

## Regular Monthly Board Meeting

Date: February 13, 2023

**Present** Mayor Brian Johnson, Trustees Doug Cropper, and Debra Gitterman, Clerk/Treasurer Jessica Thomas, Attorney Robert Fitzsimmons, Library Director Tobi Farley, OIC Vernon Doyle

Pledge of Allegiance

Call to Order: 7:00 pm

**Motion:** to approve the minutes from the January 9<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting; made by Trustee Cropper, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nays

**Motion:** to approve the January Budget to Actual Reports; made by Trustee Gitterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nays

**Motion:** to approve the payment of bills from the January 25<sup>th</sup>, February 2<sup>nd</sup> and February 13<sup>th</sup> Abstracts; made by Trustee Cropper, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nays

### Public Requests-

K. Schoemer-Asks several questions in regards to The Woods subdivision pertaining to the planning board process, covenants, driveway grades, the road, a visual simulation, and the Essig trail.

J. Sedlock-Asks questions in regards to The Woods covenants.

J. Wright-Expresses her dissatisfaction about The Woods process. A discussion continues.

**Attorney Fitzsimmons:** He reports nothing new.

**Clerk/Treasurer Report:** Village Elections will be held on Tuesday, March 21st. Petitions are due by February 14th and acceptance letters are due by February 17th. Worked closely with Cliff for water, sewer and DPW business. Worked with Superintendent LaMont in regards to DPW assistance. New payroll deductions were submitted to payroll. Had a conference call with RingSquared in regards to phone updates. Worked closely with the Union Attorney on memorandum of agreement. Assisted Tobi with setting up a Staples Advantage account. Had multiple correspondences with the Claverack Assessor in regards to property transfers. We had a large volume of tax and water bill requests. The annual water quality report was started. Began budget preparations. Researched Library archives and made copies for David Bolevice for library grant. Participated in a RestoreNY conference call. Took an insurance risk transfer webinar. Completed the transition on retirement to be gold certified. W-2's were received from the payroll company and were sent out to the employees by this office. The Office will be closed on Monday, February 20th in observance of Presidents Day.

**Building Inspector Report:** Given by Mayor Johnson. For the month he spoke with Mr. Gellert in regards to a house on Main St, he has been in touch with the gentleman that owns a house on Ark Street and he has handled a couple of issues with Monte.

**Library Report** – Given by Library Director Tobi Farley. A full copy of the report is available in the office for review or upon request. January programs: Poet's Opera was super successful with 43 attendees over the three events. The group is planning to continue with quarterly programs. Soup sales had a slow start, but are picking up a bit. We should discuss possible fundraisers including Book It 5k and new ideas if we decide to discontinue soup sales next year. Fundraisers take a lot of prep work and help! Upcoming programs: CCLA webinar/ virtual programs: email [columbiacountylibraries.org](mailto:columbiacountylibraries.org) to register for events. Ice skating in the Gilded Age – Tuesday, January 24 at 7pm had 38 participants. I was a great presentation. Please go view the recording at <https://columbiacountylibraries.org/programs/past-programs/>. Upcoming virtual programs include: The Underground Railroad Education Center in Albany on Anti-Slavery pre-Civil War in Columbia County on February 20<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. Tech Labs – various date on various topic. See flyers attached for details. Humanities NY grant funded Reading and Discussion Group led by Philmont resident, Karen Schoemer, on the writings of James Baldwin. These in-person sessions will be held monthly beginning Wednesday, February 8<sup>th</sup>. **Grants** Humanities NY grant funds of \$1,000 that we were approved for last month will be paid directly to the facilitator of the programs. **Stats** January in-person and virtual program attendance 167, January people in the library 733, January digital services hoopla 127, Kanopy 11 and OverDrive 119 Philmont, 397 Claverack. **Meetings/ trainings/ projects** The Pollinator Pathway grant that was approved last

month has an extra step of filing another application with the funder (New World Foundation). I am applying for two additional grants to help extend some of the programs that are part of this project. We are looking at new ways to assist volunteers in watering the gardens. Eileen Ordu has offered to help coordinate volunteers in the place of George Brehm, who recently passed away. We would like to place rail barrels at each site in order to help volunteers with watering. It would be best to have them closed and have the DPW fill them twice a week and water the sites on those days.

**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. **Facility:** The center has been checked regularly during the month. The center was rented twice in January for family parties. Programs: Thanks to everyone who helped make the memorial service for George Brehm very special. The program was well attended with close to 100 coming and going. The stone is very nice and well allow us to reflect on George's service to the center and village. The event was appreciated by all attending and creates a very important sense of unity. Jess Cropper-Alt, Doug Cropper and I met with Columbia County Youth Bureau Director Dan Grandinetti to learn about the Bureau and how it may be able to serve the youth of Philmont. Suggestions included networking with school districts and the Claverack Town Park's summer program. There will be a free NYS safe boating class on March 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup>. Visit the NY parks website to pre-register.

