

Regular Monthly Board Meeting

Date:12-14-20

Present Mayor Clarence Speed, Trustees Doug Cropper, Debra Gitterman, Brian Johnson, Larry Ostrander, Deputy Clerk/Treasurer Christine Speed, DPW Superintendent Dave Siter, and remotely via Zoom, Attorney Rob Fitzsimmons.

Motion to approve the minutes from the 11-09-20 Board Meeting made by Trustee Cropper, 2nd by Trustee Ostrander.
All Ayes, No Nays

Motion to approve the 11-30-20 Budget to Actual Reports made by Trustee Johnson, 2nd by Trustee Gitterman.
All Ayes, No Nays

Motion to approve the payment of bills (General, Water, Sewer, Library, T&A, & Health Care Deductible) from the November 19th and 24th, December 1st, 7th and 11th Abstracts made by Trustee Cropper, 2nd by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nays

Motion to accept with regret, Carol Pickens' resignation as Clerk/Treasurer effective December 11th, 2020 made by Trustee Johnson, 2nd by Trustee Ostrander. All Ayes, No Nays

Motion to appoint Patricia DeLong as Clerk/Treasurer/Registrar at the rate of \$25.00/hr. (7 hours a day/5 day a week) with a position evaluation after 90 days, a rate change of \$27.00/hr. will be paid; effective December 28th, 2020 made by Trustee Ostrander, 2nd by Trustee Johnson. All Ayes, No Nays.

Motion to make budget line transfer of \$8,400.00 from A1620.2 Buildings/Equipment to A9040.8 Employee Benefits/Work Comp., \$5250.00 from F8340.4 Transmission & Distribution to F9040.8 Employee Benefits/Work Comp. and \$5250.00 from G8110.4 Sewer Administration to G9040.8 Employee Benefits/Work Comp. to cover the invoice that will be received in January from the county for \$20,438.40 by Trustee Ostrander, 2nd by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nays.

Motion to make a budget line transfer of \$3,000.00 from A7550.4 Celebrations to A7310.4 Youth Agencies to cover the expenses for the Community Center for the 2020/2021 fiscal year made by Trustee Cropper, 2nd by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nays

Motion to move \$10,000.00 from the Sewer savings account to the Sewer checking account to cover bills and payroll thru the end of December made by Trustee Ostrander, 2nd by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nays.

Motion to accept the appointment of Barbara Sagal to the Philmont Library Board of Trustees in the position of Vice President made by Trustee Gitterman, 2nd by Trustee Ostrander. All Ayes, No Nays.

Motion to accept the assignment of Barbara Sagal as the Chair of the Agawamuck Creek Watershed Advisory Committee with the term to begin 12-14-20 thru 12-31-24 made by Trustee Cropper, 2nd by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nays

Motion to approve the Mayor signing the NYSEG Agreement for the LED Light Conversion of the Village of Philmont made by Trustee Johnson, 2nd by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nays.

PUBLIC REQUESTS (All present remotely via ZOOM.)

Tobi Farley, Library Director spoke in length regarding the structural repairs needed at the Philmont Public Library. She noted that the original grant has been rewritten to cover these repairs. The repairs needed to the building are severe according to Trustee Johnson, Lee Heim, and Chris Hoppe. An estimate of \$70,000.00 could be anticipated to complete the work. According to Trustee Johnson the Library could anticipate being closed for up to a month while the work is completed. Plumbers, Electricians, HVAC Techs and Mechanical Engineers will all be needed to complete the work on the structure and furnace. Attorney Fitzsimmons added that per the Wicks Law, the work will need to be put out to bid, prevailing wage applies. Once a total cost is established, he will put together a bid package. Trustee Johnson will speak with Engineer Jurkowski as to expected cost and a scope of work. Library Trustee Mindy Gardner added that a Year End Appeal to all residents will be sent out, as well as establishing a GoFundMe for donations and funding.

