

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Rouses Point, New York held on April 3rd, 2023, at Halstead Hall, Civic Center, 39 Lake Street scheduled to commence at 7:00PM.

PRESENT: Dale Menard, Deputy Mayor
Brian S. Pelkey, Trustee
Benjamin J. Arno, Trustee
Nicholas C. Southwick, Trustee

ABSENT: John J. LaBonte, Mayor

OTHERS PRESENT: Arsene Letourneau, Treasurer
John Cooper, Code Enforcement Officer

RECORDING SECRETARY: Christopher Latremore, Clerk/Administrator

CALL MEETING TO ORDER:

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

OATH OF OFFICE:

Both Dale Menard and Nicholas Southwick were sworn in as Village of Rouses Point Trustees.

I. PUBLIC HEARING:

The board opened the public hearing for comments on the 2023-2024 Tentative Budget at 7:02PM.

Nobody addressed the board, and the public hearing was closed at 7:02PM.

II. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Ron LeBlanc

Ron LeBlanc described his intention to formally submit a proposal in order to buy some of the property that is next to the sewer plant. Mr. LeBlanc explained that he needs the extra space for future business plans. Trustee Pelkey mentioned that submitting a proposal is recommended to start the process of his request. Trustee Pelkey stated that in the past the Village was in the process of appraising the value of the property and the administration at the time never got

around to doing it. He also stated that the appraisal would have to be done for this process and submitting the proposal would start the process of getting the appraisal done.

Francis Stunzi; 37 Smith St.

Francis asked if there are any plans or any consideration into clearing the brush and cleaning up the trees on Lake St before the 4th of July Parade. Francis Stunzi is concerned because the process of clearing the brush was done too late last year and clearing the brush early will have the Village looking better for the 4th of July Parade. Trustee Arno mentioned that usually the prisoners clean the brush every year. Francis Stunzi stated that the prisoners might do it, but somebody must notify them of doing the job. Trustee Arno mentioned that the Village Clerk/Administrator Christopher Latremore does contact them to do this action. Francis Stunzi expressed that it should be done sooner so that it is done before the parade. Trustee Arno mentioned that it was done late last year and doesn't look bad now, as well as stating that some residents on Lake St don't want the trees cut at all. Administrator Latremore stated that the reason it was done late last year was due to the Covid-19 restrictions that the prisoners had at the time. Administrator Latremore did reach out to John Zurlo Jr. at the Altona Corrections Facility about this matter, but the work program was on hold until late last year due to the restrictions. Administrator Latremore mentioned that the Altona Corrections Facility will be contacted. Administrator Latremore said the public works men have projects they must get done and don't have time to work on clearing the brush so the only hope is the Altona Corrections Facility to get this task done.

Sharon Richards; 17 Maple St.

Sharon Richards asked for an update on the chicken situation and whether the board was going to deny the allowance or not. Deputy Mayor Menard stated that chickens are currently not allowed in the Village and so far, two petitions, one for and one against, have been brought to the board regarding the allowance of a certain number of chickens. He also stated that a public hearing has not been scheduled on this matter yet. Sharon Richards mentioned that people have been buying their chicks, so the board needs to decide as soon as possible whether to pass this or not. Deputy Mayor Menard stated that residents are not allowed to buy chicks or chickens until the Board amends the law to allow chickens. Sharon Richards asked the timeline for this decision. Deputy Mayor Menard stated that there is not a timeline on the matter. Deputy Mayor Menard mentioned that at the next board meeting a public hearing date for this matter will more than likely be decided. Sharon Richards asked if the board is making the decision on this matter based on majority rules. Trustee Arno stated that laws would have to be made like the City of Plattsburgh did. Trustee Arno stated that size of land, chicken coups, no roosters, and other elements would have to be decided on for the law. Trustee Arno stated that all the laws regarding this could take up to a year to be fully implemented. Administrator Latremore mentioned that this would take a minimum of two months for this matter to be decided on.