**Police Report:** Given by OIC Vern Doyle. A full copy of the report is available in the office for review or upon request. For the month of January, we had 12 calls for service, 62 property checks, 1 UTT's issued, and 16 V&T warnings. They worked with the County Health Dept and the whole department have Narcan training. The county is ordering boxes to install so Narcan is available to the public. There will be some other upcoming trainings.

**Summit Lake & Its Watercourse (BOA) Report** – given by Trustee Gitterman, as submitted by Grant Administrator S. Baker. A full copy of the report is available in the office for review or upon request. **Brownfield Opportunity Area BOA** The BOA Grant Committee meeting was held on 1/24/23 attended in person by Co-Chairs Mayor Johnson and Trustee Ostrander; Sally Baker, PBI Project Management, called into the meeting. **LWRP grant Watershed Management Plan updates:** The consultant services contract for the Agawamuck Creek Watershed Management planning project under the DOS Local Waterfront Revitalization Program grant was approved by the Village Board on 1/9/23. The contract agreement was emailed to LaBella Associates on 1/10/23 for countersigning. **BOA grant updates:** The DOS informed PBI of a personnel change at the DOS for oversight of the BOA – Philmont Rising grant. The new DOS representative will additionally have oversight of the Smart Growth grant recently awarded to the Village to fund the Comp Plan updates. PBI proposed inviting the new DOS representative to call-in to the BOA Committee meeting scheduled for February and to invite Robin Andrews (Chair of the Comp plan Committee) to attend to discuss how the BOA grant and the Smart Growth grant can best coordinate consultant services for the various BOA scope of work that will benefit the Comp Plan. Several studies will be completed under the BOA grant, such as a village-wide zoning assessment, and an infrastructure assessment of Summit St, Ellsworth St, Elm St, and the connections to the Main St section of the downtown that can benefit the Comp Plan and not duplicate services. PBI was approved to outreach to Robin Andrews to invite and set up the meeting call-in with the DOS representative. This has been accomplished. PBI is working on the Draft of the RFP for the BOA grant Work Plan. **The Village of Philmont Historic District – updates:** Use of the Village Hall was approved by the Village Board on for a presentation by the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) scheduled for Wednesday March 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:pm-7.30pm aimed at answering community questions regarding the nomination of the Village of Philmont Historic District to be listed on the NY State and National Registers of Historic Places. All are welcome to attend and bring questions! PBI will fund the flyers and mailing cost announcing the presentation to property owners and posting flyers on community message boards.

**Climate Smart Taskforce-** given by Tom Paino. The Storycrafters are coming up with a storyboard to do a video for the lightbulb exchange. There will be a table for the Climate Smart Task Force at the Community Day. The energy audits of the village hall and community center will be reviewed. The water treatment plant was removed from this program and switched to a program called FlexTech. This program will concentrate on the biggest users of energy, mainly the pumps. Tom will get an estimate for what the cost would be for an audit through the FlexTech program. Once the building audits are approved, Pledge Element 2.1- Government Operations Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory can start. The CSC assessment summary and table indicating planned and completed actions required for bronze certification are posted on the Village website. The standard county roadside sign for the EV charging station was approved. The library has agreed to have it installed in their front yard. The sign will either be free or have a cost of \$60. The Hudson Valley Watershed Alliance is looking for citizen monitoring of water quality of natural water bodies. Summit Lake would be a good candidate for this. It will be researched further. Columbia County has signed on to NYSERDS's Clean Heating and

Cooling program, offering the same to towns and villages. The program involves installation of energy saving devices. Michael will research this further. The next meeting will be held Wednesday, February 8, 2023.

**DPW Report** – given by Mayor Johnson. We are down to two guys. Louie LaMont has stepped in to help with the DPW. The sweeper has been taken apart and they are looking for an engine for it. They have been keeping up with things. With only two of them it's a lot for them to get done.

**Mayor Johnson-** He thanks Julie and Jess for putting together the memorial for George. It was very nice to see the community come together. We have been notified that a company is working on installing fiber optic for the next 3-5 months. He was at a meeting and spoke to a Sheriff about how the Philmont Police are an integral parts of what they are doing in the village. Without the Police Department it would be a lot tougher for the Sheriffs to get their work done. Philmont would be in a much worse position without them. He thanks OIC Vern.

**Trustee Cropper-**He met with Dan Grandinetti regarding the county supporting programs for the children. He spent a lot of time working on the fire siren situation. There will be a survey on the website in regards to the siren. He attended the workshop and the event for George Brehm. He had a meeting with Brian and a NY state engineer regarding the sidewalks. He had to call ENCON officer Jeff Cox in regards to an outdoor burn.

**Trustee Detzel-** Given by Trustee Gitterman as submitted by Trustee Detzel. Pleased to report that the work on the library continues and the board and I are working on securing additional funding for more projects this summer. I have been working on collating police department numbers for our upcoming workshop. I plan to run again for a trustee position and am excited to work with Skip should we both be elected next month. I apologize for not being at the meeting but I had to attend a funeral out of state with my family. Please continue to contact me if you have any questions or concerns in the Village.