Peter Johnson submitted in writing the following and then read aloud the following for the Boards consideration:

1. 3 loans to Philmont. DPW garage. principal: \$149,463 at 3.75% interest, fire truck; principal: \$201,302 at 3.29% interest, environmental facilities; principal \$26.375 at 3.18% interest

question: given the significant drop in interest rates, will the Village finance committee renegotiate with the lenders to secure a lower interest rate?

2. rental property registration. the village webpage states \$50 per property. the ordinance is \$50 per unit.

question: has the ordinance changed?

3. unlicensed vehicles ordinance.

question: given the inaction on the Summit St. vehicles, is the ordinance no longer enforced? if not, why not?

4. Elm St. property with the closed doctor's office to the north: this has become a scrap metal yard which is in violation of permitted use in the zoning resolution.

Question: will this illicit use be allowed to continue?

5. police reform review.

question: when will Philmont hold the required public hearings or is the village completely relegating its responsibilities to the County? if the latter, that should be public information. should the county's effort not be acceptable to the governor's review board, then the village will most likely not receive police state funding.

6. planning for a reduction in state aid. the current budget calls for \$38,000.

question: will a loss of 20%, perhaps more, have any budgetary consequences? i suppose the finance committee is working on the new FY budget.

The Board thanked Mr. Johnson for his submission, followed by a discussion regarding the possibility of hiring a Code Enforcement Officer to deal with dumping of unwanted items and the above-mentioned issues. Trustee Cropper suggested that the position could possibly be added to the 2021/2022 Budget. Attorney Fitzsimmons will look into what qualifications are required of the position.

Attorney Fitzsimmons

Attorney Fitzsimmons received a letter from Chris Hoppe regarding lot grading in Summit Heights. He will be meeting with Karen Davala regarding the lots. Habitat for Humanity mapping is done and filed. The issue of encroachment and lot line adjustments needs to be handled by Habitat. The Pine Haven project is still pending. He met with Dave Siter & Ray Jurkowski on the project, they are awaiting a scope of work to move forward. Attorney Fitzsimmons stated that Monolith Solar is in receivership, he will work with Chrissy Speed to sort out the NYSEG accounts and spreadsheets to get a settlement.

Clerk/Treasurer Report— given by Christine Speed

The office will be closing at noon Thursday 12-24-20 and reopening Monday 12/28/20 for Christmas. It will also be closed 01-01-21 for New Year's Day. All the normal office tasks have been completed, Bank Statements, Accounts Receivables, Accounts Payable, Deposits, Garbage Sticker Sales, etc. Water/Sewer penalties have been assessed to all past-due customers. All department heads met in the Village Office on 11-23-20 to get a jump start on budgeting for the 2021/2022 fiscal year. The second half of the month has been spent training Chrissy Speed on accounting in Quick Books so that there will be a smooth transition for the new Clerk when she starts on 12-28-20. I wish you all the best and it has been a pleasure to work here.

Police Report – N/A

At this point the Board discussed the need for air conditioning units in the police office and back hall. Once OIC Doyle receives 3 bids for the units, the Board will reassess. There is also the possibility of a grant through the court to provide units for the back hall/court room.

Library Report – given by Tobi Farley

Building - The building committee will be attending the next village board meeting to request funding for the structural repairs to the building. We are also looking to set meetings with the Town of Claverack, the school district and the Town of Ghent to ask for some additional support. The building committee is working on writing a letter to the community looking for additional support.

Thanks to Mindy Gardner and Dave Bolevice for donating and installing (respectively) a new programable thermostat.

Services Project updates: Early Literacy Kits – we have expanded this program beyond just the Head Start class and are now making kits for the 10 students in the class and an additional 7 children.

