

Village of Rhinebeck
Organizational/ Board of Trustees Meeting
Monday, September 21st, 2020
7:00 PM

Mayor Gary Bassett:	Present
Trustee Richard Lewit:	Present
Trustee Brant Neuneker:	Present
Trustee Paul Korczak:	Present
Trustee Vanessa Bertozzi:	Present

Also present were: Treasurer Karen McLaughlin, Village Clerk Martina McClinton, Village Attorney Rich Olson, Town Supervisor Elizabeth Spinzia, Town Board Member Chauncey Walker, Justice John Kane, County Legislator Brennan Kearney, Kathleen Rooney and two Rhinebeck Farmers Market Board members.

Mayor began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mayor introduced new Board of Trustees and congratulated first time elected Trustee Vanessa Bertozzi and fourth time elected Trustee Brant Neuneker.

Mayor read organizational structure for the Village of Rhinebeck for the year 2020-2021.

Mayor made a **motion to accept the organizational structure**. Seconded by Trustee Korczak. **All aye**.

County Legislator Brennan Kearney gave county update.

Mayor read update from Rhinebeck Farmers Market which asked if they could start planning for process for next year and keep current plan going until the end of this year. Trustee Neuneker asked when will the season end. The Farmers Market Board members said they would like to end December 27th, 2020. Mayor **made a motion to allow the Rhinebeck Farmers market to extend their space until the end of the year and to start planning process for next year**. Seconded by Trustee Lewit. **All aye**.

Trustee Korczak noted that when they start planning again that they should coordinate with any activities of the Chamber of Commerce.

Court Consolidation

Kathleen Rooney of the Laberge Group gave a presentation of the Justice Court Consolidation Study. Justice John Kane spoke about the practicality of the consolidation. Justice Kane mentioned that he thought it would be better space for the clerk, it would allow a dedicated space for public defenders, and that timewise, it would be helpful to be combined. Additionally, Justice Kane said that he felt the Town Court could manage and handle a consolidation. Town Supervisor Elizabeth Spinzia confirmed that the Town Board had already voted and approved the consolidation, and she said she was happy to do it. Town Board member Chauncey Walker said he was an enthusiastic supporter of the plan. Trustee Korczak asked if moving forward with the consolidation was contingent on capital improvements and/or architectural changes to the Town Hall. Ms. Rooney said that the Town could move forward with a combined court as is and improvements could be made over time. Trustee Korczak asked if any debt would be incurred if grants are not allowed. Ms. Rooney said no and pointed out that many improvements should happen whether the courts consolidate or not. Trustee Neuneker asked if the

improvements mentioned in the study were necessary to do. Ms. Rooney explained that they were included as a road map and that there is ample space in the court room and court staff space. Changes would enhance and improve the court but are not necessary to begin the consolidation. Trustee Neuneker said there are three court clerks, one full time in the Village and two part time in the Town and asked if a clerk would be laid off. Ms. Rooney said there would be room for two full time clerks and the other person could be absorbed into another government position. Trustee Lewit pointed out that it would be up to the Town to administer the court most efficiently, and that it is not likely that anyone would be laid off. Trustee Lewit also said that New York State has guidelines for courts and the Village is not up to date and needs to deliver a better service for people coming to court. Trustee Lewit said that this is not the case with having two courts, and the Village has a chance to provide a much better service while also saving \$45,000. Trustee Neuneker asked if the Town was going to allow all the savings to go to the Village. The Mayor said that no, the consolidation is not an intermunicipal agreement. Trustee Bertozzi asked if the Village would be required to pay for the suggested improvements. The Town Supervisor said that no, improvements would be a Town cost and be within their Town levy. Ms. Spinzia said that she considers all Village residents to be Town residents as well and that this consolidation would give a full-time court office for residents. Trustee Neuneker said that he does not see the Village court as dysfunctional. Trustee Bertozzi said that the status quo is not up to par and having the space for attorneys and their clients is an important improvement. Trustee Bertozzi said she appreciates the concern for the clerk's job and agrees with Trustee Neuneker that no one should be laid off. The Mayor said that changes must be made to continue court and if the Board goes forward with a resolution, that the Village and Town will need to work out how costs are managed. Ms. Rooney pointed out that the timing of the consolidation would be at the end of the term for the elected Justice, which ends March 31, 2021. The Mayor mentioned that there is a public compartment. If the Board approves the resolution, and the public wants a vote on it, there is a referendum process. Ms. Rooney said a petition would trigger a permissive referendum. Village attorney Rich Olson explained that within 30 days from the date of adoption, residents would have to get signatures from 20% of registered voters within the Village to challenge it. Trustee Lewit said he believes there will be an emotional reaction, but the reality is that the consolidation would provide better services rendered and savings for the Village. Consolidation is not dependent on remodeling work and as grants come in, changes can be made. Trustee Neuneker said he would like the vote to include job security. The Town Supervisor said that will be the Town's decision. Trustee Neuneker mentioned that the public is not able to speak in regard to this matter, let alone at any Board meetings since they've been live streamed on Facebook. The Mayor said that this isn't a public hearing and while it is a public meeting, they are not currently allowing public comment. Trustee Neuneker said he could not make this decision without hearing public comment. The Mayor noted that public comments have been submitted and will be entered into the record. The Mayor read the Court consolidation resolution. The Mayor made **motion to accept resolution to abolish the Justice Court**. Seconded by Trustee Korczak.

