

**VILLAGE OF RENSSELAER FALLS**  
**Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**March 13 th, 2023**

**5:00 P.M. 2023/2024 Budget Work Session**  
**5:45 P.M. Public Hearing Fire/Building Code**  
**6:00 P.M. Regular Monthly Meeting**

Present: Mayor Michael Hammond, Deputy Mayor Charles Fified, Trustee Jolene LaSiege, Trustee Samatha Booth, Trustees Connie McAllister, Village Clerk Lisa Hammond, Ralph Hammond, Bob Poor, Shirley and Nick Calton.

Absent: Attorney Henry Leader and Sewer Superintendent Mark Basford

5:00 p.m. Mayor Michael Hammond opened the 2023-2024 Budget Work Session

Discussion was held on matters concerning the budget. Answers and questions were received between board members. Trustee Samatha Booth questioned Social Security payments and discussion was held. Clerk Lisa Hammond and Becky Donnelly will check into the matter. Celebrations and Beautification line item was discussed upon questions of Trustee Samatha Booth. Mayor Michael Hammond explained to Booth that this line item is a specific code in the budget and are part of the AUD filings with the State. This line item has historically been a part of the villages spending plan.

5:40 p.m. Mayor Michael Hammond closed the budget work session

5:45 p.m. Mayor Michael Hammond opened the Public Hearing on Local Law #1-2023 upon motion of Trustee Samatha Booth and seconded by Trustee Connie McAllister. All voted in favor.

The Public Hearing is an update to Building and Fire Code, required by the State. Ralph Hammond was present for the Public Hearing. Mayor Hammond asked if there were any questions and no public comment was made.

5:59 p.m. Mayor Michael Hammond closed the Public Hearing upon motion of Charles Fifield and seconded by Samatha Booth. All in favor.

6:01 p.m. Mayor Michael Hammond opened the Regular monthly meeting

Mayor Michael Hammond added to the agenda the Hazard Mitigation agreement with St. Lawrence County. Hammond reminded the public that the Village board has held two budget work sessions on the upcoming proposed 23-24 budget.

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

Bills were audited by Trustees Charles Ffiled and Samatha Booth

Motion: Charles Fifield      Seconded: Jolene LaSiege    Vote: unanimous

3. Approval of Minutes:

Minutes of February 6, 2023

Motion: Connie McAllister    Seconded: Samatha Booth    Vote: unanimous

Minutes of March 6, 2023 were tabled to April regular board meeting

4. Reports: Departments and Committees
  - a. Sewer Report: No report was received.

26 Hours reported by Basford for February and 33 Hours reported for Jared Murray

Clerk Lisa Hammond stated for the record that the Village has lost 8 sewer rents in the last couple years with one new build added. Total loss of 7 sewer rents.

- b. Code Enforcement Report: No report

Mayor Michael Hammond noted that Grant Backus has not yet been active to give a report or receive compensation. Hammond has updated the website to reflect Grant Backus as interim Code Officer, reflecting his contact information. When the advertisement for the position was posted, no applications were received. A brief discussion was held on contacting a neighboring Towns/Villages Code Officer to assist in the transition.

c. Clerk's Report:

Clerk Lisa Hammond gave a verbal report noting that she and Becky Donnelly have been working on the budget with Mayor Hammond. Clerk Hammond is continuing working with Corning on past due payments and the Post Office on materials being returned to the State as undeliverable. Clerk Hammond feels that the matters are moving in the right direction, just time consuming. Hammond also noted that she called the County Attorney's Office and was told that the Village of Rensselaer Falls is not covering the FireFighters Workmens Comp, it is under the Town of Canton. Clerk Hammond and Becky Donnelly held a phone conference with SLC Real Property about the possibility of placing a new line item on the Village Tax bill for Fire. Trustee Jolene LaSiege suggested finding training on quickbooks for the Clerks to sharpen their skills. Clerk Hammond added that she recently reached out to Gray and Gray for assistance on matters with quickbooks with a fee attached. It was decided after discussion that the Clerk will move in a different direction.