**Trustee Ostrander-**Not present

#### *Fire Department Report*

20 Calls for the month. Total fire calls for the month 9. Total EMS calls for the month 11. Drills for the month 4 and 2 truck inspections. There was a sub night on January 6<sup>th</sup> with 11 members attending. Columbia County firefighters' convention quarterly meeting was on January 11<sup>th</sup> in Ghent. 6 members attended. There was a sub night on February 3<sup>rd</sup> with 9 members attending. LOSAP was presented to the Village board for final approval on February 13<sup>th</sup>. There will be a CPR/ AED recertification training at the firehouse on February 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Trustee Gitterman-** She reports she attended the Climate Smart meeting. She met with Melanie McMahan from NYSERDA and Tom regarding the energy audit. She also attended a meeting for the Restore NY grant and met the crew at the Empire State Development Corporation that we will be working with to develop 56 Main St. She spoke with Monte Jennings and got a debrief about community day. They need more volunteers. Meetings are held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday of the month at 5pm at the Rod and Gun Club. She also spoke with Didi Barrett's office about the process for getting sidewalk money. She attended the workshop meeting and George's memorial.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE LIST provided to the members of the Board and the public**

- 1) Letter from Robert Rodriguez, Secretary of the State, dated January 4, 2023, in regards to Environmental Protection Fund Smart Growth Community Planning and Zoning Program Grant
- 2) Email from Tighe & Bond dated January 17, 2023, in regards to proposals for water storage tank repainting.
- 3) Letter from Elena DeFio Kean from Hinman Straub dated January 31, 2023, in regards to property tax exemption for NY volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers.
- 4) Email from Jessica Winters dated February 1, 2023, in regards to volunteer or community service work.
- 5) Email from Joseph Miranda date February 3, 2023, in regards to Philmont Zoning Board vacancy.
- 6) Letter from Mindy Gardner dated February 8, 2023, in regards to Library board members.
- 7) Letter from Jesse Langille dated February 8, 2023, in regards to water leak.
- 8) Letter from Eileen Ordu received on February 13, 2023, in regards to The Woods.
- 9) Email from Tomoko Gurbo dated February 13, 2023, in regards to an educational public event regarding Climate Change.
- 10) Email from Tomoko Gurbo dated February 13, 2023, in regards to the proposal regarding EMF regulations.

## Motions and Resolutions-

**Motion:** to enforce the water turn off law and take action against delinquent water users; made by Trustee Cropper, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nay

**Motion:** to appoint Lucy Nordin to the Village of Philmont Volunteer Fire Department as a member; made by Trustee Cropper, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nay

**Motion:** to accept the 2023 Code Enforcement Officer shared services agreement as submitted by the Town of Canaan; made by Trustee Gitterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nay

**Motion:** to enter into a professional services agreement with Laberge Engineering & Consulting Group, Ltd. for the feasibility study at the library; made by Trustee Gitterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nay

**Motion:** to allow the mayor to sign the memorandum of understanding for the Hudson River Valley Greenway Planning grant; made by Trustee Gitterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nay

**Motion:** to reimburse Trustee Larry Ostrander in the amount of \$442 for a payment associated with the Community Center memorial event; made by Trustee Cropper, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nay

**Motion:** to reimburse Jessica Cropper-Alt in the amount of \$80.43 for a payment associated with the Community Center memorial event; made by Trustee Gitterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nay

**Motion:** to reappoint Robert MacFarlane as Chairman of the Village of Philmont Planning Board for a one (1) year term, with the term to expire March 1, 2024; made by Trustee Cropper, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nay

**Motion:** to reappoint Kurt Basl as the Chairman of the Village of Philmont Zoning Board of Appeals for a one (1) year term, with the term to expire March 1, 2024; made by Trustee Cropper, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nay

**Motion:** to reappoint Mindy Gardner as a member of the Village of Philmont Library Board of Trustees for a three (3) year term, to expire September 30, 2025 retroactive to September 30, 2022. (Adjustment to fix the term rotation of 5 years for library board members due to errors in oath book.); made by Trustee Gitterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nay

**Motion:** to accept with regret the resignation of Barbara Sagal from the Village of Philmont Library Board of Trustee effective immediately; made by Trustee Cropper, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nay

**Motion:** to allow the mayor to sign the wastewater treatment facility design, planning, and flow management 2022 annual certification form; made by Trustee Gitterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nay

**Motion:** to allow the mayor to sign the Water Withdrawal Reporting Form for 2022; made by Trustee Cropper, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nay

**Unfinished Business and New Business:** N/A

**Motion:** to go to Executive Session to discuss employee positions, made by Trustee Cropper, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nays

**Motion:** to come out of Executive Session, made by Trustee Cropper, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nays

**Motion to adjourn** –made by Trustee Gitterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nays.

Adjournment: 8:31 pm

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jessica  
Clerk/Treasurer