

## **Regular Monthly Board Meeting**

Date: March 13, 2023

**Present** Mayor Brian Johnson, Trustees Doug Cropper, and Debra Gitterman, Larry Ostrander, and Jason Detzel, Clerk/Treasurer Jessica Thomas, Attorney Robert Fitzsimmons, and Library Director Tobi Farley

Pledge of Allegiance

Call to Order: 7:04 pm

**Motion:** to approve the minutes from the February 13th Board Meeting; made by Trustee Detzel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Ostrander. All Ayes, No Nays

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

**Motion:** to approve the payment of bills from the February 22<sup>nd</sup>, March 6th and March 13th Abstracts; made by Trustee Detzel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nays

### **Public Requests-**

M. Crane- Speaks about the research that he has done in regards to climate change. When the climate act eliminates New York's greenhouse gas emissions, the effect will not be measurable. With all of the information he has presented, he feels that what the climate action community has in mind will cause more harm or suffering.

P. Johnson-Starts by talking about the Columbia newspaper. There were two insightful pieces in it. Kinderhook received a grant through the NY Forward program. This program is to rehab the main street areas. The fact that a rich town received this grant should call attention to the conditions in Philmont. The second article says that Copake activated a team to look at housing. Copake and surrounding towns and villages have a moratorium on subdivisions to address the lack of housing affordability. The village needs an RFQ, so we have a list of people who are able to write grant proposals.

D. Haynes- He asks why there is so much talk about and emphasis on climate change now. He presents a resolution to the board for consideration. If passed, this resolution would rescind Resolution #1 from 2018 in its entirety and encourage sponsored meetings and forums to encourage public debate, research, and discourse.

K. Schoemer-She is there to represent the Summit Lake Conservation Group. She talks about the letter that their lawyer sent to the board in regards to The Woods. She reads some of the points out loud to share concerns about the process. She urges the board to become more involved in the process.

K. Reese-Hurd-Speaks about electromagnetic fields. The Climate Smart agenda wants everything to become more electrified. This would cause dirty electricity that affects health.

**Attorney Fitzsimmons:** He reports nothing new, just on-going projects.

**Clerk/Treasurer Report:** Budget Estimates were sent out via email to all department heads on February 17<sup>th</sup>. Budget Proposals were due back by March 1<sup>st</sup>. Guidance for Village elections day and election inspector's webinar was taken. Participated in a phone call in regards to sustainable construction for the Restore NY grant. We have noticed an increase in requests for death certificates and the need for notary services. Record retention project has continued to be worked on. The office will be closed on Friday April 7<sup>th</sup> in observance of Good Friday.

**Building Inspector Report:** Given by Trustee Detzel. A full copy of the report is available in the office for review or upon request. From October-February 2023: Tenancy CO issued 24, Tenancy Inspections 24, Rental Registration Issued 11, Vacant Buildings Registered 0, Building Permits 16, Construction Inspections 27, CO/CC issued 19, CO searches 6. Continued investigation and voluntary eviction of tenants at 49 ½ Summit St. Complaints received/investigated 0. Monte Jennings handle these. He does not report to me. Zoning review/referral of new projects: Bill Trusciewicz Main St.

**Library Report** – Given by Library Director Tobi Farley. A full copy of the report is available in the office for review or upon request. **Services** February programs: James Baldwin program – 27 attendees and three additional people reached out to join the next meeting on March 8<sup>th</sup>. Tech Labs are averaging 35 attendees per event. Underground Railroad webinar had 51 attendees. Upcoming programs: We are planning planting days for the 5 public sites for the Pollinator Pathway. These will

begin in April. We are still looking for volunteers, but have had members of Free Columbia offer to help. Cornell Cooperative Extension will be present at least 3 programs on pollinators, native plants, bees 101, birding 101 and house plant care for beginners. Waiting to confirm dates. Free Columbia has offered to also partner on a ceramics program on creating planters to go along with our plant share initiative. We are partnering with Neighborhood Forest to distribute free trees to children. Parents must register by March 10<sup>th</sup> and pick up their tree at the library when they arrive closer to Earth Day. <https://www.neighborhoodforest.org/parent-registration/?school=17850>. We have a quite a bit of interest in restarting our Repair Café. I have had inquiries about lamp and clock repair. I have a lamp repair person, but would love help finding a clock repair person. The target for the program is sometime in May. Book It! 5k (our fundraiser in partnership with the Claverack Library) is scheduled for May 21<sup>st</sup>. **Grants** We applied for a grant through Berkshire Taconic for \$7,500 for programs for seniors. The proposal included lunch/game/socialization time 2x per week, a book delivery service and tech classes. The grant decision will be announced in May. **Stats** February in-person and virtual program attendance 145. February people in the library 690. February digital services hoopla 120, Kanopy 12 and OverDrive Philmont 130, Claverack 414 **In the News** There was an article in the Columbia Paper about our receiving a grant for the Pollinator Pathway. We are the only library in the system to receive a grant and only one of 5 organizations in the county. Turtle Tree Seed (Camp Hill Copake) asked to include us in their yearly newsletter as one of the organizations they donated seeds to last year and how it benefitted our patrons. They were very excited at the amount of people who benefited and how the seed library has supported the tool library and expanded to the Pollinator Pathway and houseplant sharing projects. **CCLA** The County Library Association is planning a Community Read this Summer. We have applied for grants to support the program. It will revolve around the book [The Boy Who Harnessed the Wind](#). This book is available in adult, young adult and picture book versions. We are planning local book groups and regional hands-on programs for all ages. More info on specific dates to come.

