

Board of Trustees Meeting

December 11, 2023; 7pm

MINUTES

Call to Order (Regular Meeting): by Mayor Howe with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00pm.

Present: Mayor John Howe; Trustees K. Schassler, R. O'Mara-Garcia, P. Minahan; Village Clerk D. Kelleher, Deputy Clerk S. Davis, Jr., Attorney K. Dow, Treasurer P. Delong, Chatham residents Kerstin Briggs and _____, Adam Black. Not present: Trustee M. Spock.

First Public Comment (limited to 15 minutes):

1. Chatham resident K. Briggs and _____ circled back to the topic of 5G technology which was previously brought to the attention of the Board. Briggs asked if the Board had an opportunity to look into it further. Mayor Howe indicated that he had and that to his knowledge there has not been any push for 5G from any vendors or public agencies to move in that direction, from the Village standpoint where the Village would need to give approvals.

_____ added that 5G is being implemented in many Towns and in many states. Telecomm companies are pushing 5G saying that 5G will give better cell reception and faster data. These companies have not been able to prove the safety of 5G. She stated that the electromagnetic radiation that comes off the towers have been proven to affect our cellular levels. Causes headaches, exhaustion, neuro-toxicity for some people to various degrees. Some towns have decided to wait on approval of 5G until safety data can be presented. It has happened in some towns like Sheffield, MA where people have become sick and needed to evacuate and companies do not take responsibility. What Kerstin had previously presented was information which shows studies of the ill-effects of 5G towers being brought into communities, and once the towers are up they are extremely difficult to have removed. Stamford, CT recently decided to not allow 5G towers to be erected until safety data is available. Mayor noted that 2/3 of the Village is in the Town of Ghent, and 1/3 is in the Town of Chatham. These 2 Towns can regulate what they choose to regulate independent of the Village. The Mayor stated again that up to this point in time there have been no requests made to put any 5G towers up. He thanked them for coming to the meeting and providing the information, and stated that if and when a request is made to erect a 5G tower the Village, the Board will take the information presented under advisement prior to decision. Resident Adam Black commented that he is in support of the information which was brought to the Board.

2. Village resident Adam Black presented his business concept of refurbishing e-bike batteries and creating a circular economy with the lithium and other metal materials that go into lithium ion batteries. Partners like Blue Whale Materials, among others that take batteries from various sources and crush them up and put the lithium back into the system. There is a vital need, on a local level, national level, self-defense level, economic level, for lithium as "lithium is like the new oil". Important for America to source it's lithium here as opposed to getting it from China, Chile, Russia and elsewhere. The idea is to create demonstration project with our partners, to collect safely, easily, and add value to community by having the resource to collect these lithium ion

batteries. It's a community project, no community money involved, which would be sponsored by his company, Blue Whale materials, and Community Bank has said they are interested. As a demonstration project we would like to create a place, enclosure, possibly near Community Bank, to collect batteries. If it works reasonably well it could be brought to other Community Bank locations (approximately 300) across the state. There are already places like Best Buy where you can drop batteries off but people don't know about it and it's not state-wide. We would like to do this state-wide. Black states that he would like to get the support of the Board and of the community, and work together to explore and work through any issues that might arise in the planning. R. O'Mara-Garcia asked for clarification what type of batteries. Response from A. Black: E-bike batteries. He also reiterated that they are looking for 2 things: 1. consideration of the project in the Depot Square area due to accessibility, and possible "marriage" with Community Bank, etc.; 2. (He never stated number 2).

Mayor Howe mentioned that the Depot Square property is not all Community Bank property and that the Village owns a portion. Historic over zone brings another level of requirements for approval and it is something that would need to be considered. A. Black asked about the vehicle charging stations and Mayor Howe explained that the charging stations are a cooperative effort on the part of the Towns...the Towns maintain the charging stations. The station at Depot Square is in the Town of Ghent and the station in the Main Street municipal lot near the brewery is in the Town of Chatham. However, they are on Village property.

Departments and Committees Reports:

>**Building Department:** Building Inspector, Erin Reis. *Read by D. Kelleher.*

>**Police Department:** Acting Chief J. Alessi; Police Commissioner Pete Minahan. *Presented by J. Alessi.*

>**Fire Department:** Chief P. Rideout; Fire Commissioner Melony Spock. *Read by D. Kelleher.*

>**DPW:** Foreman P. Genovese; Wastewater/Water Commissioner Ralph O'Mara-Garcia; Streets & Snow Removal Commissioner Karyn Schassler. *Read by D. Kelleher.*

Approve Minutes Nov. 13, 2023. *So moved by R. O'Mara-Garcia, seconded by K. Schassler. Approved by all.*

Approve Nov. 2023 Budget to Actuals. *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by P. Minahan. Approved by all.*

NEW BUSINESS:

Resolution 160 of 2023 – To authorize the Mayor to sign a one-year agreement between the Village of Chatham and **Columbia County MIS** to provide computer related services for the period **January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024.** *So moved by P. Minahan, seconded by R. O'Mara-Garcia. Approved by all.*

Resolution 161 of 2023 – To certify the **Unpaid 2023 Taxes Report** indicating **\$17,908.81** in billed taxes and penalties, which remain uncollected. *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by P. Minahan. Approved by all.*

