

VILLAGE OF RENSSELAER FALLS
Regular Meeting Minutes by Zoom
April 6, 2020
(6:00 P.M.)

Present: Mayor Michael Hammond, Deputy Mayor Charles Fifield, Trustee's, Jolene LaSieve and James Blackburn

Trustee Connie McAllister was present by cell phone placed on speaker.

Also in Attendance: Clerk Treasurer Lisa Hammond, Sewer Superintendent Mark Basford, Code Enforcement Officer Tim Tuttle, Mark Bomyea, Brandon Kelley, Fire Chief Dallas Denny, Town of Canton Council member Bob Washo, Jerry Godwin, Brian Davis, John & Bonnie Danis, Ellis Giacomelli from the Watertown Daily Times

Absent: Village Attorney Henry Leader

Mayor Michael Hammond opened the meeting at 6 pm and read over the rules and procedures of conducting a zoom meeting.

1. Pledge of Allegiance was said by all in attendance
2. Appropriations approved:
General and Sewer

Motion: Charles Fifield

Seconded: Jolene LaSieve Vote: animous

3. Approval of Minutes:

Minutes of March 2, 2020 Regular board meeting were approved.

Motion: James Blackburn

Seconded: Jolene LaSieve

Vote: unanimous

4. Reports: Departments and Committees

- a. Sewer Report:

Mark Basford reported that all the flows at the Sewer Plant are good.

Basford added that he had a soft violation due to high flows and paperwork has been submitted and is ok.

Discussion was held on purchasing a camera for use in sewer lines.

Trustee Charles Fifield asked if other municipalities have cameras that Rensselaer Falls could borrow or purchase a camera together to share. Fifield expressed his concern of the aging sewer system.

Trustee Jolene LaSeige asked if Basford would operate the camera and he stated yes.

LaSeige expressed her concern about the six times at least that the Village has paid for someone else to operate a camera.

Basford noted that it would be handy to have our own to help speed up the process of repairing aging lines. All board members have previously reviewed new camera quotes. Trustee James Blackburn stated he is full support of owning our own camera due to the aging system.

Approval to allow Basford to purchase a Wohler brand camera and monitor at a price of \$6,522.00 in the 2019-2020 budget year.

Motion: James Blackburn

Seconded: Charles Fifield

Vote: unanimous

Discussion was held on the emergency preparedness plan. and the generator that has sat at the Sewer Plant for years and not had much use. This generator gets started every month.

PTO generator was discussed in the past. Mark Basford recommended a welder generator for the Sewer Plant.

After discussion it was decided to relocate the generator from the Sewer Plant to the Fire Department - but owned by Village, but housed by the fire department. The Fire Department will build a shed to house the Generator.

After discussion was decided to purchase a new generator for the Sewer Plant in the 2020-2021 budget year. Tabled to May

Trustee Jolene LaSiege would like to see some homework done on grants and pricing.

All in agreement

Basford is speaking with DEC about starting the sand replacement process this summer, noting that there is a lot of leg work to be done.

b. Code Enforcement Report:

Tim Tuttle stated that things are going well. Tuttle issued 1 permit. A new Building code will be starting on May 13, 2020. It will be a digital version and if the municipalities want books they will have to pay for them. The Playground paper work has finally come to a close and should have paperwork before the next board meeting. Tuttle wants Planning and Zoning members to be trained in a group hopefully in the Village Office after the COVID 19 is over.

Motion to accept Code Officers report by Trustee Connie McAllister, seconded by Trustee James Blackbur. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

c. Clerk's Report

Clerk Hammond reported that things are going well

Hammond added that three bills came in
General \$198.43 Merrimans and \$149.90 for Zoom
Sewer \$127.78 Merrimans

Motion: Charles Fififled Seconded: James Blackburn Vote: unanimous

d. Mayor's Report:

Mayor Michael Hammond discussed the little libraries that have now become food pantries due to the COVID19 virus. Hammond reported that the pantries and being used in a moderate manner and that donations continue to come in.