REGULAR SESSION:

III. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING:

Trustee Arno made a motion to accept the minutes of the March 20, 2023, regular meeting, and the special meeting held on March 22, 2023, seconded by Trustee Pelkey. **ALL VOTED AYE. MAYOR LABONTE ABSENT.**

IV. BILLS: \$16,572.78 CHECK # 29455-29485

Treasurer Arsene Letourneau indicated that there were no additions and no deletions to the bills: Trustee Arno made a motion to pay the bills, seconded by Trustee Pelkey. **ALL VOTED AYE. MAYOR LABONTE ABSENT.**

V. CORRESPONDENCE:

- 1) Administrator Latremore stated that an email was sent to the board from Mike Duffy, and it was signed Mike Duffy. Mr. Duffy expressed in the email his support for passing the law to allow chickens in the Village of Rouses Point. Mr. Duffy mentioned that he has read the law that was enacted in the City of Plattsburgh and suggested that the same elements and structure of their law would work in the Village of Rouses Point as well. Mr. Duffy also mentioned that with proper regulation on the size of land that would be allowed to house chickens would severely limit the number of chickens that would be in the Village.
- 2) Administrator Latremore stated that an opposing petition was sent in and received from Scott Richner against passing laws to allow chickens in the Village of Rouses Point and they were distributed to the Board.
- 3) Administrator Latremore mentioned that the recommended changes of the allowed uses pertaining to the I2 Zone were received from Patricia Birkett from the Zoning Board of Appeals and each member has a copy of that.
- 4) Administrator Latremore mentioned that the last item that was given to them is an email from Mark Haynes at 64 Maple St from ERS. The email asked the Board to review some development programs that they would like to do at 64 Maple. ERS has asked the board to hold a special meeting with ERS members on this matter.

VI. REPORTS OF THE MAYOR AND TRUSTEES:

A. MAYOR LABONTE

- 1) Absent

B. DEPUTY MAYOR DALE MENARD:

1)Trustee Pelkey motioned a vote on Resolution 2023-9 amending the water rates to reflect current Water Department operations which would make the monthly flat rate \$50.75 per month, seconded by Trustee Arno.

**MAYOR JOHN J. LABONTE-ABSENT
DEPUTY MAYOR DALE M. MENARD-AYE
TRUSTEE BENJAMIN J. ARNO-AYE
TRUSTEE BRIAN S. PELKEY-AYE
TRUSTEE NICHOLAS C. SOUTHWICK-AYE
MOTION PASSED AS AMENDED.**

2)Trustee Pelkey motioned a vote on Resolution 2023-10 which would adopt a budget for the new fiscal year making appropriations for the conduct of the Village government and establishing the rates of compensation for officers and employees for such period, seconded by Trustee Southwick.

**MAYOR JOHN J. LABONTE-ABSENT
DEPUTY MAYOR DALE M. MENARD-AYE
TRUSTEE BENJAMIN J. ARNO-AYE
TRUSTEE BRIAN S. PELKEY-AYE
TRUSTEE NICHOLAS C. SOUTHWICK-AYE
MOTION PASSED AS AMENDED.**

3)Trustee Pelkey motioned a vote on Resolution 2023-11 which expresses gratitude to Kevin Chagnon for his 35 years of volunteer service to the Rouses Point Fire Department, Walter Laramie who has celebrate 25 years of service to the Rouses Point Fire Department and 32 years of volunteering at Chazy Fire Department for a total of 57 years, Dennis Roberts who has celebrated 40 years of volunteer service to the Village of Rouses Point Fire Department, and Sally J. Smith for her 60 (yes, 60) years of volunteer service to the Rouses Point Fire Department Auxiliary, seconded by Trustee Southwick.

**MAYOR JOHN J. LABONTE-ABSENT
DEPUTY MAYOR DALE M. MENARD-AYE
TRUSTEE BENJAMIN J. ARNO-AYE
TRUSTEE BRIAN S. PELKEY-AYE
TRUSTEE NICHOLAS C. SOUTHWICK-AYE
MOTION PASSED AS AMENDED.**

4)Trustee Pelkey made a motion to authorize Administrator Latremore to publish legal notice for public hearing regarding the sewer laws, seconded by Trustee Arno.
ALL VOTED, AYE. MAYOR LABONTE ABSENT.

