

**Regular Monthly Board Meeting**  
**Tuesday March 8, 2021**

**PRESENT:** Mayor, Clarence Speed; Trustees; Douglas Cropper, Debra Gitterman, Larry Ostrander, Brian Johnson; Clerk/Treasurer Patricia DeLong, DPW Superintendent Dave Siter, present remotely via Zoom: Attorney Robert Fitzsimmons, BOA Grant Administrator Sally Baker, Library Director Tobi Farley.  
Members of the community: via zoom

Call to Order: 7:01 p.m.

**PUBLIC REQUESTS:** No public was in attendance due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and social distancing restrictions placed on open meetings. Attendance via Zoom.

**Motion** to approve the minutes from the 2-8-21 Board of Trustees Meeting made by Trustee Ostrander, 2nd by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nays

**Motion** to approve the Budget to Actual Reports made by Trustee Cropper, 2nd by Trustee Johnson ALL AYES, NO NAYS

**Motion** to approve the payment of bills (General, Water, Sewer, Library, T&A, & Health Care Deductible) from the March 8th Abstract made by Trustee Gitterman, 2nd by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nays

P. Johnson refers to his email and voices concern about the Village budget, stating that Philmont is among the highest, if not the highest, taxed for real estate yet is next to the lowest for average annual median household income. He asks about including a cost/benefit analysis and current expenditures analysis. He speaks on disinvestment from the slum lords/tenants, real estate and tax payer funds. He also makes an inquiry about the plan being adopted by the Board of Supervisors and how the policy will be overseen locally and by the Sherriff's Office. He expresses his thoughts on major financial implications.

R. McKay expresses his concern over the sidewalk clearing. He states he is fully aware of his boundary lines, how he had complied with the ordinance with his walk being snow blown twice, and his thoughts about it be unjustified. Mayor Speed states that the Board had discussed the bills and decided for one time only they would cut the bills in half to cover the costs of the snowblower and the manpower. R. McKay asks where the information comes from. Mayor Speed explains the DPW provides it. R. McKay states how he has paid all of his water bills and taxes.

W. Gurbo – not in attendance.

J. Giblette states she wanted to comment on the proceedings of the meetings, reduce the tax burden on Philmont residents, mitigate taxation, greater transparency, and a greater opportunity to participate in general.

F. Benson states she is speaking as an individual and not a member of the Library. She is gratified to hear that if they see stickers for the Patriot Front that they should just remove them but asks why the Board has not made an official stand. She continues to read her letter and voices concern over white supremacist groups.

M. Rowntree starts with a 2nd to Faith's statement. He continues that there had been a previous mailer stating that the candidates were endorsed by the GOP and he was happy to see this did not happen this time and voiced elation to see ideas of togetherness and focus on common goals. He expresses that the lowest vote getter should get the set vacated should Brian become Mayor.

H. Iverson states he is following up on the discussion of the fines for the snow removal, a reversal of the fines, and the way the law was communicated to the Village. He continues that the information on the Village website is incorrect, stating \$250, asking if Facebook is a way to communicate important *Town* matters. He voices concern there is an error on the bill he received because he does not have 10 feet of sidewalk and if the true spirit of the fine is public safety then consistent law enforcement would have gotten rid of the whole problem. Trustee Johnson explains why the Village is not in the business of snow shoveling and why the residents take care of their own sidewalks. He adds that \$2.00 a foot is fine, snow is not convenient for anybody. H. Iverson asks when the \$4.00 was published. Trustee Cropper states if the

property is not correct, bring it to the Clerk to adjust. Trustee Johnson explains that they have tried several different ways to enforce the sidewalk clearing, and the only that was worked was the \$4.00 fine. Trustee Ostrander states a new website is being worked on, a sign board out front, but it doesn't excuse the fact that you are liable to shovel the sidewalk.

T. Paino states the he agrees with Faith's statement. He gives an update on Climate Smart, his resolution needs to pass to move forward, a community of 6 will be more than ample, he discusses Climate Smart being a much broader program and grants for specific action, with these grants being first come first serve. Trustee Johnson explains the lights are changed out, still outside work left to do, and the switches are done. T. Paino explains NYSERDA grant overlap. Trustee Cropper states that when the water bills go out, the committee can be mentioned in the newsletter.

M. Sesserman notes the Board's dedication to the Village and the willingness to listen and help out, and he looks forward to working with the next Board. He concurs with M. Rowntree's statement, and he concurs with F. Benson's, T. Paino, and Mark's statements. He discusses local recruitment. He adds that when he was growing up snow was included in his taxes, contractors are hard to find, and the elderly can not shovel their sidewalks.