At Home Learning Kits – we have started dispersing kits from Art Omi. The 24 kits they provided us are almost gone. They will provide more when asked. We posted a picture of the kit and a sample of one done by a child on Facebook. There were lots of great responses and several people came in to get a kit. Two math manipulative kits for early and upper elementary students, Olana, CLC, and Kids Need Music kits will follow soon. Sash Memorial Project – the deadline has been extended to December 31st and Amelia Tolke will be providing more soon. Please let us know if you would like to participate. Job skill workshops – mobile hotspots and Chromebooks are on order and we are setting dates with Columbia-Greene Community College for the workshops and how to handle PR together. Christmas Ornament Workshop registration has begun, and we have 10 children registered already in just a week. We will soon have an account with the Claverack Library for Hoopla. It is a streaming service that provides music, eBooks, eAudiobooks and movies on a cost per circ basis. They require an upfront deposit of at least \$1000. Sharing an account with Claverack allows us to decrease this initial cost. We have agreed to start with \$1,200. We are contributing \$400 and they are contributing \$800. We hope this will cover our first year of service to the community. This is being funded to both libraries by the Berkshire Taconic Foundation grant. Due to the new cluster color coding for possible closures in the state we will scale back to no programs if in an orange zone and back to one staff at a time and curbside pick-up only if in a red zone. We are in discussions with PBInc. about collaborating on the seed library project. Since this project pairs well with their victory garden and cooking classes with the Sylvia Center we are looking to seek funding and donations together as a larger community project.

Grants and Donations \$1,500.00 Berkshire Taconic Foundation, \$80 anonymous patron donations

Stats November 2020 total circ 2728, November 2019 total circ 3440

Meetings/ trainings/ projects The Columbia County Library Association (CCLA) – Great News! We just discovered a grant that was applied for asking for \$36,000 for museum passes and the on-line reservation and on demand printing system for all Columbia County patrons was not only granted, but expanded! They have agreed to give CCLA \$50,000. We will be discussing in the next two months the logistics of the project. This means that will not need to spend the \$1,500 that we earmark for museum passes this year from our budget. MHLS directors' meetings for both October and November. Discussion included changes to regulations and guidance by the state, etc. Projects on weeding and patron records continue.

We are beginning to coordinate for our yearly soup sale. The plan is to change the soup sales to every other week through January, February and March. Soups selections will be announced and must be pre ordered. They will be picked up by appointment only. We have a volunteer who will be making phone calls to those who have previously made soup or who would like to sign up for the first time. Please let us know if you would like to contribute! THE LIBRARY WILL BE CLOSED DECEMBER 24, 25, 31 and January 1 for the holidays.

Community Center Report – given by Trustee Cropper

Facility: Wi-Fi has been installed in the community center. This service will be useful for students who do homework at the after-school program and for special program events. A request to use the facility in January for a private family event has been received.

Programs: The After School Youth Program is on hold due to the increase in COVID-19 cases.

Sarah Jampol-Auerbach, Monte Jennings, and Julie Veronezi provided activities during the beginning of the month.

Although the Columbia County Mental Health Association will no longer be sponsoring CAVE at the center, they will help with new programs at the center based on community needs. The center was used by the Historic Boat Restoration and Sailing Society for a business meeting.

COVID Update: The tracing log is kept up to date and all precautions are being followed by those who enter the center. A thermometer for temperature checks was purchased. I recently completed a Covid Tracing course on line at John Hopkins University. The information was very valuable.

Staff: Monte Jennings will be available on a fill in basis at the center but due to other responsibilities is unable to assist on a regular basis. I have contacted an individual in the community who may be interested in helping on a regular basis.

Budget: The budget meeting on November 23rd was helpful. Thanks to Carol Pickens, Bob Patterson and the trustees who also attended.

Summit Lake & Its Watercourse (BOA) Report – given by Trustee Ostrander

REPORT SUMMARY:

The two grant contracts received last month have been executed and submitted to the Department of State to fund the next steps of the project:

- Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) Pre-development Activities
- Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) Agawamuck Creek Watershed Management Plan

Monthly meeting was held with the BOA project Co-Chairs Trustee Ostrander and Trustee Johnson to review the month's project activities, including, the Village appointment of Barbara Sagal as the Chair of the Agawamuck Creek Watershed Management Plan Advisory Committee; a good response to two surveys circulated to increase participation by residents and business owners wanting to join the Working Groups; a grant opportunity released by Local Champions for assistance to Climate Smart Communities located in Columbia County; and the plan for launching Philmont Rising online and with Zoom meeting project presentations to start in February. Residents and business owners are welcome to join a Working Group and can sign up to participate in online Zoom meetings by contacting PBI at info@pbinc.org.

