

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Rouses Point, New York held on February 7, 2022, at Halstead Hall, Civic Center, 39 Lake Street scheduled to commence at 7:00 PM.

PRESENT: Jed F. Thone, Mayor
Benjamin J. Arno, Trustee
Dale M. Menard, Trustee
Brian S. Pelkey, Trustee
Joseph Rodriguez, Trustee

OTHERS PRESENT: Arsene Letourneau, Treasurer
Tom Murnane, Village Attorney

RECORDING SECRETARY: Christopher Latremore, Clerk/Administrator

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

Mayor Thone called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARING:

Changing house numbers on Edgewater and changing Lakeview to Woodhaven.

Residents from Edgewater, Lakeview and Woodhaven presented a petition with 37 signatures with explanations on why they feel this change should **not** happen.

Kelley Donoghue assistant director from Clinton County Emergency Service made a presentation to the board. Mr. Donoghue provided the board with the history about how 911 was started in the 80's. Mr. Donoghue understands that the last thing anyone wants to do is change his/her address. EMS has system in place to help ease the transition. EMS contacts the Binghamton Post Office which controls this area for postal service. EMS will provide a letter to property owners on this change so when property is sold property owners can have the deed updated. No need to change deed until property is sold. Mr. Donoghue also indicated that the village office will take care of the necessary changes of address for utilities, and DMV issues can be managed through the DMV website. Mr. Donoghue believes that roads that sound similar need to be changed. Mr. Donoghue feels that safety comes first. Recently there was an EMS call on Lakeview and the county dispatcher accidentally said Lake Street. This caused a delay on EMS to arrive to the correct address. This is why this change needs to happen. Residents need to know that when EMS dispatches a call, the driver or mutual aid, may not be local individuals familiar with the area, so EMS must take action to help make finding the location easier. Mr. Donoghue asked residents to put house numbers not only at the end of the driveway but also on the house. Mr. Donoghue advised the board that they can make a resolution to make the necessary changes, but if the board chooses not to do this then do not hold the county responsible for any issue on any delays or communication problems.

The board wished to table the change but will put up new signage. The village will also extend Lakeview to make it straight to identify where Lakeview ends, and Woodhaven starts.

REGULAR SESSION:

I. PUBLIC COMMENT:

II. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

Trustee Arno made a motion to accept the minutes of the January 18, 2022, meeting, with change seconded by Trustee Menard. **ALL VOTED AYE.**

III. BILLS: \$53,132.50 CHECK # 28267-28317

Treasurer Letourneau indicated that there were no changes to the bills.

Trustee Pelkey made a motion to pay the bills as presented, seconded by Trustee Arno. **All voted AYE**

IV. CORRESPONDENCE:

Clerk/Administrator Chris Latremore advised the board in the event of when a major emergency state exists on the NYS Power System. Immediate actions are required to avoid damage to power system equipment or loss of load and to return the NYS Power System to the Normal State. It is the responsibility of all TOs to shed load as ordered by the NYISO to assist other TOs. A TO is responsible for Load Shedding within the geographic area of its Transmission District. The recommendation from chief line worker Jason Juneau he suggested that when such request is asked for the Village of Rouses Point to shed load its hereby agreed that the village will shed load at 64 Maple Street.

Trustee Pelkey made a motion, seconded by Mayor Thone. **All voted AYE**

Clerk/Administrator Latremore advised the board that Charlene Sample indicated that the Hometown Hero's flag event was a remarkable success. They have seventy-four (74) flags and only had to turn away one individual for that person's hometown was Cadyville.

Mayor Thone and clerk/administrator Latremore spoke on a marketing plan with the Village of Champlain and town Of Champlain. The three communities wish to fund a website promoting residential and commercial real estate and recreation to help build the communities for growth. Each municipality will have to contribute funding towards the development of the website.

Montgomery Hose, Hook & Ladder wished to approve new member Gordon Snide for a probationary period of six month.

