

**VILLAGE OF RENSSELAER FALLS**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**December 6th, 2021**  
**6:00 P.M.**

Present: Mayor Michael Hammond, Deputy Mayor Charles Fified, Trustee Jolene LaSiege, Trustee Stacy Gushea, Trustees Connie McAllister, Attorney Henry Leader, Sewer Superintendent Mark Basford and Code Enforcement Officer Tim Tuttle, Village Clerk Lisa Hammond, Fire Chief Dallas Denny, Jeff Hammond

5:30 p.m Entered into Executive Session for the purpose of personnel

Motion: Stacy Gushea            Seconded: Connie McAllister            Vote: unanimous

5:59 p.m came out of Executive Session

Motion: Connie McAllister    Seconded: Jolene LaSiege            Vote: unanimous

6:00 p.m. Mayor Michael Hammond opened the Regular monthly meeting

Addition to agenda: Swearing in of Mayor Michael Hammond

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

Bills were audited by Trustees Charles Fified and Connie McAllister

Motion: Connie McAllister    Seconded: Charles Fified            Vote: unanimous

3. Approval of Minutes:

Minutes of November 8, 2021

Motion: Stacy Gushea            Seconded: Jolene LaSiege    Vote: unanimous

4. Trustees Sworn In:

Clerk Lisa Hammond swore Trustees Stacy Gushea and Jolene LaSiege in for a two year term ending December 2023.

Clerk Lisa Hammond also swore Mayor Michael Hammond in for a two year term ending December 2023.

#### 5. Appointments:

Clerk Lisa Hammond

Deputy Mayor Charles Fified

Planning Board full now with additions of Sam Booth and Kira Hammond

Zoning Board is also full

Official Newspaper - North Country This Week/Now

Mileage - .56 cents

Motion: Charles Fified Seconded: Connie McAllister Vote: unanimous

#### 6. Reports: Departments and Committees

##### a. Sewer Report: Written report was received.

Mark Basford was present 's and stated all is well at the sewer plant. Snowblower has been put on the new tractor. Attachments are all taken care of and in place. A brief discussion was held on a past sewer issue at King Street, the problem seems to be resolved at that location at this time.

Motion: Connie McAllister Seconded: Jolene LaSiege Vote: unanimous

##### b. Code Enforcement Report: Report was received via email.

Tim Tuttle was present and brief discussion was held on non compliances and compliant people. Five issues are being addressed at this time. Tuttle reported he is still working on matters and some will be going to court. Discussion was held on a recent garage fire in the Village and what approach should be taken and possible next steps. Power has been cut to the home. Mayor Michael Hammond asked Attorney Henry Leader to put some thought into this property, as it is not good for the community inlight of all the debrid around the property. Adding this property to the list for the Code Enforcement Office, Tim Tuttle will make it number six. Fire Chief Dallas Denny added his knowledge of the circumstances of the property. Mayor Michael Hammond asked Tuttle if he was contacted about a building permit for two ongoing construction projects; an addition and a new roof within the Village. Tuttle was not aware, but will contact these homeowners.

Tuttle finalized a permit for Brayton Footes driveway extension, noting that he would have liked to run this through the Zoning Board of Appeals as a dry run. Foote would like to be an alterment for any member on the Planning or Zoning Board. Training is scheduled for December 7, 2021 7 - 8:30 p.m.

Motion: Jolene LaSiege                      Seconded: Stacy Gushea                      Vote: unanimous

c. Clerk's Report:

Clerk Lisa Hammond reported that she emailed Jeff Dollinger about the number of FireFighters interior and exterior to be in compliance for Cancer Coverage through the Village Insurance Company. Fire Chief Dallas Denny was present and asked Clerk Hammond to forward this request to Karin Blackburn as she was in charge of membership. Mayor Michael Hammond would like a list of current officers for the Website. CHIPS reimbursement has been submitted.

Motion: Stacy Gushea                      Seconded: Charles Fifield                      Vote: unanimous

d. Mayor's Report:

Mayor Hammond stated that he attended the Mayors Dinner in Heuvelton and the Youth Development Bureau of St. Lawrence County, run by Miss Backus, who was the guest presenter. Backus is from the Heuvelton area, recently moved back from living in Chicago and Indiana doing numerous things in Public Service. Backus is the Director and gave a good presentation to the Mayors Association. Backus provided survey results and her knowledge on what the Youth Bureau provides. Mayor Michael Hammond will be serving on the Youth Development Board for the Youth Bureau. 17 School Districts are in St. Lawrence County and Backus's goal is to have 2 students from each school be involved. Discussion was held on job shadowing through this program. Brief discussion on Sales Tax was held and keeping this the subject on board members radar. Mayor Michael Hammond thanked the Fire Department and Tradesman Contracting for once again erecting Santa in Pioneer Park. Michael Hammond and Natalie Denny completed their BEFO training for exterior fire fighting in a group of about 19 people that went through. Hammond stated it was a very good experience. Hammond added that he will take care of the ongoing logo format issue.

Motion: Connie McAllister                      Seconded: Stacy Gushea                      Vote: unanimous

e. Committee Reports:

Mayor Michael Hammond stated that there is a Holiday Decorating contest going on, flyers are available and posted around the Village. Kevin Hammond sponsored the event with a \$150.00 donation. \$50 to each of the three winners.

*Trees* - Waiting on National Grid. Mayor Hammond to reach out to them.

