

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Rouses Point, New York held on March 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

**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.

**REGULAR SESSION:**

**I. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Scott Richner asked about the hydro power allotment. Mr. Richner was advised the village allotment is 13.79 based upon the contract the village has with NYPA until 2040, and anything over will put the village in supplemental. Mr. Richner also asked the board to provide an update on the Rabideau Way property sale. Trustee Pelkey said he reached out to the guy, and he never got back to Trustee Pelkey. The village was going to enter into a contract and there was going to be a \$1500.00 appraisal fee. The village never received the signed contract back. Mr. Richner than asked the board their thoughts on putting a community garden at Rabideau Way. Trustee Arno felt that it would not be a good place due to all the blacktop on the property. Mayor Thone thought the property next to the sewer plant may be a good location, if the soil was tested.

Nicholas Southwick asked for an explanation on Rider A. Mayor Thone explained that it allows the municipality to charge a business for its high demand of electricity. Mayor Thone advised that businesses such as bitcoin miners, data mining etc. may fall under this program due to their high energy usage. Mayor Thone advised that he wants to follow the local law of Plattsburgh but has not had a lot of success on making this change. It was also pointed out that if a business falls under the cooperative economic development program, the business will not fall under rider A.

Mr. Southwick also thanked the village workers for all their work restoring the power during the power outage in January.

Marlene Beal had concerns about her utility bill. Ms. Beal told the board that her utility rate has gone up due to the extra power consumed by big business. Ms. Beal feels that the supplemental cost needs to go to the big business. Ms. Beal told the board that she is on a fixed income, with a very little pension and her utility bill increase by \$150.00 this month. Ms. Beal advised the board that she called public service commissioner and spoke to a man named Elliot and he informed her that the additional charge needs to be petitioned. She asked the board to call the public service commissioner and have the supplemental cost be billed to the big business. She explained that a big business on Maple Street is heating the outdoors with

the doors and windows opened. She went on to explain that the business is not even allowed to be in the village for the village does not allow bitcoin operation. Mayor Thone told Ms. Beal that he would reach out to the public service commissioner on March 8, 2022. Ms. Beal told the board she has paid her bill for the supplemental under protest.

Steven Deso asked the board if it has established what type of business was at 64 Maple Street for, he feels that it may be in violation of village local law. Mayor Thone advised Mr. Deso that there is no evidence of any violation. Mayor Thone advised Mr. Deso that he did in fact shut one business down that admitted to having a bitcoin operation. Mayor Thone said without having a probable cause there was nothing he could do. Mr. Deso asked for an explanation on what types of business uses this much power, creates noise and heat. Mayor Thone indicated that it could be multiple companies. Mr. Deso asked what type of business would be drawing high density loads other than a cryptocurrency company violating the village law which would be probable cause. Mr. Deso advised the board that do to this business using so much electricity it is causing all the residence to pay more and suffer. Mayor Thone indicated that he still doesn't feel there is probable cause. Mr. Deso said what else could it be for he does not see them making Tesla's and feels that the village needs to look further into the operation. Mr. Deso told the mayor that they are receiving tax breaks and have not fessed up to their operation.

Laura Birtz asked about the letter she received in the mail with her utility bill explaining the increase electricity cost. Ms. Bitz is happy the village uses hydro power, but is not happy with the increase. Ms. Bitz wants to know what type of business is at 64 Maple, and if an inspection was completed for this is a standard procedure. She understands that a inspection was not done and wants to know how they received a certificate to do business. Mayor Thone told Ms. Birtz that the certificate to do business is provided by the county when a business is starting. Trustee Menard advised Ms. Birtz that inspection attempts have been made, but they will not allow the village in the building. Ms. Birtz asked for an explanation on the electricity increase. Treasurer Letourneau explained that electric sales for billing date March 1, 2022, are as follow. Residential KWH billed 4,692,141, 43.84 percent of sales, commercial sales KWH billed 864,432, 8.08 percent of sales, industrial KWH billed 4,711,200, 44.02 percent of sales, municipal street lighting KWH billed 22,161, 0.21 percent of sales, other public street lighting KWH billed 696, 0.01 percent of sales, other public authority KWH billed 94,975, 0.89 percent of sales, sales to railroad KWH billed 9,092, 0.08 percent of sales for a total KWH billed 10,701,856. Last year residential KWH was approximately 4,950,000 and industrial KWH has gone up by approximately 4,000,000. Ms. Birtz thanked Treasurer for putting the numbers and percentages together. Ms. Birtz feels that supplemental charges need to go to the business rather than the residents. Mayor Thone indicated that he has been trying to schedule a meeting with the board to discuss but has not had any luck.