L. Schneider states she would like to follow up on the snow bill asking where the \$4.00 was in writing, no recourse offered, and no option to dispute. Mayor Speed explains how the Board discussed cutting to \$2.00 this one time and explains why the fine is \$4.00. L. Schneider asks why this has not been updated on the Village website. Mayor Speed explains it will.

T. Gaylord – not in attendance.

W. Gurbo is now on the call. He asks about snow removal; he adds that he hopes the Board will keep to that feeling that the Board is for the people of the *Town* and not against. He adds trust in Trustee, the \$4.00 is not fair and consider that. Mayor speed explains that the \$2.00 has been decided on.

S. Baker notes that she is on the call if anyone has any questions.

**ATTORNEY FITZSIMMONS:** He reports he has been working on ongoing projects. He adds he has no comments on the snow removal as the Village had done everything it said it would.

**CLERK/TREASURER REPORT:** Given by Patricia DeLong. A full copy of the report is available in the office for review or upon request. All normal office tasks including payroll, abstracts, phone calls, emails, garbage sticker sales, and posting to social media have been completed. The annual water quality report is being complied for posting. The grant account has been reopened. The quarterly calendar is being prepared to be sent out with water bills on April 1st. Record retention and file purging has continued. Village elections will be held on Tuesday, March 16th from Noon – 9 pm in the Village Hall to elect two Trustees and one Mayor; all for two-year terms. The office will be closed on Friday, April 2nd for Good Friday. Delinquent Tax notices were sent out on March 1st totaling the amount of \$62,472.96. Bob Patterson has completed a draft budget which was emailed to all the Department Heads and the Board of Trustees on March 3rd.

**LIBRARY REPORT:** Given by Library Director Tobi Farley. A full copy of the report is available in the office for review or upon request. She thanks Dave Siter for coming down and helping with the roof. Virtual programs are having good attendance of at least 25 people. We have also received positive feedback from participants for the history series with the FDR Museum and Library and the Snow Moon program with Mud Creek, which had 35 participants! At Home Learning Kits are going well tanks to Mindy Gardner. The job skill workshops are now rescheduled for March 18th and 25th, April 15th and 22nd and May 13th and 20th. People only need to sign up for one. As a part of our Early Literacy Kits we will be sharing Little Ranger Kits from the Martin Van Buren National Historic Site. We are starting plans for our summer reading programs. The theme this year is Tales and Tails. So, think lots of animals! Grants and Donations \$ 628 soup sales, \$15,000 Town of Claverack. The director's association has drafted a letter to the governor asking that library workers be included in phase 1b of the vaccination plan. The county library association is finalizing the new county wide museum pass program. Faith and I are working on scheduling our Coalition of Community Partners meeting this week. Grant proposal has been submitted to facilitate community conversations to help in the library's strategic planning. A big thank you to PBlnc for inviting us to participate in a grant proposal with them and the Co-Op and the Sylvia Center. Funds were approved by the Rubin Community Health Fund and will help us to be able to start our tool library to include

gardening tools, provide programs on composting, container gardening and eventually create a seed sharing library, planting vegetables, and cooking classes for families to participate. Trustee Ostrander asks where the vegetables will be planted. Tobi explains in PBI's Victory garden. She adds the Library has managed the website and email under the Village's domain, the Library is paying for hosting but there are problems with the emails and suggests the Village take over philmont.org to have more control over it.

**COMMUNITY CENTER REPORT:** Given by Trustee Cropper, as submitted by Director Veronezi. A full copy of the report is available in the office for review or upon request. The Youth Activities Program will reopen on March 15 on Mondays and Wednesdays. The hours are 3:30 to 5:30. The program offers activities, homework help, and healthy snacks. Building Bluebird houses will be one of the first spring activities which will be led by Doug Cropper and Julie Veronezi. Covid protocols are in place. Participants will be limited to 10 to start up. The program is free of charge. Call 518-567-8220 to preregister. Thanks to Ghent Wood Products for donating all the wood for the Bluebird houses. A program for teaching the basics of canoeing is being planned for the spring. Thank you for approving my request for National Boating Safety Instructor status.

