

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF BALLSTON SPA, NY held on February 14th, 2022.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mayor Christine M. Fitzpatrick.

Present: Mayor Christine M. Fitzpatrick, Trustee Elizabeth Kormos, Trustee Shawn Raymond, Trustee Benjamin Baskin, Village Clerk-Teri O'Connor, Village Treasurer- Julia Smith, Village Administrator- Jennifer Moskowitz, Bartlett, Pontiff, Stewart & Rhodes, P.C.- Karla Buettner.

18 Members of the public observed via Zoom

- 1) **Call to order**
- 2) **Pledge to the Flag**
- 3) Motion made by Trustee Kormos, Seconded by Trustee Raymond, that the minutes of the 1/24/2022 meeting be accepted.

AYES ALL

4) Mayor Announcements:

- i) Karla Buettner will be late to the Board of Trustee meeting as she is in Village Court for the evening.
- ii) Happy Valentine's Day to everyone
- iii) The Ricketts demolition will begin this week by Jackson Demolition. The residents in the area have been made aware of the project.
- iv) Masks are no longer required. In keeping with Gov. Hochul's Executive Order on masks, which allowed mask removal in indoor spaces, the signs have been taken down on Village Buildings. Anyone who wishes to continue to wear a mask is welcome to do so.
- v) In response to a suggestion from a community member's request, public comments will now be held to 4 minutes. All comments must be civil and be related to Village business.
- vi) Jennifer Moskowitz – Village Administrator will be moving forward as co-host of the Village of Ballston Spa Trustee Board Meetings.

5) Treasurer Report – See Attached.

6) Old Business - No Old Business

7) New Business-

- i) Departmental Report – Treasurer Report –Julia Smith - See Attached - Trustee Kormos asks about how much we are currently paying for our phone bill and the Village Treasurer stated it's about \$56.00 per line. Trustee Baskin asks about the staffing during the Saratoga County Fair in the summer. The treasure replied that we do pay extra for policing during the fair week.
- ii) Departmental Report – Building Department Report – David LaFountain - See Attached - The Mayor announces that the Building Department phone number is – 518-885-3167. Trustee Raymond asks if there is a busier time of year, the Building Inspector states that the busiest time of year is in the spring, when people start to think about their summer projects. Trustee Kormos supports the stated need of a better records retainment system in the Building Inspectors Office., and thanks Dave LaFountain for his report. Trustee Baskin asks about the 4 part time staff's hours. Dave LaFountain works 10 hours a week, The Building Inspector Clerk works 16 hours a week, The Assistant Building Inspector works a few hours a day, and the Fire Inspector works full time as a volunteer. Trustee Baskin asks about compliance, the Building Inspector states that last year there were about 3 or 4 court cases. But usually, complaints can get resolved via voluntary compliance. Trustee Baskin thanks Dave LaFountain for his work.

- iii) Presentation by Trustee Kormos about Potential Infrastructure Funding Opportunities – See Attached. Mayor Fitzpatrick points out that the process to get a grant is arduous and very involved. However, all the financing had to be in order, so the Village was not in a position to apply to any of these grants until the Village finances were all in order, and several contingencies were put in place. Now that the finances are back to a solvent level we are able to look forward with grant proposals. Trustee Raymond asks if there is any thought to applying to a Downtown Revitalization Grant. Trustee Kormos says we are in a position to apply for that grant, and that the Board of Trustee's needs to discuss that particular grant before applying. Trustee Kormos also sites the Comprehensive Plan not being ready yet, as a hold up on applying for the Downtown Revitalization Grant. Trustee Baskin thanks Trustee Kormos for her presentation. Trustee Baskin asks if the majority of these grants are very specified and would need professional assistance in applying for the grants. Trustee Kormos agrees that it is the norm to have outside assistance to apply for these grants. The alternative to applying for these grants is to look at the taxpayers as an additional income revenue to cover these expenses. Trustee Baskin continues that he would be interested in talking about moving forward on the Village of Ballston Spa Water System Feasibility Study and asks the Treasure if the Water Meter Reading Fee can be used to pay for that study.
- iv) Motion made by Trustee Baskin, seconded by Trustee Raymond, that the attached budget transfers be approved.

AYES ALL

- v) Motion made by Trustee Raymond, seconded by Trustee Baskin, that Zachary Fitzpatrick be appointed as a member of the Ballston Spa Fire Dept. and assigned to Union Fire Co. #2.