Motion to accept Mayors report by Trustee Connie McAllister, seconded by Trustee James Blackburn. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

e. Committee Reports:

Trees - None
Playground - Jerry Godwin to put equipment up
Falls Festival - Discussion was held on t-shirt sales

Motion to approve all Committee reports Connie McAllister, seconded by Trustee Charles Fifield. All voted in favor, motion carries.

5. New Business:

a. New Fire & Rescue Department Members - Discussion & Approval

Motion to approve Brian Davis to join the Fire Department and Rescue Squad by Trustee James Blackburn, seconded by Trustee Charles Fified. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

Motion to approve Robert Denny to join the Fire Department by Trustee Connie McAllister, seconded by Trustee James Blackburn. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

Motion to approve Derek Wainwright to join the Fire Department as a Junior FireFighter by Trustee James Blackburn, seconded by Trustee Connie McAllister. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

b. Easter Bunny - Discussion

Discussion was held on the Fire Department driving through the Village with Easter Bunny Brandon Kelly riding on top of a firetruck throwing eggs filled with candy to childrens yards - keeping social distancing.

This event will take place on Easter Sunday in the Village at 12 noon, flyers will be handed out. This is not to be advertised due to the COVID 19 virus.

A brief discussion was held on Shutting down the Playground.

c. Tax Relevy - Discussion

It was approved to relevy \$10, 214.00 to Village June tax bills. Listing was sent to board members via email.

Motion to approve by Trustee Charles Fified, seconded by Trustee Connie McAllsier. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

d. COVID-19 - Discussion

Mayor Hammond reported that the board members and himself have been in contact with the Fire Department on nearly a daily basis. Trustee Jolene LaSeige

gave a brief overview of what she is seeing as a RN at Claxton Hepburn Hospital in Ogdensburg.

Trustee James Blackburn handed out flyers in the Amish Community to help spread the work to them about COVID19 virus.

e. Spring Cleanup - Discussion

Discussion was held on spring clean up for the season. Mayor Hammond stated that he has been in contact with the Town Highway Superintendent and everything is running behind due to the COVID virus.

Hammond noted that Jerry Godwinn will be the Villages handyman this season. Hammond noted that he has had preliminary discussion on renting and or owning a Bobcat frontend loader.

f. Tree in Memory of Donald Brown - Discussion & Possible Approval

Due to the recent passing of Donald Brown, a long time Rensselaer Falls resident it was decided to purchase a tree and have it planted in Pioneer Park by our tree committee in his memory.

Motion made by Trustee Connie McAllister, seconded by Trustee James Blackburn. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

g. Camera/Sewer - Discussion & Possible Approval

see Code Enforcement report above

h. Generator/Sewer - Discussion & Possible Approval

see Code Enforcement report above

i. 2020-2021 Preliminary Budget - Discussion

Mayor Michael Hammond stated that there is still some work to be done. Hammond noted that Karen Clary is helping as a second clerk due to Esther Gushea resigning. Hammond will be working with new elected Trustee James Blackburn and Mark Basford. Blackburn has been working on a draft emergency preparedness plan. Blackburn wants to see put in the budget as a line item.

6 . Updates:

a. Pavilion Project - Discussion

Mayor Michael Hammond stated that the project bids were extended two weeks due to the COVID19 virus.

Discussion was held on Montroy bringing in top soil for the Pioneer Park project from last year.

b. National Grid - Discussion

Discussion was held on the new LED Street lights. National Grid has been great work with. The project is about 85% done. Mayor Hammond did have one concern from a resident about the health hazard of the LED light. They do make a shield for them and can be considered.

Discussion was held on additional street lights being added.

Discussion was held on the addition to poles to allow for Christmas lights.

c. Ditch Work - Discussion

Mayor Michael Hammond stated that he has seen an increased interest from contractors wanting to bid on Village projects.

Trustee James Blackburn talked about his research in the poor drainage in the Village. French drains would be a good solution. Blackburn to keep researching to work toward a solution. St. Lawrence County Planning Office may be able to help out with maps.

7. Any other business that may come before the Board:

8:01 p.m. adjourned

Motion: Charles Fified

Seconded: James Blackburn

Vote: unanimous

Respectfully Submitted:

Lisa Hammond, Village Clerk