**POLICE REPORT:** Given by OIC Vern Doyle. He reports that the Village had 11 calls for service, 138 property checks, 4 V&T warnings, and 10 parking tickets. He explains property checks. Trustee Ostrander asks if they could leave tags like they do in Hudson. OIC Doyle voices concern over liabilities. He talks about the Police Reform Public Hearing and comments how the committee listened to folks who wanted to speak and to realize there are gaps and what is good. They will be building and continuing on with specifics, transparency, and specifics on body cameras, a 3-year plan for the cameras and a software plan. He states it is ongoing and not taken lightly to fulfill the obligations of the Police Reform. They have negotiated to cut IT costs by getting inline with the County IT. Trustee Ostrander asks about the village panel. OIC Doyle states a panel is his own doing but no obligation. He will have a meeting just for the people in June with no political agenda and about the Village of Philmont residents, giving an opportunity to have officers there so people can come in to get to know them better. He explains how people can go to the County website to fill out referrals for any unique situation. He states they want to be able to enforce the laws of NYS and continue to be a part of the ongoing changes. OIC Doyle gives the Board a document for body cameras and explains they will try to get a grant. They discuss the street cameras currently serviced by S&F.

**Summit Lake & Its Watercourse (BOA) Report** – given by Grant Administrator S. Baker. A full copy of the report is available in the office for review or upon request. She reads her report summary. Attended the BOA Co-Chair standing meeting held in February with Trustees Johnson and Ostrander. Reported the Cultural Resources Survey (CRS) was at the printers. Pleased to report the Co-Chairs will receive a hard copy each to review, and when completed we can move along to release the study. The CRS was partially funded with BOA funds, and when released we will have completed the BOA grant task on the Work plan ahead of schedule. It was decided the Philmont Rising budget meeting is to be rescheduled for after the election, and the same for the discussion needed for the Community Participation Plan listed as a Work Plan task. Reported the LWRP is on schedule and a meeting with the DOS was held with Barbara Sagal attending as Chair where we reviewed the progress made with the partnering Towns and LWRP requirements for reporting. Informed the PBI / Village Alliance Agreement is in process of communications between the Village attorney and PBI's attorney. A Working Group / Heritage meeting was held in February by Michael Seserman - attended by two people. The CRS nomination process was presented.

**MAYOR SPEED:** Reports he has signed many papers, listened to complaints and figured out what to do. He feels the Board did a good job tonight.

**TRUSTEE JOHNSON:** Gives the DPW/WA/SW reports; full copies of these reports are available in the office for review. He reports that the sweeper has been repaired, the DPW has repaired water leaks, done repairs and maintenance to the trucks and lawn mowers. He discusses brush day, budget, samples, and the break on Route 217. He reports on Pine Haven and Summit Heights. He also reports on the Water Treatment Plant lights, 90% of the work is done, the switches are changed, and the led lights are in.

**TRUSTEE GITTERMAN:** Reports she attended a webinar given by OSC on budgets. She communicates that she spoke to Trevellyan regarding website and domain as well as the option she is looking at in regard to baseline vs if someone builds it and audits it. Trustee Ostrander asks if Chris Letivoca who does the Fire Company website could help.

**TRUSTEE CROPPER:** Reports on the property checks and community initiatives. He states he checks into the office several times helping with correspondence and questions.

**TRUSTEE OSTRANDER** Reports that the Fire Police vehicle is in service, reports on elections being this month, and talks about the call regarding Monolith

**Superintendent Siter** discusses the property checks, prices for cleaning up and removing tires from derelict properties, reading water meter will start tomorrow, due to COVID they are working on fixing the broken meters, and Community Day meeting will be at 7:00 pm at the Philmont Rod and Gun Club.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE LIST PROVIDED**

- 1) Email from Peter Johnson regarding taxes.
- 2) Email from Walter Gurbo regarding snow removal.
- 3) Email from Cassandra Kerner regarding garbage.
- 4) Email from Lynn Szafran regarding garbage.
- 5) Letter from Michael Glemann regarding snow removal invoice.
- 6) Email from Lauren Schneider regarding snow removal invoice.
- 7) Letter from Katherine and Nelson Sterner regarding snow removal invoice.
- 8) Email from Jonathan Seliger regarding snow removal invoice.
- 9) Email from Robert Macfarlane regarding snow removal invoice.
- 10) Email from Faith Benson regarding hate groups.
- 11) Letter from Dave Bolevice regarding snow removal invoice.
- 12) Letter from Lawrence and Theresa Gaylord regarding snow removal invoice.