AYES ALL

- vi) Motion made by Trustee Baskin, seconded by Trustee Raymond, that Eagle-Matt Lee Fire Co. #1 be authorized to conduct a private function on February 20, 2022, from 12:00pm to 5:00pm.

AYES ALL

- vii) Motion made by Trustee Kormos, seconded by Trustee Raymond, that Eagle-Matt Lee Fire Co. #1 be authorized to conduct a private function on March 12, 2022, from 12:00pm to 8:00pm.

AYES AII

- viii) Motion made by Trustee Baskin, seconded by Trustee Kormos, to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the contract between the Village of Ballston Spa and K. Sickler Murphy for \$77,572.00 for their implementation work on the records management program. Said money to be allocated from the Local Government Records Management Implementation Fund (LGRMI) grant awarded to the Village.

AYES ALL

- ix) Motion made by Trustee Raymond, seconded by Trustee Kormos, to approve and authorize the Mayor to sign five contracts between the Town of Milton and the Village of Ballston Spa for the period January 1, 2022, to December 31, 2022, whereby the Town of Milton will allocate to the Village the following amounts:

Ballston Spa Public Library - \$41, 000

Ballston Spa Pool - \$16,000.00

Swimming Under the Stars - \$500.00

Falling Leaves Festival - \$500.00

Easter Egg Hunt - \$250.00

Trustee Kormos asks if those are the same amounts as last year, the Mayor responds that it is absolutely. If the function does not take place the Village does not receive the money.

AYES ALL

8) Consent Agenda 2022 Expenditures:

Motion made by Trustee Raymond, seconded by Trustee Baskin, that: Union Fire Co. #2 be authorized to expend the amount of \$4,264.00 for vehicle fittings. (A3412.2)

Trustee Kormos asks what are vehicle fittings? The Treasurer responds that that means miscellaneous parts for vehicle repair.

AYES ALL

9) Trustee Liaison Reports:

Trustee Baskin states that the Non-profits he works with have all been told that it is budget season and that they need to get their request in or renew their contracts. He reminds everyone that February 25th is still the deadline if any organization has any requests.

Trustee Raymond gives a compliment to the DPW and Jeff Gawrys and thanks them for all their diligent water main work amid snow and ice removal and Trustee Raymond appreciates their hard work.

Trustee Kormos thanks them for all their work on removing snow and ice from the last storm.

10) Other Business:

Trustee Baskin introduced the idea that all the Trustee's have email on the website so that they can be contacted. Trustee Raymond agrees that it is a good idea with protocols that need to be addressed and suggests that it would be easier to loop in the Mayor that way. Trustee Kormos says that it would be better than just handing out their business cards. The Mayor asks the treasurer if this already exists, and the treasurer verifies that the Board of Trustee's can receive email through the website. However, Trustee Baskin requests that the email addresses are listed so that the community can reach them. Trustee Basking also requests that the Board of Trustee's could get extensions on the regular Village Hall line so that calls that come into Village Hall that are for the Board of Trustee's can get phone messages if the calls are meant for them. Treasurer Smith references the new phone system that should be installed in Village Hall. Trustee Baskin reviews the rules and procedures of the actual meetings, with agreements from Karla Buettner. There is an organizational meeting on April 4th.

11) Public Comment:

Lisa Speidel – 106 Prospect Street – Does not expect an answer until the next meeting, but asks if it is common practice to try to rectify code enforcement through notice given, 3 strikes you're out and then you are given an appearance ticket? And who enforces animal control issues? And what takes precedent according to the law, Village Code or Agricultural Code?

Frank Rossi Jr. – 63 Saratoga Avenue Apartment B – Good questions by Lisa Speidel – Mr. Rossi's comments are about Trustee Kormos' presentation. He feels that we are spending too much time on studies, and nothing is getting done. He asks why we are continuing to go down the road of studies and grants without doing anything. Mr. Rossi feels that the Board of Trustees should not be threatening the taxpayers with higher taxes in order to pay for things that aren't priorities.

Bob Bush Jr. – 71 Church Avenue – Asks why the Board of Trustees are attending other community meetings and the Village of Ballston Spa Board of Trustee meetings are still held via ZOOM? Asks when the Board will go back to the in-person meetings? Asks Trustee Kormos about her comment that raising water and sewer fees could pay for infrastructure improvements, and the question is why don't the current water fees pay for the infrastructure? Mr. Bush also asks where we are on replacing the Water Pumps that were supposed to be replaced months ago?

