look at RFP's.

11) Public Comment (5-Minute Limit per Speaker)

Kamran Parwana, 86 South Street expressed his disappointment in the budget discussion and wants the Board to work to find common ground.

Mike Iacolucci of 9 Russell Street agreed and feels the Mayor is attacking individuals.

Keegan Pasalic, 25 East High Street feels you can't put a price on the value that the community events and especially our 1st responders.

Ms. Pasalic noted that Trustee Kormos should cite her sources in future presentations.

Jared Iacolucci of 24 Chapman Street would like to see historical data for budget items.

Mr. Iacolucci expressed concerns about prioritizing spending funds on events over long term items.

Marilyn Stephenson, 45 West High Street wants to see civility return to these meetings, including in the audience.

Ms. Stephenson thinks the Trustees deserve a raise.

Christine Fitzpatrick of 31 Chapman Street said we have to keep our commitment to infrastructure and wants the rules of procedure followed.

Mark Blech, 10 Thompson Street is very frustrated with the political theater regarding the events.

Mr. Blech stated that if Former Mayor Fitzpatrick and Trustee Kormos hadn't sold the birdhouses and donated the money to the Library last year, that money could have gone towards this year's project.

Mr. Blech pointed out that the cost of supplies has gone up.

Trustee Kormos denied being involved in the sale of the birdhouses.

Patty Hanson of 28 Greenwood Drive volunteers for our events and is amazed at how many people attend; it's really upsetting that the funding may be decreased.

Christin Iacolucci, 24 Chapman Street requested that the presentations be posted with the minutes and the meeting recording. as they were not able to see them on Zoom.

Forman Phillips of 101 Hyde Blvd. spoke about an issue he is having with his neighbor.

Mr. Phillips feels Trustee Kormos tries to intimidate.

Keith Lewis, 38 East High Street said it is important to have diverse perspectives.

Mr. Lewis accused Mayor Rossi of weaponing and turning residents against one another.

Mr. Lewis made legal accusations against Gina Marozzi, Mark Blech and Clerk O'Connor regarding the election and remarked about an armed police officer being in the Village Office when he was there for a FOIL request fulfillment.

Clerk O'Connor stated that regarding the legal accusations, she will let her attorney respond for her.

As far as the armed police officer, Mayor Rossi told Mr. Lewis that he makes the Clerk and other staff is uncomfortable and intimidated because of what he does.

Clerk O'Connor stated she is very uncomfortable and noted that Mr. Lewis disparages everything she does and makes her family's life miserable.

Mr. Lewis accused the Mayor of stopping the ADU proposal to punish him.

Mayor Rossi responded that it was Trustee Kormos ADU plan that was trying to create a system for people that blatantly blew the law in the past.

Trustee Kormos responded that the Village didn't enforce its own code which should be fair and equal to everyone.

Ms. Marozzi stated there is a difference between being denied and building it anyway.

Ms. Marozzi read a transcript of an interview she did with Former Mayor Woolbright regarding his reasons for resigning. (attached)

Jason Gurtler of 99 Rowland Street noted that the events have grown and remarked on the exposure all of the news coverage; it generates a lot of business which increases sales tax revenue.

Trustee Kormos suggested that the businesses contribute.

Bob Bush Jr., 71 Church Avenue chastised the Board for not finalizing this budget during the budget workshops.

Donna Martin, 20 Chesterwood Court doesn't think many business owners in the Village can contribute money to events.

Ms. Martin spoke about the kids that can't afford to do anything and how much they enjoy the events.

Pete Martin of 20 Chesterwood Court urged the Board to figure out the events.

Mandy Rider, 9 Heritage Place also spoke in favor of Family Fun Day and stated it just can't be done without more money.

Lisa Speidel of 106 Prospect Street asked what happened to the noon and 6pm fire whistles.

Mayor Rossi said it is being repaired.

Mary Price-Bush, 105 McLean Street spoke about the costs of the events and noted that it is difficult to ask the same businesses time and time again. The events, such as Family Fun Day are labeled as Village events, we are hoping the Village can step up and contribute more.

Kris DuBuque of 6 Kaleen Drive chastised the Board for saying they support the events, but nickel and dime them.

Mr. DuBuque expressed his frustration that the Board attacks the Mayor and stated the body language is insulting.; Mr. DuBuque suggested the Board look at themselves instead of blaming the public comments for the length of the meetings.

There was a lot of back and forth regarding events funding.

12) Board Comments, Questions, & Concerns

Trustee Baskin feels the big issue is we have to work with people that you disagree with and stated it is a choice to quit.