Resolution 162 of 2023- To authorize the Mayor to sign the **Town of Ghent Fire protection** contract for the term January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024, in the amount of **\$28,435.21** (3% increase over last year). *So moved by R. O'Mara-Garcia, seconded by P. Minahan. Approved by all.*

Resolution 163 of 2023 – To authorize the Mayor to sign the **Town of Kinderhook Fire protection** contract for the term January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024, in the amount of **\$17,021.08** (3% increase over last year). *So moved by P. Minahan, seconded by K. Schassler. Approved by all.*

Resolution 164 of 2023 – To establish a *specific* **Capital Improvement Reserve Fund to be known as the “Village of Chatham Hudson & Houseman Avenues Water Main Reserve Fund”**. (for phase 3 of the **Hudson Ave waterline** replacement project, from Church Street to Cemetery Hill, and for the replacement of the **entire length** of waterline on **Houseman Avenue**). ...Subject to Permissive Referendum now and notice needs to be published. *So moved by P. Minahan, seconded by R. O'Mara-Garcia. Approved by all.*

Resolution 165 of 2023 – Proposing the **Adoption of Amended Levels of Real Property Tax Exemptions for Senior Citizens** Under Real Property Tax Law Section 467. *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by P. Minahan. Approved by all.*

Resolution 166 of 2023 – To Amend the Budget to **Increase the Appropriation for Retirement**. *So moved by R. O'Mara-Garcia, seconded by P. Minahan. KD: Increased wages to Village personnel and necessary expenditures for retirement benefits in the amount \$21,271. Approved by all.*

Resolution 167 of 2023 – To establish a **“Type” Capital Improvement Reserve Fund** to be known as the **“Village of Chatham Water Main Replacement Reserve Fund”**. *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by P. Minahan. KD: This creates a holding fund for money. No obligation. No max. Permissive referendum is on the back end, when it comes time to spend the money. Right now we only need a resolution to put money into it. Approved by all.*

Resolution 168 of 2023 – To **amend the budget to reflect a Grant for purchase of police vests**. *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by P. Minahan. This does not require public hearing or permissive referendum. It may be acted on tonight. Approved by all.*

Resolution 169 of 2023 – To authorize the CPD to purchase **seventeen (17) Safe Life Defense Level IIIA Bulletproof vests** from Safe Life, per Q# QN006728, dated November 29, 2023, in the total amount of **\$14,060.53**. *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by P. Minahan. Approved by all.*

Resolution 170 of 2023 – To introduce **“A Local Law Providing Real Property Tax Exemptions for Volunteer Firefighters and Ambulance Workers”**. *So moved by P. Minahan, seconded by R. O'Mara-Garcia. Need to set public hearing for next month. Approved by all.*

Resolution 171 of 2023 – To introduce “A Local Law Amending the Income Levels of Tax Exemption for Persons with Disabilities and Limited Income”. *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by P. Minahan. Need to set public hearing for next month. Approved by all.*

Resolution 172 of 2023 – To adopt the updated **Village Procurement Policy** as reviewed and amended by Village Treasurer P. DeLong and Village Attorney K. Dow, **December 11, 2023**. *So moved by P. Minahan, seconded by R. O’Mara-Garcia. Approved by all.*

Resolution 173 of 2023 – To accept **Benjamin Horst, Matthew Horst, Erik O’Dell, Angela McCagg, and Nicholas Forcier** as new members to the **Ocean Fire Company #1, for the Chatham Fire Department**. *So moved by P. Minahan, seconded by R. O’Mara-Garcia. Approved by all.*

Introduction of:

1. “A Local Law to **Establish a 2-Hour Parking Limit on Railroad Avenue**” – There is still a need to manage parking better on Main Street and in other areas of the Village. *Looking into either parking meters or kiosk parking similar to Albany. Tabled the introduction of this LL pending revision/addition of modifications to parking in other areas of the Village by K. Dow.*

Items for Discussion:

- Sam/Ken working on issuing **reminder notices of overdue taxes** covering **2008-current year**.
- **DPW purchase bucket truck** – See quote from Village Truck Sales. Ghent is also looking into purchasing a new bucket truck as the one we used to borrow from them is out of commission. We did not plan for purchasing a bucket truck in this budget year, but we should look at including it in next year’s budget.

Second Public Comment Period (limited to 15 minutes): *Chatham resident K. Briggs is not in favor of parking meters on Main Street and hopes some other solution can be attained. Mayor Howe would like to invite a few shop owners for an ad hoc committee regarding Main Street parking.*

Executive Session: For discussion of potential, proposed, pending or current litigation.

Enter Executive session: *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by R. O’Mara-Garcia and all approved at 8:31pm.*

Exit Executive session: *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by P. Minahan. All approved at 8:49pm.*

Adjournment: *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by P. Minahan. All approved at 8:49pm.*

Next meeting: January 8, 2024; 7:00pm

Meeting Place: VILLAGE OF CHATHAM, NEW YORK, TRACY MEMORIAL BUILDING, 77 MAIN STREET, CHATHAM, NY 12037

Respectfully submitted,

Desiree Kelleher

Village Clerk

(Rev. 12/31/23)