Keith Lewis – 38 East High Street – Thanks the Mayor several times for being transparent and effective. Thanks Trustee Kormos for all her skills. References Mayor Romano and the former financial situation the Village used to be in. He does not understand why other community members want to go back to the old way of poor planning and ambiguity. States he does not understand why people want less planning. Mr. Lewis feels the Village is functioning the way a Village of our size should be. He compliments the Board for their passion and skills that they bring to the Board of Trustees. States that it is important that the truth be observed fully in the transparency and effectiveness of the Board of Trustees. He continues to thank the board and states they make him proud.

Ray Otten – 16 Middlebrook Avenue – Thanks Mayor Fitzpatrick for attending the Drug Awareness workshop that was put on by Chief Bush and Captain Daniel Morley on Narcan use. Compliments the workshop and the planners for helping the community and making it safer.

Kamran Parwana- 86 South Street – States that he is just getting over COVID and understands that there is still a need for Zoom Board meetings and requests that the community try to understand that not everyone is in the same situation. Mr. Parwana also thanks Trustee Kormos for her presentation on moneys that are available to the Village and her efforts being made to get that money into the Village.

Bernadette Van Deinse – 9 Mechanic Street - Thanks the DPW for filling a gigantic hole on south bound Hyde Blvd. Ms. VanDeinse questions are based on Trustee Kormos's presentation – when would we expect to hear results from the grants we have applied for? How many grants have we applied for? Also, in the Water Infrastructure Feasibility RFP we ask for the engineers to write the grants; how many grant applications should we expect? Points out the good work that Mayor Woolbright did to get us back into a financial good footing.

12) Board Response:

Mayor Fitzpatrick responds to Mr. Rossi's comment about threatening the taxpayers. She said it is unfortunate that he feels the Board is threatening the taxpayers. She feels the Board is educating them and feels that an educated population is the key to a successful republic. People need to know where the board is. In terms of planning, there needs to be a plan when you are spending money, and the Village needs current plans, the Village can't move forward without the plans by experts because the Village

can't apply for any sort of funding without a well thought out plan. Measure Twice – Cut Once. The information that is already in existence is old and needs to be updated.

The Mayor responds to Mr. Bush's question about the Water Pumps. The issue is that they are held up in the supply chain. Once they are here, they will be put in promptly.

The Mayor addresses in-person meetings. Other Boards are welcome to meet in person if they choose, and the Village cannot control who attends what meetings in person. The Governor may continue the State of Emergency, and if she does, the Board Meetings will continue to be via Zoom. If not, the Village will address the return to in-person meetings at the correct time.

Trustee Kormos responds to Ms. Van Deirse's question about the 1.3 million. There is FEMA Grant that the Fire department is waiting to hear on. The large implementation grant is a federal grant, and we will hear something when they make an announcement. As far as rounds of grants, after you apply for a grant, if you don't get it, the agency may help you improve your chances the second time around. A grant writer improves the chances of getting the grant on the 1st time around. The alternative to grant funding is taxpayer funding. She addresses the question of the water systems being self-sustaining and the answer is that the infrastructure was neglected for so long, the Village needs a major overhaul, before the system is up to date to make itself self-sustaining. Emergency repairs are much more costly than regular upkeep.

Trustee Raymond responds to Mr. Rossi's comments about the infrastructure grant. The past studies were last done in 2018 and it was a very preliminary study to outline the idea of getting additional water per day, it was not a complete infrastructure study, just a preliminary look. If you are going to get funding you need a complete and all-encompassing study to accurately get the correct picture and scope of need. The former mayors had not reached out to get information on the total picture. Trustee Raymond appreciated Ms. Van Deirse's comments about the audits and appreciated her noticing his hard work.

Trustee Baskin emphasizes that the purpose of studies is not to spend money the purpose is to save money. The Villages improvements are a plan to move forward in a methodical and thoughtful way.

13) Motion made by Trustee Raymond, seconded by Trustee Kormos, that the Board enter into Executive Session to discuss potential litigation and employment history of particular individuals, and property.

AYES ALL

14) Board of Trustees return from Executive Session at 9:50pm. No action taken.

15) Adjournment:

Motion made by Trustee Baskin, seconded by Trustee Raymond that the Vouchers No. 22-01141 to 22-01568 be audited and the meeting adjourned at 9:52pm.

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| General Fund | \$104,767.76 |
| Sewer Relevy | 3,484.70 |
| Library Fund | 4,000.48 |
| Trust & Agency | <u>2,734.01</u> |
| Total | \$114,986.95 |