Mayor Speed-

The Mayor reported working with the Doctors office staff and Deputy Speed to coordinate a sendoff parade and Proclamation for Dr. Neal Baillargeon, who is retiring on December 31st. He noted that he's been signing lots of Village related papers lately. He's been answering and looking into problems with landlords and will be seeking to hire a Code Enforcement Officer for the Village. The Mayor wants everyone to know that the Board will be judging the Holiday Lighting Contest on Thursday, December 17th, at 6:30pm and wished all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Trustee Johnson- Read the DPW/Water/Sewer report submitted by Dave Siter.

DPW - Projects completed

Fence on Elm Street is complete, Trucks are ready for storm, Helping read meters with Water Dept., Leaves have been picked up, "Leafer" has had some running issues, patched them and plan on fixing them over the winter, roof over Village office cleaned Garbage and recycling have been done. A reminder that recycling will be picked up on December 31st not Jan 1st

WATER/WASTEWATER

Reports have been filed with County Health and NYS DEC, Samples were taken to Adirondack. All passed. Ed Harkins has been working on pump at Sewer plant and fire building on Summit Street at tower, almost done reading meters thanks to DPW, Waiting on contact for new Pine Haven project, working on a fee schedule for water for shut offs, final readings and other. (checking along with other municipalities). Preparing for winter weather.

At this point Trustee Ostrander questioned the status of the Fire Booster pumps, Trustee Johnson noted that Ed Harkins Mechanical is working on them now.

Trustee Gitterman – Reported attending the Budget preparation meeting. She went to New Lebanon & Valatie to compare streets lights. After seeing these lights, she believes the default recommendation of 3000 lumen will work best for us. She has been reporting street light outages to NYSEG and noted that 2 still need to be fixed. She has been in contact with Matt Perry & Lee Heim about adding the rental registry to the website. Trustee Gitterman will continue using Mailchimp to continue with updates for residents.

Trustee Cropper – Reported that he attended the Community Day Committee meeting, adding that Community Day has been set for July 10, 2021. The next committee meeting will be January 5th, 7pm at the Rod & Gun Club, all are urged to join the committee. He attended the Veteran's Day ceremony, checked properties, and attended the budget meeting regarding the Community Center. He wishes to thank all of the interested candidates who applied for the Clerk/Treasurer position. Trustee Cropper also inspected a used vehicle that the Fire Company is interested in purchasing from the Stephentown Fire Company.

Trustee Ostrander - Gave the Fire Company report as submitted by Chief Mark Beaumont. Trustee Ostrander has viewed the PENFLEX report for the Fire Company LOSAP program, he believes the money in the fund will hold fine and is satisfied with the current contribution amount. He attended all monthly meetings, thanked Carol Pickens for her contribution, and thanked Chrissy Speed for "holding the fort down" over the last year. At this point Dave Siter spoke on the problems of residents dumping free items on curbs and roadsides around the Village. OIC Doyle will be contacted regarding ticketing for dumping and the no parking law.

Motions and Resolutions- see sheet

Unfinished Business – The Board wished to remind residents that fines for non-shoveled sidewalks will be imposed at the rate of \$4.00 per lineal foot. A Special Meeting has been scheduled for 12/21/20 at 6:30 pm to discuss Climate Smart and the Local Champions Grant. Trustee Johnson has been working with Ray Jurkowski of CPL regarding Sewer Plant disinfection to decide between UV and Chlorine disinfection.

New Business-Mayor Speed has canceled the 12/23/20 workshop meeting for Christmas. Trustee Gitterman inquired about the possibility of a short-term rental policy for primary residences in the Village; Air B&B's, etc. Mayor Speed read a Proclamation honoring Dr. Neal Baillargeon upon his retirement.

Motion to adjourn –made by Trustee Johnson, 2nd by Cropper. All Ayes, No Nays.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Speed
Acting Clerk/Treasurer
Village of Philmont