Motion: Connie McAllister      Seconded: Jolene LaSiege      Vote: unanimous

d. Mayor's Report:

Mayor Hammond noted that he and Trustees Connie McAllister and Samatha Booth attended the Mayor's Dinner held in Potsdam. The guest speaker was from Public Health and the speaker was Jolene Munger. Meeting was informative and well attended. Hammond and Booth gave a brief recap. Mayor Hammond stated that he has been busy doing all sorts of things for the good of the Village. Conversations with the Attorney for the Village, Attorney for the County and communication attempts with the County Treasurer. Mayor Hammond reminded the board members that the Fireman's Banquet is the last Saturday of this month and RSVPs are due.

Motion: Charles Fifield      Seconded: Jolene LaSiege      Vote: unanimous

e. Committee Reports:

*Trees* - None

Playground/Falls Festival Committee: New equipment is needed at the Playground and was in agreement in discussion.

Discussion held under New Business - see below

Motion: Connie McAllister    Seconded: Samatha Booth    Vote: unanimous

5. New Business:

- A. LL #1-2023: Motion to pass LL #1-2023 to update the law upon the State of New York's suggestion was granted. Attorney Leader to file with the State.

Motion: Jolene LaSieve    Seconded: Charles Fifield    Vote: unanimous

- B. Budget Workshop Discussion:

Mayor Michael Hammond gave a brief recap of discussions held at two separate workshop sessions. Hammond will offered to produce a bullet point highlighting changes and explanations at the April meeting during the Public Hearing if the board wanted him to. Mayor Hammond stated he was pleased with the Board members decision to pay down approximately \$30,000.00 on the Village Sewer Debt. Mayor Hammond noted that sales tax is not a guaranteed revenue. The board members were in agreement to decrease Streets and Recreation along with Fire and Rescue to bring the Village back into the level of the Tax Cap levy - mandated by the State of New York. A slight increase is proposed for Attorney fees, due to recent fires/dilapidation and Code Enforcement issues. A slight increase to Historical is proposed.

- C. Committee Assignments:

Mayor Michael Hammond went over and confirmed Committee Assignments with a full board present

Trees: Charles Fifield/ Michael Hammond  
Library: Lisa Hammond and Michael Hammond  
Historical and Small Business: Samatha Booth  
Playground and Festiva:l Connie and Jolene

Discussion was held on applying for a grant for the Historical

D. Month Meeting date change:

Mayor Michael Hammond requested that the regular monthly meetings be moved to the second Monday of each month starting in May of 2023. Beginning May 8th, 2023 the board is in agreement of moving to the second Monday of each month upon motion.

Motion: Charles Fifield      Seconded: Samatha Booth      Vote: unanimous

6. Updates

A. Summer projects:

Projects at State Street, Front Street and Congress Streets were discussed along with the catch basin located at the Fire Department. Lose numbers were discussed by the Mayor and Steven Smith Highway Superintendent. Mayor Hammond asked board members to be thinking of projects to pick from this coming season. Mayor Hammond wants Smith to give a quote at the intersection of Elizabeth Street and CR 15. Board members want Elizabeth Street intersections and the Fire Department at top of the list to get done. Clerk Hammond will get ahold of Jeff Crowbar about guard rails in the Village.

B. Village Office/Library:

Things are moving on this project. The basement is still wet. Mayor Hammond noted that Agnes Hoey has done a great job throwing out old items from the space.

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

a. Hazard Mitigation Plan:

Mayor Michael Hammond gave a brief overview of the plan, which gives a report of the strengths and weaknesses around the Village of Rensselaer Falls. After discussion it was approved that Mayor Hammond sign and return the agreement to the County.

Motion: Charles Fifield      Seconded: Connie McAllister      Vote: unanimous

- b. Mayor Michael Hammond reminded the board members of Garage Sale weekend May 20th.

6:50 p.m closed regular monthly board meeting

Motion: Charles Fifield

Seconded: Connie McAllister

Vote: unanimous

Respectfully Submitted:

Lisa Hammond  
Village Clerk