#### **Motions and Resolutions**

**MOTION** to accept with regret, Valerie Milligan Burgess resignation as Village of Philmont Public Library Clerk effective March 1, 2021, made by Trustee Gitterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nays

**MOTION** to hire Kaschia Lainez as part time Program Assistant at the Philmont Community Center at the rate of \$15.00 per hour, as submitted by Director Veronezi, made by Trustee Cropper, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Ostrander. All Ayes, No Nays

**MOTION** to identify the Village Meeting Hall, located at the rear of 124 Main Street, Philmont, NY as the polling place for the Columbia County Primary Elections to be held on June 22, 2021, and the General Elections to be held on November 2, 2021 made by Trustee Johnson, seconded by Trustee Ostrander. ALL AYES, NO NAYS

**MOTION** to allow the Mayor to sign the Purchase and Sale Agreement from Juice Bar/Oasis Charger Corporation for an electric car charging station to be located at 101 Main Street, the Village of Philmont Public Library, made by Trustee Gitterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Johnson. All Ayes, No Nays

**MOTION** to increase the budget line 16202 in the amount of \$ 3,142.97 for the expenditure of the first invoice from Juice Bar/Oasis Charger Corporation for an electric car charging station located at 101 Main Street, the Village of Philmont Public Library, made by Trustee Johnson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nays

**MOTION** to hold the Annual Organization Meeting on Monday, April 5<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM in the Village Hall, made by Trustee Cropper, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Ostrander. All Ayes, No Nays

**MOTION** to make a budget line transfer in the amount of \$17,530.00 from A1620.4 to H15 A230.8 for the sale of property located on Eagle Street to Habitat for Humanity made by Trustee Johnson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nays

**MOTION** to approve the Columbia County Police Reform Plan for the Village of Philmont, made by Trustee Cropper, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Johnson. All Ayes, No Nays

VILLAGE OF PHILMONT  
COLUMBIA COUNTY, NEW YORK  
RESOLUTION NO. 1 of 2021

At a regular meeting of the Village Board of Trustees for the Village of Philmont, Columbia County, New York, duly held on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of March 2021 at the Village Hall, 124 Main Street, Philmont, New York and virtually utilizing Zoom meetings, the following Resolution was proposed and seconded:

Resolution by: Doug Cropper;  
Seconded by: Brian Johnson.

WHEREAS, in June of 2020, Governor Andrew Cuomo issued Executive Order 203, which directs “Each local government entity which has a police agency operating with police officers as defined under 1.20 of the criminal procedure law must perform a comprehensive review of current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, and develop a plan to improve such deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, for the purposes of addressing the particular needs of the communities served by such police agency and promote community engagement to foster trust, fairness, and legitimacy, and to address any racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of black people, people of color, and poor people”, and

WHEREAS, the Columbia County Police Reform Panel was formed in October of 2020 to conform to New York State Executive Order No. 203, and a plan was developed after a comprehensive review of local police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures and practices through consultation with community stakeholders, the transparent and collaborative process included a diverse population of individuals: Columbia County residents, including minorities, people of color, black people, law professionals, elected officials, mental health and substance use professionals and local law enforcement, additionally a website was created to include a schedule of meetings, links to online meetings that can be viewed anytime, transcripts of previous meetings and a Q & A page with an email for the public to submit questions and comments, all information submitted was taken into consideration when crafting this plan, and

WHEREAS, the County of Columbia, the Columbia County Sheriff’s Office, the partnering local police departments of Greenport, Stockport and Philmont, the Columbia County Police Reform Committee, the stakeholders in the community, and the public have all worked collectively together to identify and submit the plan’s findings and recommendations, and

WHEREAS, the partnering local police departments include the Columbia County Sheriff’s Office Law Enforcement Division which consists of 101 personnel, 14 of which are females (13.86%) and six (6) are minorities (5.94%). There are 59 Full Time Deputy Sheriffs, Investigators and Administrators; six (6) Full Time Communications Personnel and three (3) Part Time; 24 Part Time Deputy Sheriffs and Special Patrol Deputies; and nine (9) Front Office/Central Garage Staff, and the Corrections Division where there are a total of 66 Personnel; 24 of which are female (22.44%) and five (5) are minority (8.16%). There are 49 Full Time Correction Officers and five (5) Part-Time, and 12 Kitchen & Medical Staff/Inmate Services, and the Town of Greenport Police Department has a total of 17 employees, 11 are males, six are females, two (2) of the 17 employees are minority, the Town of Stockport Police Department has a total of eight (8) Part Time Officers: four (6) males, one (2) female and no minorities, and the Village of Philmont Police Department that has a total of 11 officers, nine (9) are male, two (2) are female, two employees are minority, and

