

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Rouses Point, New York held on May 16, 2022, at Halstead Hall, Civic Center, 39 Lake Street scheduled to commence at 7:00 PM.

PRESENT: John J LaBonte, Mayor
Benjamin J. Arno, Trustee
Dale M. Menard, Trustee
Brian S. Pelkey, Trustee

ABSENT: Joseph Rodriguez, Trustee

OTHERS PRESENT: Becky Pelkey, Deputy Treasurer
Code Enforcement, John Cooper

RECORDING SECRETARY: Christopher Latremore, Clerk/Administrator

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

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

REGULAR SESSION:

I. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Pat Birkett as a member of the Dodge Memorial Library. Ms. Birkett wanted to discuss an issue that went back and forth last year, that caused an issue with the village administrator at that time. Ms. Birkett talked to the current administrator Mr. Latremore about this issue before it came up again this year. Ms. Birkett indicated that Juneteenth day is recognized as a federal and state holiday. The library board voted to close the library on Monday June 20, 2022, for the holiday falls on Sunday this year. The library president Mary O'Connor was unable to attend the trustee board meeting, so Ms. Birkett volunteered to speak on behalf of the library about this issue. Ms. Birkett advised the board of trustees that Ms. O'Connor wrote to the village clerk/administrator to let him know that this issue was forth coming. Mayor LaBonte told Ms. Birkett that he was familiar with the letter sent to the administrator. Ms. Birkett agreed that administrator's response was reasonable. Ms. Birkett indicated that in the administrator's response, he stated that since the employees at the library are part of the village payroll, it is right and justified that the library must follow the village approved holidays, and he is given the library reference materials. Ms. Birkett advised the board of trustees that this has been researched in the past, and the library is not a village department. The library is a public library and an independent entity. Ms. Birkett told the board of trustees, that past Mayor Dan Letourneau, did this research with the then the president of the library. It was found that the library is not considered a department of the municipality, but it is chartered as a separate entity, and just because the municipality provides support to the library it does not give it the power to control any aspect of the library operation. Ms. Birkett went on to say that based on the rules prepared the Nassau Library System, for the state of New York, it states that it is a library's board which determines vacation sick time with benefits. Ms. Birkett said this means the library has the authority to declare a holiday. Ms. Birkett wanted to give the board of trustees a heads up, to try to get this resolved before Juneteenth happens, for the library board voted to give Juneteenth as a holiday and close the library. Ms. Birkett advised the board that under the prior administration, it was kind of fudged. Mayor LaBonte asked what she meant by fudged. Ms. Birkett said that last year Juneteenth fell on a Saturday, and the person who was going to work was given the holiday, and the librarian came in and replaced that person, for it was just a couple of hours. This year the librarian who works part-time said she would not work Monday. The library will be closed so she said she would work a different day and not take a paid holiday. She will rearrange her schedule. In Ms. Birkett's eyes that is fudging the issue, and eventually we need to come to an agreement, and that is why she is here tonight. Ms. Birkett said that Mr. Latremore's answer, as fair as she was concerned, was not the least unreasonable. Ms. Birkett said that when she

joined the library board, she thought that it was like the fire department, a village department, which is subject to village rules. Ms. Birkett said she was surprised to find out that the library is not a village department, and that the library has its own authority. Mayor LaBonte indicated, that if the documents submitted are legal and accurate, then he will discuss with the full board of trustees as well as the administrator and will do what is legally entitled and right. Mayor LaBonte said he was not looking to get into any controversy but would like to review the documents. Mayor LaBonte said he does not want to do something different for one department and not for the others. Mayor LaBonte said he would make some phone calls and by the next meeting he would have a definite answer. Ms. Birkett said the Plattsburgh Library was closed for Juneteenth, as well as the City municipal buildings, and the schools are recognizing it, and the libraries fall under department of education policy. Mayor LaBonte said the village will have to address this issue eventually and that the board of trustees might as well address it now, that way we can move forward in the future. Mayor LaBonte indicated once again that he will research and have an answer by the next meeting. Ms. Birkett advised the mayor that the library director would be happy to answer any questions.

Nick Southwick questioned Mayor LaBonte on his wording from the April 4, 2022, board meeting, on mayoral appointments, for the replacing of Karin Thone from the Zoning Board Of Appeals. Mayor LaBonte advised Mr. Southwick that Ms. Thone's term had expired, and it was the decision of the mayor, on who the mayor wished to appoint to the board. Mayor LaBonte also confirmed that Mr. Duffy resigned from his position, and once again it was the mayor's decision on the appointment. Ms. Birkett told Mr. Southwick that she is the chair for the Zoning Board Of Appeals and that she confirms that the information stated by the mayor was accurate.

II. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

Trustee Arno made a motion to accept the minutes of the May 2, 2022, seconded by Trustee Menard. **ALL VOTED AYE.** Trustee Rodriguez Absent

III. BILLS: \$27,288.36 CHECK # 28451-28491

Deputy Treasurer Pelkey indicated that there were three bills added. Great America Financial Services \$430.92, Konica Minolta premier Finance \$407.41 and New York Power Authority \$82,325.94. Trustee Menard made a motion to pay the bills as presented, seconded by Trustee Menard. **All voted AYE.** Trustee Rodriguez Absent

IV. CORRESPONDENCE:

Clerk/Administrator Latremore advised the board that the application to the NYS Water Infrastructure Improvement grant was not selected to receive an award during this round. However, the village may reapply for a Water Infrastructure Improvement grant in the future. Clerk/Administrator emailed response to the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund advising them the village will proceed only upon receipt of a WIIA grant.

Clerk/Administrator Latremore advised the board that he received a letter from Montgomery Hose, Hook & Ladder Co., No. 1, Inc in reference to the annual elections of officers. The names were submitted for the mayoral appointments. Clerk/Administrator Latremore advised the board that on April 11, 2022 Chief LeBlance listed the mayoral appointments, and this information was provided for the April 18, 2022, meeting, at which time the mayor made the appointments. Clerk/Administrator Latremore also forwarded the mayor appointments to Clinton County Office of Emergency Services on April 19, 2022, for the Fire Advisory Board needed the delegates and alternate by May 1, 2022.

V. REPORTS OF THE MAYOR AND TRUSTEES:

a. MAYOR LaBonte

- 1) Thanked Mr. Latremore and George Rivers, for reaching out to the IEEP, and assisting on the Sportsman Club to receive grant money for new LED lighting.

b. TRUSTEE BENJAMIN J. ARNO:

- 1) Trustee Arno advised the board that the library steps are being worked on and are coming along nicely. The crew has started to pour the cement and the steps are looking good.
- 2) Thank the village crew for the sweeping of the roads and for the installation of the Hometown Hero Banners.
- 3) Trustee Arno made a special thank you to Charlene Sample, for all the arduous work and dedication, on the Hometown Hero Banners. Trustee Arno has heard a lot of compliments that it helps with the beautification of village streets.

c. TRUSTEE DALE MENARD:

- 1) Trustee Menard thanked Charlene Sample for her work and dedication on the banners and that they look great.
- 2) Trustee Menard also thanked the village crew on the sweeping and cleaning of the streets.

d. TRUSTEE BRIAN S. PELKEY:

- 1) Trustee Pelkey advised the board that the boat ramp has been installed at the boat dock.
- 2) Trustee Pelkey wanted to thank Charlene Sample, and the committee, on the Hometown Hero Banners that they really look nice and draws a lot of attention.
- 3) Trustee Pelkey had a meeting with the wastewater department. Everything is working normal, and we are still collaborating with the engineer on the installation of the dumping station at the facility. The engineer has submitted the plans to DEC, and once we receive the approval, we will be ready to move forward.
- 4) Trustee Pelkey discussed the vacation time that needs to be used by June 1, 2022. Trustee Pelkey indicated that most departments have complied, but the village office staff have been unable to meet the cut off June 1, 2022, due to sickness and extra work loads. Trustee Pelkey asked the board if they consider extending the vacation requirements by another 30 days.
Trustee Arno made a motion to extend the unused vacation time by an additional 30 day to July 1, 2022, second by Trustee Menard **All voted AYE** Trustee Rodriguez Absent.

e. TRUSTEE RODRIGUEZ:

- 1) Absent

VI. OTHER REPORTS:

- 1) Code Enforcement Officer Cooper advised the board that the permits are starting to pick up.
- 2) Code Enforcement Officer Cooper advised individuals that received violation notices that their appearance is coming up.

VII. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

No comment

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

Trustee Arno made a motion to adjourn at 7:26PM, seconded by Trustee Menard. **All voted AYE** Trustee Rodriguez Absent.

Respectfully Submitted,

Christopher W. Latremore

Christopher W Latremore
Village Clerk/Administrator