Trustee Baskin stated he appreciates Mr. Blech and all of the volunteers.

Trustee Kormos noted many people like the newsletter.

Mayor Rossi feels the real issue is we don't listen to the people the people that know better than us, including our accountant and attorney.

13) Agenda Items for Consideration

a) Motion made by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, seconded by Trustee Kormos that the attached budget transfers be approved. (Requested by Mayor Rossi)

Ayes All

b) Motion made by Trustee Raymond, seconded by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez that the Friends of the Ballston Spa Library be authorized submit for a grant for the amount of \$50,000.00 to The J. M. McDonald Foundation. (Requested by Mayor Rossi)

Ayes All

c) Motion made by Trustee, VanDeinse-Perez seconded by Trustee Kormos that the Ballston Spa Post #358 and the Henry Cornell American Legion Post #234 be permitted to conduct the Annual Memorial Day Parade on May 27, 2023, beginning at 9:00am, followed by a picnic type reception in Wiswall Park. (Requested by Mayor Rossi)

Ayes All

d) Motion made by Trustee Raymond, seconded by Trustee Baskin approving the attached LaBella Associates, DPC scope of work and cost of \$6,250.00 for the Church Ave. crosswalk, and authorizing the Mayor to execute the related agreement. (Requested by Mayor Rossi)

Ayes All

e) Motion made by Mayor Rossi, seconded by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez to ratify the Mayor's appointment of the following officers of the Ballston Spa Fire Department: Chief – Michael Bashore, First Assistant Chief – Colby Krogh, Second Assistant Chief – William Kenny, Third Assistant Chief – Kevin Krogh, Secretary – Stanley De Long. (Requested by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez)

Ayes All

f) Motion made by Trustee _____ n/a _____, seconded by Trustee _____ n/a _____ that the Tentative budget be amended by the items listed on "Attachment A." (Requested by Trustee Kormos)

Motion Tabled

g) Motion made by Trustee _____ n/a _____, seconded by Trustee _____ n/a _____ that any and all profits from the logging or the sale of Woods Hollow be dedicated to a reserve fund for capital expenditures for parks, trees, trails, and repairs. Fund will be set up with a \$1,000 transferred from FY2023 contingency. (Requested by Trustees Kormos & Baskin)

Motion Tabled

h) Motion made by Trustee Kormos, seconded by Trustee Baskin that the Revenue Advisory Committee be reestablished under the board's committee policy and consist of 5 members charged with reviewing water and sewer rates and revenues and any other revenue source as directed by the board and will make recommendations to the Board. (Requested by Trustee Kormos)

Memorandum of Intent does not include approval of the final contract which must be reviewed and approved by the Board separately prior to execution.

Motion made by Trustee Baskin, seconded by Trustee Kormos that the motion be amended: to approve the final Memorandum of Intent that includes the terms of sale of Woods Hollow to the Town of Milton *and to approve execution of the Memorandum of Intent by the Mayor*. Approval of this Memorandum of Intent does not include approval of the final contract which must be reviewed and approved by the Board separately prior to execution.

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez stated she thinks we are doing this a little out of order, in her opinion, we should have declared surplus.

Trustee Baskin thanked everyone who worked to get us to this point.

Trustee Raymond-yes

Trustee Baskin-yes

Trustee Kormos- yes

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez-yes

Mayor Rossi- abstained

Motion Passed

It was agreed that the final terms will be publicized on the Village Website and Facebook page, and that hard copies will be available at the Village Office.

Motion made by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, seconded by Trustee Baskin to approve the contract for 1 year of Chief David Bush as Police Chief at an annual salary of \$34,900.00 and other benefits as listed in the agreement and permitting the Mayor to execute the agreement.

Ayes All

15) Executive Session (If Needed)

Motion made by Trustee Baskin, seconded by Trustee Raymond that the Board enter into Executive session to discuss a labor issue at 11:35pm.

The Board returned from Executive Session at 11:57pm.

Motion made by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, seconded by Trustee Kormos to amended: to set a Public Hearing on Monday April 24 at 7:01pm amending Section 45- 1 of the Village of Ballston Spa Code, "Qualifications for Holding Office" to change the County where an office must reside.

Ayes All

16) Adjournment/Voucher Audit:

Motion made by Trustee Raymond, seconded by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez that the Vouchers be audited, and the meeting adjourned at 11:53pm.

General Fund	\$ 310,689.42
Sewer Relevy	2,747.24
Library Fund	8,743.41
Trust & Agency	<u>4,216.83</u>
Total	\$ 326,396.90

Ayes All

Respectfully Submitted,

**Teri L. O'Connor
Village Clerk**