Matt Morris from Lincoln Infrastructure advised Ms. Bitz that the mayor has tried at other meeting to have negotiations, and he indicated that his company is willing, absolutely 100 percent ready, to meet with the board and negotiate the electricity cost so the burden would not be on the residents, but those negotiations have failed for certain people don't want to meet. Mr. Morris open the door for negotiations again so the residents will not increase. Mr. Morris feels this will bring business and generate new tax. Trustee Rodriguez said he would like to meet with ERS, and he is just waiting for the village attorney to get back to the village board.

Mayor Thone made a motion to schedule a meeting with ERS to determine what the operation is in the building, as well as to discuss the electricity cost so the supplemental will not fall back on the residence. The board was all in agreement to schedule a meeting.

## **II. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:**

Trustee Menard made a motion to accept the minutes of the February 22, 2022, meeting, seconded by Trustee Arno. **ALL VOTED AYE.**

**III. BILLS:** \$30,231.20      **CHECK #** 28362-28399

Treasurer Letourneau indicated that one additional bill needed to be added in the amount of \$344.18  
Trustee Pelkey made a motion to pay the bills as presented, seconded by Trustee Menard. **All voted AYE**

**IV. CORRESPONDENCE:**

Chris Latremore advised the board that on March 2, 2022, he reached out to New York State Department of State Office Planning, Development & Community Infrastructure on the Smart Growth Comprehensive Plan Grant. He spoke with a Lisa Melville that indicated that the grant is in a draft stage and should be approved within the next month. The budget for the project is \$85,000, a grant worth \$76,500 and the village will need to do a match of \$8,500.

**V. REPORTS OF THE MAYOR AND TRUSTEES:**

**a. MAYOR THONE**

1) Resolution 2022-08 Rouses Point Knights of Columbus Council No. 2366 100<sup>TH</sup> anniversary.  
Trustee Arno made a motion, seconded by Trustee Pelkey. **All voted AYE**

2) Resolution 2022-09 Lakeside Coffee 2022 Small Business award  
Trustee Pelkey made a motion, seconded by Trustee Menard. **All voted AYE**

**b. TRUSTEE BENJAMIN J. ARNO:**

1) Trustee Arno inquired about the roof at the civic center. Trustee Arno was advised that Ethan had received an estimate in the amount of approximately \$74,000 and that it would need to go out to bid in order to move forward.

Trustee Menard made a motion to put the civic center roof out to bid, seconded by Trustee Rodriguez. **All voted AYE**

**c. TRUSTEE DALE MENARD:**

1) Nothing to report

**d. TRUSTEE BRIAN S. PELKEY:**

1) Trustee Pelkey wanted to let everyone know that the Rouses Point Stars and Stripes will be celebrating the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend June 24-26. Information will be available at the Stars and Stripes website through the village website. Trustee Pelkey told the board that everything is going to be bigger and better including bands, carnival, fireworks, events, and craft show.

2) Trustee Pelkey advised that the village wide yard sale will be held June 18-19, 2022.  
Trustee Arno made a motion to approve village wide yard sale, seconded by Trustee Rodriguez. **All voted AYE**

3) Trustee Pelkey acknowledge Lakeside Coffee as North County Chamber of Commerce 2022 small business of the year. Asked the board to make a resolution to honor their achievement.

**e. TRUSTEE RODRIGUEZ:**

1) Nothing to report

**VI. OTHER REPORTS:**

1) Clerk Latremore advised the board that the village received a bill from PLM in the amount of \$760.00. Clerk Latremore advised the board the bill was for consulting for the additional power that the board approved for ERS. Clerk Latremore told the board that Chief Line Crew Jason Juneau provided ERS with the scope of the work order, but ERS requested that the response come from an engineer, so Jason forwarded the request to PLM which resulted in the village receiving a bill. Clerk Latremore asked if the village should pay the bill or request ERS to pay. Mayor Thone felt the village should pay and then forward to ERS for reimbursement. Mayor Thone asked for a motion to pay the bill no second. Mayor Thone asked Clerk Latremore to forward the mayor a copy of the bill, and he would reach out to ERS for payment.

**VII. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:**

No comment

**VII. ADJOURNMENT:**

Trustee Menard made a motion to adjourn at 7:50 pm, seconded by Trustee Arno. **ALL VOTED AYE.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Christopher W Latremore  
Village Clerk/Administrator