

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE
OF BRONXVILLE HELD ON JANUARY 12, 2009 AT THE VILLAGE HALL, 200
PONDFIELD ROAD, BRONXVILLE, N.Y.

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PRESENT:	Mary C. Marvin	Mayor
	Glenn D. Bellitto	Trustees
	William H. Barton, Jr.	
	Anne W. Poorman	
	Robert S. Underhill	
ALSO PRESENT:	Harold Porr III	Village Administrator
	James Staudt	Village Attorney

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WORK SESSION & EXECUTIVE SESSION

The meeting was called to order at 6:30PM and in attendance were Mayor Marvin, Trustee Bellitto, Trustee Barton, Trustee Poorman, Trustee Underhill, Village Administrator, Harold Porr, and Village Attorney, James Staudt.

The Trustees reviewed the regular monthly meeting agenda and discussed the BAMS gas station.

At 6:47PM, on motion of Trustee Underhill, second by Trustee Barton, the Trustees entered Executive Session to discuss personnel issues in the Library and Village Court, negotiation issues with the Teamsters union, and legal issues involving the Kensington Project contract.

On motion of Trustee Poorman, second by Trustee Bellitto, the Trustees re-opened the work session and entered into the public session at 8:00PM.

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Mayor Marvin called the meeting to order at 8:05PM.

Mayor Marvin welcomed the new Eastchester Councilwoman, Christine Doherty.

Councilwoman Doherty wished everyone a happy new year and said that she had been sworn in last week. She wanted residents to know that she can be reached now at the Town Hall in Eastchester and would love to hear from residents with any comments or suggestions.

MAYOR'S REPORT

As 2008 came to a close, the Trustees and I looked back on a year filled with activity and accomplishments including a few disappointments.

Given the tumult of the tax reassessment process, we are most gratified that Bronxville now has the lowest co-efficient of dispersion (COD) or ratio of possible inequity in Westchester County at 7.7%. As an illustration, our neighboring communities all hover in the 19% range. The reassessment process has also turned out to be inevitable for most Westchester communities and we are regularly called upon for advice and assistance. We continue to monitor our tax rolls diligently to maintain tax fairness. Mr. Iagallo, our assessing consultant, will be at the February meeting to explain the relationship between our valuations and the clearly depressed residential sales market. We will also be communicating this information in some fashion to every homeowner.

In 2008, our police department saw great change and rejuvenation. We have a new Police Chief, six new officers, a new labor contract and opportunities for promotion and advancement in the department including the addition of a second youth officer to meet the needs of our teenage population.

Our commitment to green practices included the successful and energy efficient employment of our Village Hall geothermal heating and cooling system. We also committed to use only natural cleaning products throughout the Village and we now are only the second municipality to commit to using organic products exclusively on Village property.

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We continue to address the flooding issue and have applied for several grants to address problems near the Bronx River and the School and we have also embarked on a major sanitary and storm pipe cleaning effort, addressing pipes not scoped in decades.

A landscape architect is currently drawing up plans for improvements at Sagamore Park and the open space near the former Girl Scout Cabin. Some of the cost is financed by a State grant we applied for and received through the efforts of Assemblywoman Amy Paulin. We also renovated Bicentennial Park and initiated a tree donation program that so far allowed us to plant many street trees.

Our vibration study relating to the third track along our rail corridor resulted in readings well beyond what Metro North had forecast and in some cases guaranteed. We continue to meet with Metro North officials to discuss mitigation measures and will reach out to our political representatives and/or pursue our legal remedies in 2009 when appropriate and if necessary.

We recently completed our Community Plan with great assistance from the Village Planning Board. The plan gives us a road map for the improvement and updating of Village codes and laws. For example, going forward we will be considering Code guidelines for generators, solar panels and reviewing our demolition rules and ratios of structure to open space on property renovations.

We have made a number of changes to our road system including a record amount of resurfacing and curbing throughout the Village. In an effort to become more pedestrian friendly, we reconfigured the intersection near Starbucks and repainted all our crosswalks. In addition, Palumbo Place is now open with Midland Avenue, Gramatan Avenue and Pondfield Road reconfigured to decrease congestion.

In an effort to increase parking near the train station and business district, we leased the Avalon/Mobil lot and are diverting train commuters to this lot. This opens up dozens of spaces on the Kraft Avenue side for shoppers and residents doing their errands. Also, the Village owned gas station on Kraft Avenue will be demolished and converted into approximately 45 parking spaces this spring.

