

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Rouses Point, New York held on January 3, 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, Absent

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 7:01 PM and began with the Pledge of Allegiance.

REGULAR SESSION:

I. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Steve Lambert asked if the board could install a sign for truck deliveries on Chapman Street. Mr. Lambert witnessed a confused truck driver that almost hit a fire hydrant.

Hari Achuthan introduced some of his employees to the board. Mr. Achuthan advised the board that he applied for a permit with the village code enforcement officer for green houses and solar panels. Mr. Achuthan advised the board that he received a letter from the village attorney that agriculture is not permitted when it actually is a permitted use. Mr. Achuthan advised the board that at the December 15, 2021, meeting he showed full transparency, and what the village attorney was doing is completely against village code and state law. Mr. Achuthan indicated that agriculture is a permitted use in I2. Mr. Achuthan went on stating the letter from the village attorney is completely wrong. Mr. Achuthan indicated that he is willing to pay for any additional cost needed for the power and asked to board to verify the process.

Ashley Bitz advised the board that Mr. Achuthan has never built a green house. Mrs. Birtz was amazed to hear that Mr. Achuthan was going to build green houses in the United States for something that he has never done. Mrs. Birtz asked what he was doing in Watertown. Mr. Achuthan advised that he was investing in solar panels and partnering with other agencies. Mr. Achuthan advised the board that he was partnering with Cornell University for the green houses.

Adam Racine asked the board if we have a company that is spending time, money and other investments why is the board giving them such a hard time. Mr. Racine continued by stating Pfizer did provide approximately 1500 jobs and moved out of Rouses Point. The village has a company that wants invest money, create jobs, and cover any cost to the village. Why is the

village board giving them a hard time? Sad to see this happen. Board needs to think through the process.

Matt grow up in a small town in Pennsylvania. Matt saw this small-town deteriorate and residents turning to drugs. The village should have open arms on new business.

Arsene Letourneau advised the board that he has worked for the village for 36 years as treasure, and he has never seen actions like this, taking place at a board meeting. Mr. Letourneau went on to say that this is not the form for these discussions but, rather a zoning board of appeals meeting or another type of meeting.

II. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

Trustee Arno made a motion to accept the minutes of the December 20, 2021, seconded by Trustee Menard. **ALL VOTED AYE.**

III. BILLS: \$26,257.08 CHECK # 28134-28212

Treasurer Letourneau advised the board of no changes to the bills.

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

ALL VOTED AYE.

IV. CORRESPONDENCE:

Mayor Thone read a letter of resignation from Sonya Lague from the Zoning Board Of Appeals. The board thanked Sonya for her service.

Mayor Thone made a motion to accept Sonya's resignation, seconded by Trustee Menard. **ALL VOTED AYE.**

Mayor Thone read resolution 2022-01 polling place. **ALL VOTED AYE.**

Mayor Thone read resolution 2022-02 no voter registration day. **ALL VOTED AYE.**

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.

2) Inquired on 43 Chapman Street. Asbestos report came back inconclusive therefore we need to move forward acting like asbestos is present. Giving property owner 30 additional days before violation notice will be sent.

c. TRUSTEE DALE MENARD:

1) Read a letter requesting Mayor Thone to resign as mayor do to his past actions.
Mayor Thone refused to resign.

d. TRUSTEE BRIAN S. PELKEY:

1) Nothing to report

e. TRUSTEE RODRIGUEZ:

- 1) Absent

VI. OTHER REPORTS:

- 1) Treasure Letourneau had nothing to report.
- 2) Clerk Latremore needs to verify some issues on face-book. First being that Mr. Achuthan said that solar panel manufacturing was never coming to Rouses Point. Mr. Achuthan verified that this statement is correct. Also, Mayor Thone on milage reimbursement. The mayor advised that he has not been reimbursed. Verified that the mayor did not follow village procedure for board approval for reimbursement using own personal vehicle.
- 3) It has come to my attention that ERS building at 64 Maple is at its maximum limit of power. If they continue to draw power, it will cause the breaker to trip, and they will lose power completely. Asked board approval to send letter to ERS on electric. The board agreed to send letter.

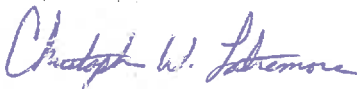
VII. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

- 1) Steve Lambert indicates that the boards need to find a better way to communicate with the residents.
- 2) Ashley Birtz asked for a better explanation to the taping and airing of the executive session. Mrs. Birtz finds it hard to believe that the mayor was unaware of this being taped.
- 3) Pat Birkett was informed by a phone call that the executive session was being aired. Once verified Mrs. Birkett tried reaching Chris but since he was not available, she immediately called the mayor. The mayor was surprised and said the board was going to crucify him. The reason for so much face-book activity is because of the live streaming and Calvin Castine putting tape on you tube. This is a good thing.
- 4) Mr. Achuthan would like to bridge the gap with 2CSRI. If the board has an issue with the amount of power 24 MEG than maybe limit them to 14 MEG. The board needs to have conversation with them to come up with an agreement. Mr. Achuthan indicated that this is not a complex issue. Conversations need to be made for this can lead to investments to this town.

VII. ADJOURNMENT:

Trustee Arno made a motion to adjourn at 8:05 pm, seconded by Mayor Thone. **ALL VOTED AYE.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Christopher W Latremore
Village Clerk/Administrator