

# VILLAGE OF RENSSELAER FALLS

March 10, 2025

## 6:00 P.M. Regular Monthly Meeting

Present: Mayor Michael Hammond, Deputy Mayor Connie McAllister, Trustees Samanth Booth and Nicholas Calton, Village Clerk Lisa Hammond, Ralph Hammond, Bob Poor, Agnes Hoey and Emily Hastings

Absence: Attorney Henry Leader, Trustee Jolene LaSiege, Code Enforcement Officer Ron Dulmage and Sewer Superintendent Mark Basford

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

A moment of silence was held in honor of Claude Palmer, who recently passed away unexpectedly. Mayor Michael Hammond noted that Claude was a pillar of the Community, an olde guard and a great dancer.

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

Bills were audited by Trustees Nicholas Calton and Connie McAllister

Motion to approve bills.

Motion: Connie McAllister    Seconded: Nicholas Calton    Vote: unanimous

3. Approval of Minutes:

Minutes of January 13, 2025 and February 10, 2025 were approved

Motion: Connie McAllister    Seconded: Nicholas Calton    Vote: unanimous

4. Reports: Departments and Committees

a. Sewer Report: Mark Basford was not present. Mayor Hammond read his report.

24 Hours reported by Basford for and 32 Hours reported for Jared Murray for the Month of February 2025

Motion: Nicholas Calton                      Seconded: Samantha Booth    Vote: unanimous

- b. Code Enforcement Report: Code Officer Ron Dulmage was not present, Mayor Michael Hammond stated that he and Trustee Nicholas Calton met with the Code Officer. Hammond noted they discussed Dobbs, Barrs and the Burnt Apartment Building on Rensselaer Street of Reynolds. Discussion was held on properties with a number of cars in yards. Dulmage is working toward goals of cleaning up. Dulmage is going to work with the County on a few properties. Mayor Hammond reminded all present that a letter went out to residents about compliance and that our newly appointed Code Officer would be available with any questions or concerns.

Motion: Nicholas Calton                      Seconded: Samantha Booth    Vote: unanimous

- c. Clerk's Report: Clerk Lisa Hammond reported that she reported to the retirement system for the Sewer Plant employees as she does each month. Hammond noted that she met on budget matters and also with the Library Steering Committee on the addition project.

Motion: Nicholas Calton                      Seconded: Samantha Booth    Vote: unanimous

- d. Mayor's Report: Michael Hammond Noted that he attended the Mayors Dinner at eh Freight House in Ogdensburg. Hammond went on to Andrea Smith of National Grid was present at this dinner and spoke of the funding help National Grid gave to Pickens Hall in Heuvelton with the addition of the St.Lawrence Federal Credit Union occupying part of their building. Hammond got her contact information and is going to reach out to her about the Library/Village project that will begin later this month, with a letter asking for support and sending the Village in the right direction. Mayor Hammond stated that the Dinner was well attended and informational. Next Mayor's Dinner will be hosted by Mayor Mike Dalton of Canton.

Motion: Nicholas Calton                      Seconded: Samantha Booth    Vote: unanimous

- e. Committee Reports:

*Trees* - none

Falls Festival/Playground:

Committee reports approved by motion of:

5. New Business:

a. Budget Draft 2025-2026 Discussion

Mayor Michael Hammond reported that Clerk Lisa Hammond, Becky Donnelly and he met on budget matters. This is the first round of discussions tonight. Discussion was held, questions and answers were received. Mayor Hammond noted social security in QuickBooks is still giving us an issue of not reporting correctly, even though it is correct on the budget. Grant Loan application line down to \$2,500.00. Fire and rescue \$8,000 and \$6,000 respectively. The fire department is in really good financial shape and have not brought forward any requests for additional funding needs. Mayor Hammond reminded the board that we were giving the departments nearly 100 percent of our real property tax revenue while other communities are giving much less. Trustee Samantha Booth noted that the Village Board has not been approached by any Fire Department member, nor rescue squad with a request or need for funding. Recreation has a proposed decrease depending on the RFP's to come in April. The Emergency Preparedness line has been zeroed out for next year due to it not being used in the last two budget cycles. Mayor Michael Hammond noted that 2 sand beds were replaced at the Sewer Treatment Plant. CD's that were cashed are being used toward the sand replacement, Mayor Hammond reminded the board members. The Code Enforcement line was increased. Discussion was held on budget items and questions were answered.

6. Updates: Library Project:

Mayor Michael Hammond welcomed Agnes and Emily to our board meeting. Hammond reminded everyone that the Number 2 phase grant for the Pro Housing Grant didn't come through. Emily, President of Canton Free Library reported that the Contractor is slated to start construction at the end of March on the Library/Village Office building. Emily noted that she and Agnes are working on a fundraising plan, along with the help of Shelly Sanderson, Lisa Hammond and Mayor Michael Hammond. Emily stated that we need \$300,000.00 for phase 2 that we can hopefully get most of it through another grant. Phase 1 of the Grant is all there and approved, which will get us the shell, windows, doors, roof, etc. By July 2025 we will have a brand new building on the

outside but need to secure funding for Phase 2 to complete the inside. This will be a net zero emissions building and will also serve as a heating and cooling station for people. Emily has also been working with the Community Fund Foundation on securing monies. Emily went on to explain that the Rensselaer Falls Library has a CD in which the Community Fund would invest for them to make a good return on the funds. Canton Free Library has money from Corning that they are willing to put toward the Rensselaer Falls Library project. Mayor Michael Hammond noted that the Code Enforcement Officer has received a set of prints from the Engineer and has issued the Building Permit, which is displayed in the front window of the Library. Discussion was held on the payment process to the Contractor NTC. Emily is going to reach out to find out the process of this and try to get something in writing. Trustee Samanth Booth asked Emily of Canton if the Village would get much notice on the start date. Emily stated she did not think there would be much notice. Booth stated she's asking because members of the community will be asking and she also wants to be able to address parking issues if they arise from contractors vehicles on the Main Street. Clerk Lisa Hammond asked Emily to be sure that the contractor has her contact information to assist with anything they may need.

#### ANY OTHER BUSINESS THAT MAY COME BEFORE THE VILLAGE BOARD

Discussion was held on the damage to the Village Streets and Sewer manholes. Mayor Michael Hammond is going to contact Steven Smith, Highway Superintendent about these matters. Storm drainage was also discussed with Mayor Hammond reporting that an engineer is going to take a look starting at the ditch from the Fire Department to the canal. Meetings have been held with FEMA and Homeland Security. Mayor Hammond stated that he hopes to get new piping in between the playground and the store this season.

A brief discussion was held with Bob Poor about upcoming trees and stumps to be taken care of when spring finally comes.

6:49 p.m. Closed Regular Monthly Board Meeting

Motion: Samantha Booth                      Seconded: Nicholas Calton      Vote: Unanimous

Respectfully Submitted:

Lisa Hammond, Village Clerk