Trustee Menard made a motion, seconded by Trustee Pelkey. **All voted AYE**

Clerk/Administrator Latremore advised the board that they need to appoint Jerry Pivette to the new title as Water and Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator as of January 18, 2022.

Trustee Pelkey made a motion, seconded by Trustee Menard. **All voted AYE**

V. REPORTS OF THE MAYOR AND TRUSTEES:

a. MAYOR THONE

1) Would like the board to consider changing the cryptocurrency and data mining law to match the City of Plattsburgh. Mayor Thone indicated that it is like the village policy, but has a better definition of high load density, fire safety heat & noise nuisance issues, and would allow bitcoin with special use.

2) Bank authorization resolution Champlain National Bank was designated as a depository for the funds for the village and authorized signatories are Arsene Letourneau, Dale Menard, Rebecca Pelky, and Jedidiah Thone.

Trustee Arno made a motion, seconded by Trustee Pelkey. **All voted AYE**

b. TRUSTEE BENJAMIN J. ARNO:

1) Thanked the crew for maintenance of the streets.

c. TRUSTEE DALE MENARD:

1) Thanked the crew for maintenance of the streets.

2) Thanked the crew at the Civic Center for doing an excellent job and keeping the center looking good.

d. TRUSTEE BRIAN S. PELKEY:

1) Trustee Pelkey wanted to discuss some concerns that the residents have about the budget. The public seems to believe that all the revenues from the village pool into one fund. The funds actually come out of four different accounts. General fund which is subsidized by land and sales tax. The general fund revenues supports the public works department vehicles, equipment for the roads and sidewalks, signage, salt, wages, welcome center, civic center during the summer months, library building repairs, fire department and EMS. One of the largest increases this year is the EMS contract with Champlain and Mooers which went up to \$131,000. In the past the village had the support of volunteers, but like many other organizations, the volunteers just are not there. The water fund is supported by the water bills. This fund supports the maintenance, wages, and infrastructure debt. Wastewater is also funded through your wastewater bills. This fund pays for maintenance, wages, and infrastructure debt. Electric department once again is funded through electric bills. This pays for maintenance and wages. Through the years, this system has been upgraded and about 90 percent of the system is underground. Currently the electric department has no debt.

2) The water plant. Rumor has it that water plant is on its last leg. Trustee Pelkey disagrees. The system is a two-part system. One part can pump up to 1 million gallons of water a day. The other part of the system, which is the oldest, was update about six (6) years ago from a funding through Senator Betty Little's office. The village replaced pumps and filters. This is what is supplying the village with its water currently. The village pumps about 250,000 gallons daily during this time of the year, and 500,000 gallons in the summertime. The biggest problem with the water system is it is labor intensive and has old technology. This is why the village is looking at a new water plant. To this day the village has had no violations with the county health department thanks to the village staff maintaining the system.

e. TRUSTEE RODRIGUEZ:

1) Thanked Trustee Pelkey for breakdown on the budget.

2) Thanked the crew for maintenance of the streets.

VI. OTHER REPORTS:

1) Treasure Letourneau advised budget officer Mayor Thone that budget sheets need to be returned.

VII. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Adam Racine thanked Trustee Pelkey and Trustee Arno for plowing his father's yard. Adam Racine indicated that he is Operation Manager for Convalt Energy. Mr. Racine thanked Hari Achuthan for hiring locals and veterans. Mr. Racine indicated that he was employed with Pfizer, and he recalled after Pfizer closed, he was deleting data and powering down over 1300 computers which required 20 employees. Mr. Racine said that these servers were used to collect data. Mr. Racine wanted an explanation on why there is such a push back from the community when they are going to hire people. Mr. Racine said he had to move away from Rouses Point for work but has since moved back. Mr. Racine said he loves Rouses Point and that he does not want to leave again.

Meridith Taylor CEO of Military Spouses. Ms. Taylor currently is not a resident of Rouses Point. Ms. Taylor advised the board that she has a talent officer, and they go out to find employees. Ms. Taylor indicated that there are rumors about Hari Achuthan, CEO of the company, that he takes bribes and that is false. Ms. Taylor indicated the Mr. Achuthan is investing in American companies, forming jobs, green power, and food. Ms. Taylor indicated that Convalt Energy hired 40 people in Rouses Point but had to let 30 people go. Convalt Energy wants to build the community and create jobs.