Trustee Korczak- Aye

Trustee Lewit- Aye

Trustee Bertozzi- Aye

Mayor Bassett- Aye

Trustee Neuneker- Nay

Vote passed 4:1

Treasurer Karen McLaughlin gave presentation on the annual Village financial review.

The Mayor gave update on Police reform and read the Governors executive order that said local government must adopt a resolution by April 1, 2021. The Mayor said that he formed a community Police reform committee and meetings are held every other week. Trustee Bertozzi asked how the committee was formed and who was on the committee. The Mayor said that they do not want to be known to the public yet and names will not be provided at this time. Trustee Neuneker said the committee was formed before the Board could contribute to it. The Mayor responded by saying that they were on a tight schedule. Trustee Neuneker asked if the committee was appropriately formed if it was established by only Mayor Bassett and Trustee Lewit. Trustee Lewit said that as per the Governor, they were required to reach out to the community within a certain amount of time. Trustee Neuneker said that Mayor Bassett and Trustee Lewit did not have the authority to create that commission. The Mayor stated that it is not a commission, it is a work group.

Outdoor Dining

The Mayor said he had reached out to the Department of Transportation and got approval for the outdoor dining/retail permit to extend to November 30, 2020. The Mayor also reached out to the county to extend the use of the barriers until that time, and asked residents their opinions and most were in favor of extending the permit.

The Mayor made a **motion to extend outdoor dining and retail to November 30, 2020**. Seconded by Trustee Korczak. **All aye.**

Trustee Neuneker mentioned that he was concerned about the use of outdoor heaters. The Mayor said that the fire inspector had gone to all the businesses within the Village and gave a letter explaining the code on heaters and the Mayor is working with all the restaurants to ensure they stay in compliance. Trustee Bertozzi asked if the barriers would be moved if it snows in November. The Mayor said that the county would remove the barriers if snow is expected that so that plows can go through. Trustee Korczak asked to consider polling all businesses involved in outdoor dining and retail to get suggestions and input. The Mayor agreed and said that the next step after the permit expires, could be to form a taskforce. The Mayor said a lot of laws were suspended to allow the permit to happen and they have to decide if they would want to do this again in the future, in which case some laws may need to be reviewed. Trustee Bertozzi asked if there was an opportunity for barriers to be removed now for restaurants who cannot have tents or heaters. The Mayor said that along with the Rhinebeck Chamber of Commerce and Chef Josh Kroner of Terrapin, he surveyed businesses and all but two want to keep the barriers in place.

Department Reports

Karen McLaughlin gave Treasurer's Report.