WHEREAS, the local police departments continuously work together in the County on policing efforts, sharing polices, trainings referral, investigation and handling of cases and offer mutual assistance, many of the local department cases are referred to, and assisted by, the Columbia County Sheriff’s office, and it was confirmed with the Office of the Governor that a collaborative police reform panel process was appropriate and proper to comply with the Police Reform process and the Executive Order, and

WHEREAS, the local police departments participated in meetings throughout the process, providing information including policies and procedures of the participating law enforcement agencies, that was posted to the Columbia County Police Reform website, and all panels were facilitated by Newell Eaton of Integrated Leadership Practices, Mr. Eaton has over 40 years of experience providing meeting facilitation for community, business and government projects, such meetings included:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Meeting</u>
10/20/20	Community Input Panel Meeting 6 PM
11/5/20	Community Input Panel Meeting 6 PM
11/13/20	Community Input Panel Meeting 6 PM
12/2/20	Elected Officials/Law Enforcement Panel Meeting 6 PM

12/3/20 Elected Officials/Law Enforcement Panel Meeting 6 PM  
12/16/20 Elected Officials/Law Enforcement Panel Meeting 6 PM  
(Main Room & Breakout Room #1)  
Elected Officials/Law Enforcement Panel Meeting(Breakout Room #2)  
12/17/20 Elected Officials/Law Enforcement Panel Meeting 6 PM  
(Main Room & Breakout Room #1)  
Elected Officials/Law Enforcement Panel Meeting(Breakout Room #2)  
1/19/21 Elected Officials/Law Enforcement Panel Meeting 6 PM  
2/3/21 Elected Officials/Law Enforcement Panel Meeting 6 PM  
2/11/21 Plan Review Committee Meeting 6:30 PM  
3/1/21 Plan presented to the Public (Anticipated)  
3/8/21 Public Hearing (Anticipated)  
3/10/21 Proposed Adoption of Plan (Anticipated)

WHEREAS, due to the global pandemic caused by COVID-19 all meetings were conducted virtually by use of Google Meets, and live stream broadcast on the County YouTube channel and then archived for future viewing and review by all members of the public, and

WHEREAS, the Police Reform process has generated a draft plan available on the Police Reform Website: <https://sites.google.com/columbiacountyny.com/police-reform-panel> for public review, and

WHEREAS, the local police department of the Village of Philmont, hereby endorses and supports the Police Reform Plan and has initiated the following local review and participation, meetings with concerned citizens of Philmont and exchanges of information and processes with residents, as well as reports on the Police Reform panel process to the Village board at ongoing Village Board of trustee meetings; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Village Board of the Village of Philmont does adopt this resolution accepting the attached draft Police Reform Plan as and for a collaborative Plan, inclusive of the Village of Philmont.

Upon question of the foregoing Resolution, the following Philmont Village Board members voted "Aye" in favor of the Resolution:

Trustee Doug Cropper;

Trustee Debra Gitterman;

Trustee Laurence Ostrander;

Trustee Brian Johnson; and

Mayor Clarence V. Speed;

The following Philmont Village Board Members voted "No" in opposition, thereto: NONE.

The Resolution having been approved by a majority of the Village Board, the same was declared duly adopted by the Mayor of the Village of Philmont.

Dated: 3/8/2021 Patricia DeLong, Village Clerk  
Village of Philmont

**Unfinished Business:** agreement with PBI.

**MOTION** to go into Executive Session to discuss contract matters made by Trustee Ostrander, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nays

**MOTION** to go come out Executive Session made by Trustee Johnson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nays

**MOTION** to authorize the agreement subject to attorney review and approval, made by Trustee Johnson, second by Trustee Ostrander. All Ayes, No Nays

**New Business:** Trustee Ostrander discusses the Pine Haven agreement. Attorney Fitzsimmons asks if there is a game plan to authorize it. Trustee Ostrander voices his concern not to miss an opportunity to use funds for something like emergency services. Attorney Fitzsimmons explains the charge has to be reasonable and rational on their usage figured into the rate related to the need and demand in the system.

The Board discusses the EMS proposal for Hillsdale. Trustee Johnson affirms they should have another year the way they are handling it with the operation expenses, adding we are not here to make money but to provide a service. Trustee Gitterman suggests writing a letter to Stephen King.

**Motion to adjourn –*in memory of Herb Near*** made by Trustee Johnson, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nays.

**Adjournment: 9:31**

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia DeLong  
Clerk/Treasurer