

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Rouses Point, New York held on January 18, 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  
John Cooper, Code Enforcement Office

**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.

Mayor Thone read a letter asking for the resignations of trustee Pelkey, Arno and Menard for violating the village policy of harassment in the workplace.

**REGULAR SESSION:**

**I. PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Ron Langlois thanked Jason and Jerrod for restoring the power this past weekend. Mr. Langlois advised Hari that the village is not anti-business. Mr. Langlois advised Hari that the issue at hand is the company occupying 64 Maple was supposed to be for manufacturing and testing of equipment, but they actually have a server farm and they lied to the village. Mr. Langlois also has concerns regarding the demo of building at 64 Maple. Mr. Langlois wants to know if all the proper tests had taken place prior to the demo being next to a school. He wanted to know if DEC was informed. There are most likely chemicals in the ground. The demo did not set well with Mr. Langlois. Mr. Langlois is not against solar power but since the village was lied to before, the village just wants to make sure they are only doing that for which they applied. Mr. Langlois feels that a lot of the issues need to be overseen in executive session.

Becky Reid asked if the property at 64 Maple Street was subject to tax breaks. She was informed that the tax breaks was approved by Clinton County for fifteen years. Ms. Reid asked about the December 15, 2021, meeting regarding the excessive power usage. From her experience as a trustee, she recalled that excess power would be based upon the number jobs created by a company. Ms. Ried asked for the number of jobs being created. Mayor Thone replied approximately 50 jobs. Ms. Reid feels that the village should do a load capacity test to see if the substation can manage the surge. Ms. Reid questioned the greenhouse plans. Ms. Reid wanted an explanation on why they would want to build greenhouse if they do not make money. Mr. Achuthan stated that greenhouses in general do not make money, but with low electricity cost and utilizing the heat from the building, it will make the greenhouses more efficient. Mr. Achuthan also, indicated that food costs are going to be increasing in the next 2 – 3 years. Ms. Reid asked what the plans are for the covenant on the property, indicates that no agricultural or digs are allowed on the property? Mr. Achuthan said that he will bring materials in as permitted by code.

David Kreutz indicated that ERS only owns the buildings. They attract business to communities.

Mr. Kreutz said that if a community starts with a data center it will bring other business to the community. Mr. Kreutz stated that the solar manufacturing company coming to Rouses Point was not Hari Achuthan's company, but it is a company from Canada, and after they saw the board's reaction from a board meeting the opted out. Mr. Kreutz asked for Trustee Pelkey's resignation. Mr. Kreutz indicated that these complaints are not allegations, and Trustee Pelkey did violate workplace violence policy. The village needs to have zero tolerance. Mr. Kreutz also advised that he had the report that Trustee Arno received, and Trustee Arno hid the report from the mayor. Trustee Arno advised Mr. Kreutz that the report was marked confidential, and after talking to the village attorney he was advised not to share the report with anyone.

Hari Achuthan requested the village for an official reply from the code enforcement officer on his permits. Mr. Achuthan advised that the board is not being supportive, and the code officer needs to reply. Mr. Achuthan indicated that his permits have gone to the village attorney twice, and that is not the right process. Mr. Achuthan wants a letter from code enforcement officer. Mr. Achuthan said he will invest in the village and place employment in this village. Plans have been given to the administrator. The village needs to follow the process and nothing that the village has done has been fair. Mr. Achuthan advised the board that they will settle for 14 MEGs of power and that will allow for additional expansion.

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

Trustee Menard made a motion to accept the minutes of the January 3, 2022, seconded by Trustee Arno.  
**ALL VOTED AYE.**

## **III. BILLS: \$285,808.23 CHECK # 28214-28264**

Treasurer Letourneau advised the board that he had two bills to add. One for New York Power Agency for \$72,873.28 and New York Power Authority for \$85,070.29. As of December 20, at 9:00 AM power usage was at 12.353 KW. Also need to make correction from page 6 Gillies Auto should be at \$209.10 rather than the amount listed which is \$167.00 less.

Trustee Pelkey made a motion to pay the bills, seconded By Mayor Thone.