**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. Oil was ordered. The center was rented for a birthday party. We will be asking for a refundable \$20 key deposit when renting the center. Programs: Scouts are using the center on a regular basis. March 4<sup>th</sup> there will be a CPR course taught by Joshua Leifer. Seats were filled within 2 days of posting the course. March 18<sup>th</sup> NY State Safe Boating Class from 9 to 1 and March 19 from 11 to 3. The course is free. Signups must be done through NY State on the computer. Course taught by Doug Cropper and Julie Veronezi. Flyer is available. Always looking for presenters and programs.

**Police Report:** Given by Mayor Johnson. A full copy of the report is available in the office for review or upon request. For the month of February, we had 10 calls for service, 0 arrest, 23 property checks, 9 UTT's issued, and 12 V&T warnings.

**Summit Lake & Its Watercourse (BOA) Report** – given by Trustee Ostrander, as submitted by Grant Administrator S. Baker. A full copy of the report is available in the office for review or upon request. **BOA grant updates:** The BOA Grant Committee meeting was held on 2/28/23 as a Zoom meeting due to inclement weather; the Mayor called in. Attending: Barbara Sagal, Mathew Smith, Robin Andrews, Nicole Allen, and Carolyn Stern. The [meeting recording](#) was made available to the Village of Philmont on 3/1/23. The meeting introduced Matthew Smith, the DOS Specialist with oversight of the BOA pre-development activities and the DOS Smart Growth grant for the Village Comp Plan updates. The topics covered in the meeting addressed how the Village Comp Plan updates, as a high-level document for the future vision and development of the Village as a whole, incorporates the BOA Summit Lake and Its Watercourse and the LWRP Agawamuck Creek Watershed Management Plan as master plans for very specific areas and sites within the Comp Plan vision and goals for these existing economic development plans. As a follow-up to the meeting, Matthew Smith, DOS, emailed examples of how the City of Rochester incorporated existing plans into the City of Rochester Comp Plan: “Rochester recently adopted a Comprehensive Plan in 2019 (not a DOS-funded SGCP) [City of Rochester | Rochester 2034 - The City's 4th Ever Comprehensive Plan](#), and completed a BOA for their Bull's Head area around the same time [Bull's Head BOA | Department of State \(ny.gov\)](#). The Comp Plan does make reference to the Bull's Head BOA and underutilized sites more generally (see pages 98, 100, 112, 147, and 316 as examples). You can see that implementing recommendations from the various BOAs was identified in the plan as a strategy to achieve their placemaking goals.” PBI is working on the Draft of the RFP for the BOA grant Work Plan. **LWRP grant Watershed Management Plan updates:** PBI continued to work with [LaBella Associates](#), the consultant hired for the Agawamuck Creek Watershed Management Plan, to organize the Zoom kick-off meeting scheduled for March 8<sup>th</sup> with the Watershed Advisory Committee (WAC) including the participating towns of Claverack, Ghent, Hillsdale, and Austerlitz, and WAC members. **The Village of Philmont Historic District – updates:** A mailing party was held with members of the Heritage Working Group to stuff 425 envelopes with 3 flyers mailed to property owners for the State Historic Preservation Office presentation in the Village Hall scheduled for March 15<sup>th</sup>. Many thanks to Paul Naprstek, Cara Brownell, and Jennifer Thibeault for making a record

time of 2hrs.30mins for all those envelopes and their volunteer effort! Flyers are posted all around town, and postings are continuing on social media for the SHPO presentation. All are welcome!

**Climate Smart Taskforce-** given by Tom Paino. Last meeting was March 8<sup>th</sup>. The NYSEDA Clean Energy Community PON 3298 (municipal building energy audit) The two audits (Community Center and Village Hall) will be reviewed with Jeff Scharl of NYSEDA and Matt Arisohn from L&S Engineering the week of March 20<sup>th</sup>. How to spend the remaining \$3,300 will be considered at that meeting with recommendations made to the Village Trustees. A meeting is scheduled for March 14 with Stacey Sabo of NYSEDA to review the feasibility of using the Flex Tech program for an energy audit of the wastewater treatment plant. Once the building audits are approved, Pledge Element 2.1 – Government Operations Greenhouse Gas Emissions Inventory – can start with the assistance of Haley. Pledge Element 2.5 – Government Operations Climate Action Plan is dependent on 2.1 GHG inventory. The submission deadline has changed from April 7 to July 7 by NYSEDA who claims that the success of the program has overwhelmed their office with submissions and the need an extension. Climate Vulnerability Assessment and Climate Adaptation Plan (Pledge Element 7) is dependent on County initiation with Cornell Extension taking the lead. Andrew, Tom, Susan, Michael, Sarah and Arthur are scheduled to tour the Valatie Micro-hydro facility lead by John Doran tomorrow, Thursday, March 9. A directional sign for the EV charging station was provided by the county free of charge, through the efforts of Jeff French, and was erected in the front yard of the library by the Village. Through the Local Champions program three hours of consultation is being offered from each of two expert advisors – Kriston Wilson (fundraising) of RUPCO and Jennifer Crawford (civil engineer) of Crawford Engineering. Tom will schedule the calls. Philmont still needs to complete the Scoping Document which Michael will look into. The next meeting will be held, Wednesday, April 12, 2023.

