

VILLAGE OF RENSSELAER FALLS

Regular Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2021

5:00 P.M. Budget Workshop
(6:00 P.M.) Regular Meeting

Present: Mayor Michael Hammond, Trustee Jolene LaSiege, Deputy Mayor Charles Fifield, Trustee Connie McAllister and Trustee James Blackburn, Village Clerk Lisa Hammond, Village Sewer Superintendent Mark Basford, Karen Clary, Dallas Denny, Natallie Denny, Jeff Dollinger and Mark Bomyea

Present by Zoom: Attorney Henry Leader, Code Enforcement Officer Tim Tuttle, Diane Wilcox, John Danis, Scott Rivers, Ellis Giacomelli, Tim Danehy and Bob Washo

5:00 p.m. Mayor Michael Hammond opened the Budget Workshop Session

Mayor Michael Hammond noted that the proposed budget is now in Quickbooks, noting that in the past few years it was in excel. Hammond went over any notable changes. Discussion was held, questions and answers were exchanged. Sub categories were discussed along with contractual expenses.

Discussion was held on CHIPS, PAVE NY, EWR monies and what the balances may look like down the road and rollover monies. Road work and sides of the roads are some things that can be claimed. Mayor Michael Hammond noted that past Highway Superintendent Terry Billings was a big help in helping the Village on spending. .

Trustee James Blackburn asked if the Sewer Plant has anything earmarked to upgrade at the plant. Mayor Hammond talked about upgrading the tractor.

Patty Ritchie Grant monies were discussed.

Discussion was held on increase to the Fire Department and Rescue Squad. \$1,000.00 bingo license money was discussed in the fact that it has not been spent in two years. Mayor Michael Hammond noted that there has been a 12 to 14 percent increase over the years to the two departments. Mayor Hammond suggested raising the Rescue Squad and the Fire Department. Discussion was held on losing money on Bingo, as the crowds are not as large as prior years. Bingo was not held in 2020 and will not be held in 2021 due to COVID19. Discussion was held on the Fire Department holding a chicken BBQ to help with the decline in bingo monies. Trustee Charles Fifield stated that he would like to see the Rescue budget be \$11,000.00 and the Fire Department budget be \$19,100.000. After discussion it was decided to hold another budget

workshop on March 15th, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

General appropriations were discussed. Discussion was held on the CD's and looking into investing somewhere else as the interest is very low and to look for better returns. Money Market investments were discussed.

Mayor Michael Hammond thanked Karen Clary for her help and knowledge with the budget.

6:06 p.m. Mayor Michael Hammond opened the Regular monthly meeting

1. Pledge of Allegiance was said by all in attendance

2. Appropriations:

Sewer and General

Bills were audited by Trustees Jolene LaSiege and Charles Fifield

Motion: Trustee Jolene LaSiege Seconded: Trustee Charles Fifield

Trustee Jolene LaSiege asked Mayor Michael Hammond to check into changes to the National Grid bills.

3. Approval of Minutes:

Minutes of January 4th, 2021 and February 1, 2021 were approved

Motion: Trustee James Blackburn Seconded: Trustee Connie McAllister Vote: unanimous

4. Reports: Departments and Committees

a. Sewer Report:

Mark Basford sent his report in writing by email. Basford discussed a violation that he received from last September for not filing on time. It is a fine of \$250.00. Discussion was held on emails that were received about this issue. Mayor Hammond will sign notice and noted that mechanisms have been put in place to avoid this happening again.

Motion: Charles Fifield Seconded: James Blackburn Vote: unanimous

b. Code Enforcement Report:

Tim Tuttle sent his report in writing by email. Tuttle reported two car issues and a junk issue. A minor fire and a landlord- tenant issue. Tuttle has been in communication with the Village Attorney Leader about modifying our current local law to charge owners with clean up fees. No new building permits issued. Mayor Michael Hammond asked about an existing Main Street business “retail” changing to another “retail” . Does it require a permit and going through Planning and Zoning? Tuttle stated no not in this case. A brief discussion was held on a possible code issue at a resident that is renting rooms out in the Village. Mayor Michael Hammond is going to get information to Tuttle to check into this matter. Zoom meeting is still on Tuttle's agenda for later in April for a possible driveway project. Mayor Hammond to send an updated list of members from the Planning and Zoning board to Tuttle.

Tim Tuttle personally thanked the Village of Rensselaer Falls Rescue Squad for their service.

Attorney Henry Leader was present by zoom and held up documents and a binder showing the Local Laws and that a full inventory has been put together.

Motion: Connie McAllister Seconded: Jolene LaSiege Vote: unanimous

c. Clerk's Report:

Clerk Lisa Hammond reported that a mail slot for the Village Office door has been purchased. Hammond suggested placing a letter for the new Life Pack 15 asking for donations from Village residents by placing the letter in the April sewer billing. Jeff Dollinger noted that this donation is tax deductible.

Motion: Charles Fifield Seconded: Connie McAllister Vote: unanimous

d. Mayor's Report:

Mayor Hammond stated that he appreciates Karen Clary's work on the Budget alongside himself and Clerk Lisa Hammond.

Motion: James Blackburn Seconded: Connie McAllister Vote: unanimous

e. Committee Reports:

Trees - None

Playground - None

Falls Festival - None

5. New Business:

a. New Fire Department Member: Discussion & Possible Approval:

Michael Hammond was present and expressed his desire to join the Fire Department. Approval was given contingent on passing his physical.

Motion: Connie McAllister Seconded: Charles Fifield Vote: unanimous

Scott Rivers thanked the Mayor and board for mailing out letters for donations for new machine purchased by the Rescue Squad.

b. Proposed Budget Public Hearing Date: Discussion

March 15th, 2021 at 5:00 p.m. a budget work session will be held.

6. Updates.

a. Local Law #1 - Village Clerk Residency - Discussion & Possible Approval

Discussion was held on having a Public Hearing.

Trustee James Blackburn noted that he would like the law to state that the board will search within the Village first and then go outside the Village for the Clerk search. Recommendation by the Mayor for the Clerk position has to be approved by the Village Board members. A brief discussion was also held on Trustees being allowed to serve on the board that live outside the Village. Attorney Henry Leader was asked to do some research on the matter.

b. Ethics Policy - Discussion & Possible Approval

Discussion was held on the Ethics Law being a Local Law instead of a policy. This matter to be discussed again at the April meeting.

c. Rescue Squad Contract: Discussion & Possible Approval

Mayor Michael Hammond asked the Village Board members permission to sign the proposed contract that has been shared with them. Approval to sign was granted.

Motion: Connie McAllister Seconded: Charles Fifield Vote: unanimous

d. Reimagining Canton Recreation: Discussion & Possible Approval

Mayor Michael Hammond read a documentation from reimagining Canton Recreation. A brief discussion was held on the Village of Rensselaer Falls contribution. Trustee Jolene LaSieve stated that she is looking for more pointed direction from the Committee as to what will be provided to Rensselaer Falls. LaSieve is looking for a clearer vision of what Canton may be looking for. Hammond noted that a public input session will be held on the 22nd of March. A questionnaire will be placed on the Website, Hammond encouraged all Village Board members and residents to participate and answer the questionnaire before the 22nd date. Trustee James Blackburn noted that recreation is much more than just sports.

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

7:03 p.m Adjourned meeting

Motion: Trustee James Blackburn Seconded: Trustee Charles Fifield Vote: unanimous

Respectfully Submitted:

Lisa Hammond, Village Clerk