Trustee Neuneker made **motion to approve adjustments as presented for Water and Wastewater**. Seconded by the Mayor. **All aye.**

Mayor made **motion to accept budget amendments as presented**. Seconded by Trustee Lewit. **All aye.**

Mayor gave Police Report.

Trustee Korczak gave Building, Planning and Zoning Report.

Trustee Lewit gave Highway Report.

Trustee Neuneker gave Water & Wastewater Reports.

Trustee Neuneker said the floor tiles at the wastewater plant are the same tiles from 1984 and need to be replaced. Two bids were received for floor tiles, one from Palazzo for \$2000 and the other from Butler and Sons for \$2680.

Trustee Neuneker made a **motion to approve new floor tile at the wastewater plant for Palazzo bid of \$2000**. Seconded by Trustee Korczak. **All aye.**

Trustee Neuneker mentioned proposed work for the WWTP Filter Building including improvements to roof, door and panels. Trustee Bertozzi asked if repairs were urgent. Trustee Neuneker said that this building holds expensive UV equipment and the roof is starting to leak. They have been trying to patch the roof but it is brittle and once patched more areas start to leak. The Mayor said this issue has been on the Boards radar for a long time.

Trustee Neuneker made a **motion to go out for RFP on WWTP Filter Building Rehabilitation Project**. Seconded by the Mayor. **All aye.**

Trustee Bertozzi gave the Environmental report.

Trustee Bertozzi made a **motion to switch the billing for the climate smart web page to the Village for \$140 per year**. Seconded by the Mayor. **All aye.**

Committee Reports

Trustee Lewit gave Tree Commission Report.

Trustee Lewit made a **motion to accept 12 tree planting sites for November 12th, 2020**. Seconded by Trustee Neuneker. **All aye.**

Trustee Lewit made a **motion to accept tree commission recommendation of requested tree removal from Chris Leggett on Platt Avenue**. Seconded by the mayor. **All aye.**

Other Business

Trustee Korczak said there was no update on Village owned parcels.

Trustee Lewit said he spoke with Tree Commission member Nataalka Chas on planting at Village entrances.

The Mayor said Building and Planning Clerk Ryan Dowden is exceeding civil service hours and therefore would not be able to be a meeting administrator for Village Board of Trustees meetings. Trustee Neuneker asked about using the clerk who does the minutes for the Planning Board meetings. The Mayor said that the previous minute clerk recently retired and that the Planning Department had asked the Village clerk to take over, but she could not, given her current schedule. The Mayor said Mr. Dowden is currently doing the minutes for Planning Board meetings. Trustee Bertozzi asked if the minutes clerk

was a paid position. The Mayor said yes, and that they are waiting for a recommendation on who to hire.

Special Requests

The Mayor read the application from the Rhinebeck Chamber of Commerce who would like to continue having music on Market Street throughout the month of October.

The Mayor made a **motion to accept music on Market Street date for the month of October**. Seconded by Trustee Lewit. **All aye, except Trustee Korczak who had stepped out while board voted.**

The Mayor read the application from Ferncliff Forest who would like to hold a Turkey Trot race. The Mayor said that so far no one in other municipalities has approved road type races due to state regulations which state that gatherings of more than 50 people are not permitted. Trustee Lewit asked if the event could be approved depending on state regulations. The Mayor asked if the Police department had approved the request. The Village Clerk said not yet, as the application was submitted late. Trustee Lewit made a **motion to approve the Turkey Trot pending approval from Sergeant Dunn and guidance from the county**. Seconded by the Mayor. **All aye.**

Minutes Approval

Mayor made a **motion to accept the minutes for the Village Board meeting on 8/20/2020**. Seconded by Trustee Korczak. **All aye.**

Personnel Anniversaries

The Mayor congratulated Acting Highway Foreman Scott Minn for 25 years and Chief Water Plant Operator Bryan Alix for 7 years of service to the Village of Rhinebeck.

Mayor made a **motion to adjourn meeting**. Seconded by Trustee Korczak. **All aye.**

Meeting concluded at 9:29 PM.

All reports and correspondence on file in clerk's office.

Respectfully submitted by Martina McClinton, Village Clerk.