We also negotiated a very favorable agreement for the Village with Verizon for FIOS cable service.

We continued to foster a high quality of communication with our residents through newsletters, TV shows, and increasing the information available on our Village website.

Our greatest disappointment was the bankruptcy of our Kensington Road developer, WCI Communities. We believed the quality and design of the project was a great fit for our Village and had hoped to be breaking ground at this point in time. However, thanks to the oversight of our attorneys and Trustee Robert Underhill, we ended the deal with a \$275,000 refund to the Village.

We had also hoped to end the year with a contract with the Teamsters who represent our Public Works employees and have our village wide e-mail system and Police alert up and running.

The foundation we established in 2008 should serve us well as we prepare for the challenges in 2009.

Now to talk about our goals for 2009.

Given the very challenging economic climate, the Trustees and I have decided to begin reviewing the budget for 2009-2010 now even though it will be adopted in April. We will not just be reviewing line items for possible decreases but taking a hard look at what we fund and whether it continues to be an optimal use of taxpayer dollars in 2009. We will not just evaluate spending, but program as well.

Next on our agenda will be to find the best possible use for the Kensington Road property and get it back on the tax rolls with a project that will enhance the value of the neighborhood.

Equally important is devising ways that the Village can help keep our merchants remain economically healthy and keep our business district vibrant during these difficult times.

We will continue our green initiatives planting more street trees, adding recycling receptacles to the business district in partnership with our Rotary Club and continue to make the Village even more pedestrian friendly, but more aggressively enforcing our sidewalk maintenance and dog clean up laws.

We hope to finalize a contract with our Public works employees and find a new library director to replace Jane Marino, who is leaving us to head the entire Great Neck, NY system.

We will also be revising Village codes/regulations to meet the realities of 2009 – subjects such as regulation of generators, solar panels, tear downs.

We will have up and running our Village wide e-mail notice and police alert systems.

We will continue our joint efforts with the school on flood mitigation and continue our program of cleaning our own pipe/drainage system throughout the Village.

And, we will not cease in our efforts seeking noise and vibration mitigation in our train corridor.

On all these endeavors, we ask for your continued support and involvement.

Now I have two announcements – one very positive and one bittersweet.

The first is a welcome to our new Village Attorney, Jim Staudt, though he is really not new to us. For the last decade, he has advised us on real estate/zoning issues and has luckily for us agreed to add the role of counsel to the Board. Jim is a graduate of Boston College and Villanova Law School and has practiced municipal law in Westchester for over 25 years. He is counsel to several other Westchester communities including Larchmont, his hometown, for the last 25 years. We are so glad you agreed to take this crew on and we already enjoy working with you.

And finally, for Bronxville it is truly an end of an era. Frank Spillo, or known by every school child for the past 21 years who has been safely crossed to the Bronxville School as just Frank, our beloved crossing guard retired. Frank has worked in the Village for 49 years total, the first 28 as a milkman for many residents. He was also a proud Marine and veteran of Guadalcanal. He retired on Thursday as possible the most well known, most loved and most popular man in Bronxville. This will give him more time to spend with his wife Genevieve and 3 grandchildren and follow his beloved Yankees.

Frank, you certainly have a place in Bronxville history.

TRUSTEE REPORTS

Trustee Bellitto announced that there will be a Citizens' Advisory Council meeting on Tuesday, January 27, 2009 at 7PM at Village Hall. There will be a speaker from the Audubon Society who will discuss green initiatives.

Police – Trustee Bellitto congratulated the department on all of their hardwork.

Parking – Trustee Bellitto reported that the revenues were higher than budget.

Trustee Barton advised residents that the new Village sanitation schedule was mailed out last week.

Finance – Trustee Barton reported that the expenses are in control and the Village remains in good financial shape.

Trustee Underhill – welcomed Jim Staudt to the Village and commented that he is a terrific addition.

Trustee Underhill applauded Chief Satriale on his e-mail blasts sent out recently. It is exciting and brings new energy to the department.

Kensington Road Project – Trustee Underhill reported that the Village has received a number of unsolicited requests from credible parties about this property. The Village is in the process of crafting a request for proposal (RFP) that will be sent out in the near future. It will outline what is expected of the interested parties. This will result in a highly informed proposal to the Village.

Trustee Poorman reported that Jane Marino, Library Director, has resigned effective January 16, 2009. Laura Eckley, currently of the children's department, will be the acting director until the Library Board finds a replacement.