Playground/Falls Festival Committee:

Jolene LaSiege stated that the last of the tshirts came in and Connie McAllister helped with separating and distributing. Leftovers have been pushed out on Facebook. Mayor Michael Hammond stated that Brian Hammond wants to come back and play at the Festival next year. Committee members are in agreement to this. Hammond to let Brian know it's a go but time slots for the band have not been finalized until it is presented at committee. Michael Hammond wants to set a committee meeting date and start planning fundraisers. Jolene LaSiege wants to see a new cotton candy machine purchase.

Motion: Charles Fifield      Seconded: Stacy Gushea      Vote: unanimous

5. New Business:

a. Canton Recreation:

Mayor Michael Hammond noted that he forwarded an email received from Canton Town Supervisor Ashley and asked for input on the email received from her. Mayor Hammond stated that he hopes the current recreation director Ms. Richardson didn't get in hot water for attending the Village of Rensselaer Falls board meeting last month. All board members are in agreement that it was the appropriate thing for her to do (attend our meeting and introduce herself). Mayor Hammond to craft a response to said email with help from trustee Gushea. Trustee Gushea stated she does not feel the need to attend a meeting on this matter, as this should be held in a committee setting. Trustee LaSiege stated that our tax dollars contribute to recreation and here in the Village do not get much to show for it. Both Gushea and LaSiege do not want to contribute to this fund when nothing is done for the Village residents at this time. Richardson was not at last month's meeting for programming, stated

Mayor Hammond just introductions.

b. CR 14 and Congress Street Ditches:

Mayor Michael Hammond stated that he is waiting for Steven Smith to officially sworn in to approach him on this matter. Ernie Swartsfigure is working hard on the beaver problem in this area. Trustee Stacy Gushea requested that Hammond ask Smith to look at her property in this area also. Hammond added that he will also talk with Smith about manhole issues from paving at the West Front Street location. Hammond noted that Mark Basford used cold patch on the covers and wants this done correctly.

c. Tractor Purchase:

Tractor was purchased through a State Contract. This coming out of the Sewer Budget. Mayor Michael Hammond asked for approval for Clerk Lisa Hammond to send full payment on the tractor from all board members. All board members were in agreement. Clerk Hammond will email all board members current bank statements for the Sewer account.

d. Town of Canton Fire Contract:

Mayor Michael Hammond noted that there has been an increase in fire tax. All fire departments received an \$2,500.00 increase with the exception of the Village of Canton Fire Department. Mayor Michael Hammond stated for the record he signed the Contract and will get it back to Canton.

e. Marijuana regulation and Taxation Act:

Discussion was held and it was decided that at this time the Village Board will not respond. Under the current law a "No Response" from the Village of RF means that the Village is opting into the Act.

## 6. Updates.

### a. Fire Department Request: Discussion

Mayor Michael Hammond stated that this has been discussed for the past three months. It was six years ago when the Village bought six sets of turnout gear. The turnout gear lasts 10 years. Data was received from the Fire Department of age of gear and accessories. These are State requirements. Trustee Charles Fified proposed that the Village purchase accessories to bring them current. This proposal did not pass. Fire Chief Dallas Denny was present and explained how important proper gear is to protect the fire fighter, exterior and interior. Chief Denny noted the department has 8 interior Fire Fighters at this time. Denny provided the Board members with a current quote on equipment and noted that not only does the prices continue to raise the wait time in receiving them increases also. Trustee Jolene LaSiege noted that the Village gives \$19,000.00 each year in the budget. LaSiege asked Chief Denny about budgeting for these items within their department. Denny stated that it is not a line item in their budget. Village Board members were in agreement that purchasing six seats of turnout gear would not be feasible as they would all expire at the same time. Board members feel two a year would help with the rotation cycle for replacement and staying current. Discussion was held at length and it was decided to purchase one set of turnout gear. Trustee LaSiege noted that there was a request for items needed and or purchased due to having \$2,000.00 in the budget for emergency services and that the request had not been answered. The Fire Chief Dallas Denny also noted \$1,000.00 of unused Bingo monies. Discussion was held at length and it was proposed by Trustee Stacy Gushea to purchase two sets of turnout gear, this did not pass. Trustee LaSiege suggested transferring funds to cover purchasing of needed turnout gear. It was agreed upon by board members. Trustee Charles Fified made a motion to purchase one set of turnout gear. Mayor Michael Hammond wants to look at what the stimulus money can be spent on, like helping the Fire Department. Motion for the Village to purchase one set of turnout gear by Charles Fified, seconded by Connie McAllister. All board members voted in favor. Trustee Stacy Gushea voted in favor of one set, but would have liked two sets purchased.

- b. CHIPS Submission: Clerk Hammond stated reimbursement has been requested.
- c. Senator Ritchie Grant:  
An extension has been requested, with Laura Bomyea back in the loop looking into this for the Village. The Village would still like to see a pavilion built.

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

8:01 p.m closed regular monthly board meeting

Motion: Connie McAllister      Seconded: Charles Fifield      Vote: unanimous

8:02 p.m. went back into executive session for the purpose for personnel

Motion: Connie McAllister      Second: Charles Fifield      Vote: unanimous

8:16 p.m. came out of executive session

Motion: Stacy Gushea      Seconded: Charles Fifield      Vote: unanimous

Respectfully Submitted:  
Lisa Hammond, Village Clerk