C. TRUSTEE BENJAMIN J. ARNO:

- 1) Trustee Arno stated that the windows at the railroad station are starting to turn black on the windowsill because they are single pane glass panels. Trustee Arno said that windows need to be addressed or there will be damage in the next couple of years if these don't get replaced. He mentioned that some of the panels are rounded at the top so they would have to be custom made. Administrator Latremore suggested that Steve LaBombard is contacted to go over and look.
- 2) Trustee Arno asked if there's any update on the contractor that is doing the demo on the Create Civic Center. Administrator Latremore indicated that his calls haven't been returned. Administrator Latremore mentioned that due to the grant funding from Billy Jones, he is in the process of getting quotes from Chazy Hardware to replace all the exterior doors and windows in the board room, as well as replace the flooring in the board room and flooring in the warming room. Administrator Latremore explained that he is in the process of getting an estimate for a turf in the rink for the spring time through fall also using the Billy Jones funding. The Plattsburgh Lacrosse Club is having trouble securing space in Plattsburgh due to some issue, the team asked if the civic center would be able to be rented out to them and Administrator Latremore agreed to this request. Administrator Latremore is hoping the civic center will be used more during the spring, summer, and early fall. Administrator Latremore suggested that bringing more people from around to use the civic center would be great for the village. Administrator Latremore stated that flag football is getting more and more popular and that's also a great opportunity to take advantage of for the civic center. Turf would work for flag football, lacrosse, and indoor soccer. He also said that the outdoor fields can be used for lacrosse tournaments that always gather a large crowd. Administrator Latremore said between the help of John Rodriguez for contacts and Trustee Arno's help, the Civic Center is working towards becoming more profitable for the village.

D. TRUSTEE BRIAN S. PELKEY:

- 1) Trustee Pelkey requested permission to authorize Heath, John, Jerry, and Brian to travel to Peru, NY on May 3, 2023, to attend an event for their licenses. Trustee Pelkey made a motion to authorize travel to Heath, John, Jerry, and Brian, seconded by Trustee Arno.

ALL VOTED, AYE. MAYOR LABONTE ABSENT.

- 1) Trustee Pelkey mentioned he had some items to take to executive session, but the matter must be put on hold until Mayor LaBonte can be present.
- 2) Trustee Pelkey stated that he spoke to the Public Works Supervisor and asked when the sweeping would start. The Supervisor stated that they will start cleaning and sweeping the roads starting on Wednesday, April 5, 2023. All the equipment needed for this matter has been serviced and they are ready to go. Trustee Pelkey mentioned that the black topping that needs to be done must be done between June and July. In

the village budget, Wood Haven Dr, Lakeview Dr, And Trahan Dr will be done which means that the Public Works Department will be very busy this summer.

E. TRUSTEE NICHOLAS C. SOUTHWICK:

- 1) Trustee Southwick wished the best for former Trustee Rodriguez and his family. He also thanked the board and administration for the warm welcome and looks forward to serving the Village.

VI. OTHER REPORTS:

- 1) None

VII. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Scott Richner; 16 Pratt St

Mr. Richner wanted to add a note to the opposing petition on the matter of chickens. He mentioned that his petition was not a door-to-door solicitation petition. The petition was thrown out to the public and people contacted Scott Richner to sign it. He stated that there were 104 signatures in-person, and 5 signatures from individuals in surrounding areas.

Carmine Della-Serra; Pearl St

Mr. Della-Serra asked who oversees the economic development of the village. Trustee Arno stated that the Village Board was responsible. Mr. Della-Serra asked if there was a specific committee that oversees events, planning, and other economic opportunities for the village. Administrator Latremore explained that the village doesn't have a specific board for economic development. Administrator Latremore expanded on the topic and explained that right now the Town of Champlain, Village of Champlain and Village of Rouses Point are essentially part of Champlain and they're correlating to promote all three municipalities together. Administrator Latremore stated that phase one included advertisements and that the advertisement is waiting to be approved for publication. Mr. Della-Serra asked where he would go to inquire about new developments in the economics of the Village. Administrator Latremore suggested contacting the Village office and he would be able to give him a run-down of what's in the works.

Sharon Richards; 17 Maple St.