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APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On motion of Trustee Underhill, second by Trustee Bellitto, the Board approved the minutes of the Regular Meeting on December 8, 2008, and the Special Meeting on December 18, 2008, as drafted.

NEW BUSINESS

RESOLUTION – Village Election

On motion of Trustee Barton, second by Trustee Poorman, the following resolution was unanimously approved:

BE IT RESOLVED the hours for Village Election Day, Wednesday, March 18, 2009 be set from 7:00AM to 9:00PM., and that the polling place shall be Village Hall, 200 Pondfield Road, Bronxville, N.Y.

BE IT RESOLVED the Village Clerk is authorized to contact the County Board of Elections requesting the use of four voting machines.

BE IT RESOLVED the Village Clerk is authorized to appoint up to four inspectors each from the Democratic and Republican parties to serve on Election Day.

RESOLUTION – IMA for Westchester County Land & Legal Records Public Viewing Application System

On motion of Trustee Poorman, second by Trustee Bellitto, the following resolution was unanimously approved:

WHEREAS, Westchester County has created an internet-based public viewing system of land records entitled the "Westchester County Land and Legal Records Public Viewing Application (L&LR)" and made it available at no cost to municipal governments, and

WHEREAS, although the information will be available to the public, access to the L&LR system will be limited to staff from the Assessor's office, via user identification numbers and passwords and further limited to land records only, and

WHEREAS, the L&LR system streamlines the manual, labor-intensive, costly and time consuming process currently utilized by the Westchester County Clerk's office for the preparation and dissemination of deeds, mortgages and other land records documents, and

WHEREAS, the Village of Bronxville will benefit from this system as a result of this increased efficiency, and

WHEREAS, Westchester County recently submitted a proposed Inter-municipal Agreement to the Village of Bronxville that shall commence upon execution, and shall expire on December 31, 2009.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor is herein authorized, on behalf of the Village of Bronxville, to execute an Inter-municipal Agreement with Westchester County to provide for remote access to the Westchester County Land and Legal Records Public Viewing Application System.

RESOLUTION – Police Uniforms

On motion of Trustee Bellitto, second by Trustee Poorman, the following resolution was unanimously approved:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Board of Trustees awards the contract for police uniforms to Rosen's Uniforms of Middletown and Albany, NY. Price list is attached.

PUBLIC COMMENTS –

Mr. Thomas Wolff, 230 Pondfield Road, inquired if there were any changes to the labor relations situation at the Library.

Village Administrator, Harold Porr, responded that the employees had filed a petition a few months ago and a union was formed. To date, there has been no contract negotiations due to a delay in certification of the CSEA unit by the New York State Public Employee Relations Board at the Library

Mr. Wolff then asked if Palumbo Place was “officially” a one way street.

Mayor Marvin answered that the one way is a pilot program put in place by the Chief of Police and the Superintendent of Public Works. In order to make it “officially” a one way street, there would need to be a public hearing.

Betsy Harding, 39 Homesdale Road, thanked the Public Works employees that work on the glass and plastic truck.

Mrs. Harding then asked about the police force staff being at 19 and if Chief Satriale was looking at a list to bring the department to full complement.

Mayor Marvin replied that the reason the department was not at full complement was because Officer Gannon returned to the NYPD for personal reasons and Sergeant Gallo was out for medical reasons.

Village Administrator, Harold Porr, stated that the current list did not provide any suitable candidates.

Mrs. Harding asked if the Village could increase the number to full staff of 23 because she feels it makes a tremendous difference.

Mayor Marvin responded that even though there are only 19 the services have not been diminished. As a matter of fact, the department has added a bike and speeding patrol.

Village Administrator, Harold Porr, commented that every shift is fully manned and that we have added a detective as well as a sergeant in the past month.

Trustee Poorman said the Trustees had discussed with Chief Satriale the hiring process and exploring the official list. The Chief will inform the Trustees when a list comes out that yields good candidates.

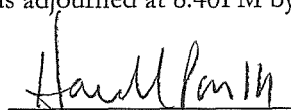
Mrs. Harding wanted to remind the Trustees that regular updates to the assessment roll are necessary. The coefficient of dispersion only tests horizontal equity but does not compare fairness.

Mayor Marvin reported that assessing consultant, Gerry Iagallo, is working hard to keep the roll updated and that he will be at the February meeting.

Trustee Barton thanked Mrs. Harding for her comments on the Public Works employees and thanked them for doing a terrific job.

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There being no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 8:40PM by motion of Trustee Poorman, second by Trustee Barton.



Harold Porr III
Village Administrator/Village Clerk