Allison Beeman chief of staff for Convalt Energy. Ms. Beeman indicated that Convalt Energy wants to give back to the community and hire from within. Ms. Beeman indicated that all Mr. Achuthan's businesses start from the ground up, and he has done a lot in America. Convalt Energy will provide supplemental power. Would like to produce an agreement with the village.

Scott Richner indicated that he has been out in the community and the residents are dissatisfied that board does not have any answers. Mr. Richner indicated that there is only one board member that has not been asked to resign. Mr. Richner feels that the board needs to talk more to get more business in the village. Mr. Richner feels that the board is dysfunctional and making the village look bad. Mr. Richner would like to see the board start working together and less arguing. Mr. Richner feels that the board is voting personally rather than on the village issues.

Raymond Wayman wants an explanation on the concept of businesses wanting to come to the village, and that the company needs to send representatives to beg the village to do business. Mr. Wayman asked if a variance could be issued to allow greenhouses. Mr. Murnane replied yes. Mr. Wayman indicated that other places are going vertically and producing food. Mr. Wayman advised the board that the village needs to replace revenues. The village needs to do repairs to the civic center roof. Thanked Trustee Pelkey for explaining the budget. Mr. Wayman asked Trustee Arno why he did not share the letter from the attorney with the mayor or the board and asked what he expected to happen with the letter. Trustee Arno advised he did not share the information provided with anyone for it was marked confidential, and acted on the advice he received after speaking to the village attorney.

Ashley Birtz asked of the 30 people laid off, what title or job did they hold. Ms. Taylor advised the jobs lost were construction and security.

Sharman Birtz ask about the village power usage. Ms. Birtz was advised that as of December 20, 2021, the village was over the hydro allotment of 13.7 which puts the village in a supplemental state. This was caused from the new business and below zero temperatures causing demand for more heat.

Steve Lambert thanked Adam, Taylor, and Alisson for being so open. Mr. Lambert does not feel that ERS has been open to the people in the village. Mr. Lambert feels that ERS needs to open its doors and allow the village to see what is going on in the building. Mr. Lambert feels that ERS has not been a particularly good neighbor. Mr. Lambert understands that ERS has an investment in Rouses Point, but they need to consider this is where the residents of Rouses Point live.

Jean Birtz feels that if ERS are going to be good neighbors they should be transparent to the board, follow code, and allow the village to see what is going on in the building. Mr. Birtz advised the board that he lives next to Delagar, and they are a good neighbor and allow people into there business. Mr. Birtz feels that since the village is in supplemental power, money is coming out of his pocket and going into Mike Miranda's. Mr. Birtz also feels that since the operation in the building is against village code, they should pay \$1000 a day for each day they are in violation. Mr. Birtz indicated that the City of Plattsburgh has a debt from a similar operation as here in Rouses Point, and the village should require a 2-million-dollar retainer. Mr. Birtz advised the board that they just cannot violate the local law.

Ashley Birtz indicated that Mike Miranda is wanted by the FBI for stealing computers and scratching the serial numbers off the computers. Ms. Birtz asked that the names of the business in 64 Maple Street put their names outside on the building. Ms. Birtz advised that security has been removed since last board meeting. Ms. Birtz advised the board that data centers are coming to Rouses Point for its cheap electricity. She also said that the cost of doing business is still less, even when the village is in supplemental power rates.

Matt Favro wanted some clarification on the property at 64 Maple Street. Mr. Favro understands that ERS owns the building but was uncertain on the number of tenants. Mayor Thone indicated that the building houses three (3) tenants. Convalt Energy, R/P NY Holdings and 2CRSi.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

Trustee Rodrigues made a motion to adjourn at 9:31 pm, seconded by Trustee Arno. **ALL VOTED AYE.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Christopher W Latremore
Village Clerk/Administrator