**ALL VOTED AYE.**

## **IV. CORRESPONDENCE:**

Malana Tamper from the Clinton County Health Department made a presentation on active community concept and the Northern Tier. The concept is to increase outdoor activity. The county will fund the cost of the program. The program will fund for signs posting points of interest and paint for sidewalk crossing. Mayor Thone asked if this could include historical points of interest. Ms. Tamper said that it could be part of the program, but her program would not be able to fund historical points of interest that would need to go to the Clinton County Historian's office. The budget amount is approximately \$8,000 for material. The village will have to do the installation. Work needs to be completed by May 2022.

Administrator/Clerk received a request from David Kreutz to increase the power usage at the ERS building. Andrew Staulcup from ERS is now managing. Currently the building has 600 AMP, and they are close to exceeding the breaker limit per Jason Junea. Andrew wanted more details so Jason reached out to PLM and provided Jason a report indicating that we can provide them with a total of a 1000 AMP's. This report was forwarded to Andrew, and they would like to move forward with the recommendations from PLM.

Mayor Thone made a motion seconded by Trustee Rodriguez.

Trustee Pelkey ask for a discussion. Trustee Pelkey asked Mr. Staulcup what the additional power was needed for rumor has it that there is a server farm in the building which is against local law. Mr. Staulcup you need to open the doors and allow the village to go in the building and do an inspection. Mr. Staulcup replied that the village indicated that there is a safety issue, and now you what to hold this issue up. Village will be held liable, and the village needed to stop harassing the tenant.

Mayor Thone made a motion seconded by Trustee Rodriguez.

**Trustee Arno Aye**

**Trustee Rodriguez Aye**

**Mayor Thone Aye**

**Trustee Pelkey Nye**

**Trustee Menard Nye**

Resolution 2022-02 Inspectors of election for March 15, 2022.

Mary Racicot-Chief inspector compensation \$14.00 per hour, Nancy Baker, Elise Breyette, and Murielle LaFave inspector at \$13.50 per hour.

Trustee Arno made a motion seconded by Trustee Menard. **ALL VOTED AYE**

Kelly Donoghue is requesting the house number on Edgewater to be changed and that the name of Lakeview be change to Woodhaven. The reason for this request is due to potential issues with emergency responders that are not local.

This has been set up for a public hearing for February 7, 2022

Mayor Thone indicated that Pat Birkett Chair of the Zoning board of appeals has received and application from Mike Duffy to fill the vacant seat as an alternate and has recommended Mr. Duffy. Mr. Murnane also suggested since the mayor had another interested person Sharman Birtz to appoint her as an alternate as well since the board rarely has people wanting to volunteer for the Zoning Board of Appeals. Mayor Thone appointed Mike Duffy and Sharman Birtz as alternates to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

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

### **a. MAYOR THONE**

- 1) Nothing to report

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

- 1) Thanked the Public works crew for snow removal of the streets and electric department for their work restoring power from January 15, 2022, power outage.
  - 2) Spoke with Charlene Sample regarding flags of heroes. Ms. Sample would like to install flags downtown by drilling holes in sidewalk next to existing poles and install an additional pole for the flags.
- Trustee Arno made a motion seconded by Trustee Menard. **ALL VOTED AYE**

### **c. TRUSTEE DALE MENARD:**

- 1) Nothing to report

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

- 1) Trustee Pelkey indicated that he worked for the village for 36 years until he retired in 2019. Trustee Pelkey designed and maintained the electrical for the village. While he was employed by the village in the electric department, he did plan for the future growth. He installed a large cable to supply

business, to promote growth which is currently less than 50 percent capacity. The village has been able to provide electric demands for business whether they wish to grow or bring in new business. Looking at the future for electric cars. Trustee Pelkey has installed car charging devices and they draw about the same amount of power as a small electric hot water tank. The village power can support this right now for the residence. Rouses Point has contract for 13.7 for hydro power. If the village goes over the 13.7, then the village will go into supplemental and everyone in the village is going to pay more for their electricity. Trustee Pelkey indicated that the village is in supplemental right now and this is the first time since 2018. 2CRSI has asked for 20 MEG and the village will not be able to supply them for their demand. 2CRSI needs to abide by the local law. Cryptocurrency is illegal and the residents should watch an interview with the past mayor of Plattsburgh Colin Reid on CNN. Trustee Pelkey said he is always available to the residents. Trustee Pelkey stressed that he knows the electric system and the residents need to listen. Trustee Pelkey indicated that the code enforcement officer needs to be able to walk throughout the building.