Sharon Richards asked what there is to develop at 64 Maple St. She mentioned that about 3 or 4 years ago, when the Village was going through a lot because of that property, Clinton County had paperwork on file that stated nothing can be done or built on that land, and the ground cannot be disturbed because of the contaminants in the ground. Administrator Latremore explained that there are three buildings on the property. One is currently occupied, two have the

potential for tenants. Before going outside of the development, the present building needs to be occupied. Administrator Latremore mentioned that the biggest issue is the I2 Zone that is in place. In 1990, Pfizer was full blown, the zones were created with the thought that Pfizer wasn't going to leave the Village of Rouses Point. The I2 zone only really allowed pharmaceutical and certain other warehousing. After Pfizer left, the zoning never changed. The Board of Trustees asked the Zoning Board of Appeals to make recommendations on loosening the restrictions on the I2 zone. The Zoning Board Chair, Patricia Birkett came up to an agreement of suggestions that the Board of Trustees should allow. Administrator Latremore said that once those buildings are filled, ERS can contact Pfizer to see what can be permitted on that property. Sharon also asked about brush and other property maintenance going on. Code Officer Cooper mentioned that they were served a zoning violation last fall for this matter. Andrew Staulcup from ERS mentioned previously to Administrator Latremore and Code Enforcement Officer Cooper that they were having difficulty finding someone to do the work. They also mentioned that the property has come a long way in terms of aesthetics since last fall.

Harold Ashline; 136 Lake St

Harold Ashline mentioned that it's exciting that new businesses are coming into the village but there is no parking downtown and was wondering about the solution for this matter considering there is already a parking issue. He also mentioned that he is worried about chickens being allowed in the Village because of concerns over the enforcement and management of the chickens. Trustee Arno stated that back in the 1950's there were loads of businesses downtown and they had no parking issues then. Mr. Ashline stated that there is at this moment in time. Trustee Arno mentioned that many restaurants have parking behind them. Mr. Ashline stated that the elderly will not want to park in the back parking lots. Sharon Richards mentioned that even in the village parking lot, to get down to the sidewalk is on a downgrade and it is icy, and muddy depending on the season. She mentioned that this can be dangerous for older people walking with canes and walkers. Sharon Richards also stated that some individuals that live in the apartments are using village parking, and sometimes boats are parked in the Village parking lot all winter. Sharon Richards asked if they are paying a parking rental for storage of the boats. Administrator Latremore stated that someone can apply for a parking permit in the Village, and it can either be granted or denied. He also stated that there is no charge for a parking permit. Administrator Latremore said that per the village code they can't charge for it. Trustee Arno mentioned that in the future it is worthwhile reviewing the way the parking permits work and maybe start charging for parking vehicles like boats or not even allow boats to be parked there. Trustee Arno stated that in terms of the chickens, the reason for the public forum is for the residents to express their issues on the matter. Sharon Richards asked how this public forum will be announced. Administrator Latremore explained that a notice will be published in the paper. The notice will also be posted in the Village office, the digital sign at the Civic Center will also have a notice on it, and it will be on the Village website. Administrator Latremore stated that the biggest mistake the Village of Rouses Point has made is abolishing the police department. He recognized that it was costly for the Village residents, but the village is now seeing the ramifications of not having one in place. Administrator Latremore mentioned that he has had conversations with Trustee Pelkey on developing constables for the Village. Sharon Richards mentioned that reinstating Village police should be something the Village investigates in the next

year. Trustee Pelkey stated that it is too costly to have a full police force due to the minimal funding the Village has.

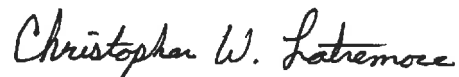
George Walker; 64 Montgomery St

George Walker asked what was going to be done for the individuals that dedicated so much of their time to the Rouses Point Fire Department as volunteers and asked if they received a certificate. Trustee Arno mentioned that at the Fireman's Banquet they will receive a plaque and be acknowledged for their service.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT:

Trustee Arno made a motion to adjourn at 8:00PM, seconded by Trustee Pelkey. **ALL VOTED AYE. MAYOR LABONTE ABSENT.**

Respectfully Submitted,



Christopher W Latremore
Village Clerk/Administrator