Request executive session to discuss personal issue.

Trustee Pelkey made a motion seconded by Trustee Menard. **ALL VOTED AYE**

**e. TRUSTEE RODRIGUEZ:**

- 1) Thanked the public works and electric department for a job well done during power outage.

**VI. OTHER REPORTS:**

- 1) Treasure Letourneau advised Mayor Thone as budget officer he needs to start the budget.
- 2) Clerk read a letter from Raymond Wayman asking for the resignation of Trustee Pelkey and Arno.
- 3) Free COVID test kit are available at [COVIDtests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov)

**VII. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:**

Raymond Wayman referred to the March 4, 2021, meeting with ERS and the loss of a major investment. He indicated that the article in the Sun Community paper is not fake news as the clerk indicated. Mr. Wayman wanted to know if 2CSRI still had power or if the power was shut off. The board advised him the power was still on.

Steve Deso asked Mr. Kreutz if the security was armed. Mr. Kreutz indicated that they are not. Mr. Deso also asked if RP holdings is lobbying for marijuana at 64 Maple St. Mike Miranda indicated that they are not but does in other parts of New York State. Mr. Miranda said he runs data centers and that 2CRSI is one of his customers.

Melissa McManus is the fourth generation growing up in Rouses Point. She indicated that Rouses Point has always been a good place to have good, heated discussions, from both sides coming in passionately and caring about the residents. She feels the board needs to separate the issues. She remembers in 1960 when her Uncle Dan Letourneau was mayor and chose to become part of the municipal lighting to make the electric more affordable. She remembers the ice storm of 1998, and how the electric department was able to keep the electric on and how the elderly would stop in the village office on the third of each month and pay their electric bill with cash with considerable pride. The residents need to know that if the village goes over its 13.7 it goes into supplemental and then everyone will have to pay. The board needs to look at the numbers along with the issues thinking of the next generation.

Ashley Birtz indicated that she had friendly conversation with Mayor Thone about two years ago. Mayor Thone indicated that this company was going to create 300 jobs but now we only have 30 jobs. Ms. Birtz indicated that when she lived in California, they would take her family to google, and they did not have any security. Ms. Birtz indicated that residents are scared of the operation at 64 Maple Street. Ms. Birtz feels they are hiding information. Ms. Birtz just asked that they show the people the true operation. Mayor Thone indicated that Pfizer had security. Ms. Birtz asked why we went from 500 jobs to 30 and then with Hari 100. Mr. Achuthan indicated that they do not want people on the premise for liability issues such as slips and falls. Ms. Birtz asked if law enforcement had been called to the premise? Which Mr. Staulcup said no.

Becky Reid asked for update on water plant. She was advised the village is still waiting on a grant.

David Kreutz advised that the village needs to decide on the use of the building either technology like Hari or warehouse.

Jean Birtz indicated that he was a trustee and remembers when the board paid for the water tower for Pfizer and then they left, leaving the debt to the residents. Mr. Birtz said let them pay for the extra power rates and expansions at the substation. Enter a signed contract with them allowing them to pay for the supplemental. The board needs to come up with some type of agreement.

Melissa McManus liked Trustee Birtz comments looking out for the residents.

Raymand Wayman thanked Mr. Birtz. Mr. Wayman asked the board to form a neutral committee to work with the board and PLM.

Mr. Birtz said he has faith in Tom Murnane and the mayor.


**VIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

- 1) Board agreed to CSEA memorandum agreement
- 2) Board agreed to follow through on counseling memorandum

**VII. ADJOURNMENT:**

Trustee Arno made a motion to adjourn at 10:15 pm, seconded by Trustee Menard. **ALL VOTED AYE.**

Respectfully Submitted,

  
Christopher W Latremore  
Village Clerk/Administrator