**Comprehensive Plan Update-**given by Robin Andrews. The MOU you signed for the Greenway grant has been received by them. Thank you for that. Nicole Allen of LaBerge will be sending you a contract for their work. Now that we have gotten both grants (the State and The Greenway), we can plan Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the plan (Phase one is more of the outreach). Between the two grants, the volunteer matching, and the village's match of \$6610, we will be able to do the entire project. LaBerge's contract will be project based, and I will review it before you see it. We have had two meetings with the committee and Nicole – one on Zoom, and one in person. We are working on the Participation Plan, right now. We are planning an open house day on Monday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>, for input – in the Village Hall, if that is ok. We are also designing a short survey, and making plans on how to get the word out for maximum participation. Nicole and I also met with the BOA committee to ensure that our efforts our coordinated. Our next regular meeting is April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**DPW Report** – given by Mayor Johnson. He reports that they have taken care of a couple of water breaks and that they have been getting the trucks ready for the snow storm and taking care of the snow. It has been a tough winter for them being shorthanded.

**Mayor Johnson-**He starts by thanking Larry for all of his years of service. The water tank tower painting has been put out to bid. He has a prebid meeting with Doug on March 20<sup>th</sup> for all of the prospective workers. The tank will be shut off for a test period around April 15<sup>th</sup>. It will be tested for a week.

**Trustee Cropper-** He reports he attended the planning board meeting and the workshop. Property checks have been completed. He had several conversations with concerned citizens about various issues and also took a grants webinar. He also thanks Larry; working together all these years has been an honor and privilege.

**Trustee Detzel-** He reports that he attended all of the usual meetings. The thing he has been working on mostly for the month is the Berkshire Taconic grant to supplement part of the comprehensive plans on how the library fits as an anchor for the community. He also reports that he has been talking about starting a parent's resource group.

**Trustee Ostrander-** He reports that he attended the regular meetings. He thanks everybody for supporting him on the board. It has been a pleasure and an honor to serve the community that he grew up in and loves. He wishes everybody good luck.

*Fire Department Report-* 17 Calls for the month. Total fire calls for the year 16. Total EMS calls for the year 21. Drills for the month 3, truck inspections 1, and 1 work detail. There was a CPR class at the firehouse on February 11<sup>th</sup> with 3 members recertified. There was a sub night on January 3<sup>rd</sup> with 5 members. A special OSHA training at the fire house on March 4<sup>th</sup> had 5 members in attendance. The corned beef and cabbage dinner fundraiser will be at the Churchtown fire house to benefit the Langdon family.

**Trustee Gitterman-** She reports she attended the planning board meeting, the workshop and the climate smart meeting. She has been in touch with Didi Barrett about sidewalk and other money. She is happy to say that Community Day will be July 1<sup>st</sup>. There will not be fireworks, but there will be a bonfire and block party. The day will start with a village wide market/yard sale.

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

- 1) **Letter from Columbia County Department of Health dated January 30,2023 in regards to the approval of plans for public water supply improvement.**
- 2) **Letter from Eileen Ordu received on February 21, 2023 in regards to The Woods**
- 3) **Letter from Philmont Volunteer Fire Company dated February 22, 2023 in regards to a new elected member.**
- 4) **Letter from Thomas A. Shepardson, Esq. of Whiteman Osterman & Hanna LLP dated March 9, 2023 in regards to The Woods Subdivision.**
- 5) **Email from Datta Haynes dated March 10, 2023 in regards to election candidates.**

**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 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 27, 2023, and the General Elections to be held on November 7, 2023; made by Trustee Detzel, seconded by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nays

**Motion:** to hold the Annual Organization Meeting and the Annual Budget Hearing on Monday, April 10th at 6:00 PM in the Village Hall; made by Trustee Gitterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Ostrander. All Ayes, No Nays

**Motion:** to appoint Beremka Lehrman to the Village of Philmont Volunteer Fire Department as a member; made by Trustee Gitterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Detzel. All Ayes, No Nays

**Motion:** to reimburse Community Center Director Julie Veronezi in the amount of \$85.00 for a payment associated with her National Safe Boating Council certification; made by Trustee Detzel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Gitterman. All Ayes, No Nays

**Motion:** to put out for bid, the painting of the water tower; made by Trustee Gitterman, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nays

**Motion:** to start the process of making an emergency purchase of a motor for the street sweeper; made by Trustee Detzel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Cropper. All Ayes, No Nays

**Motion:** to purchase the software updates required for the water tank painting from Smith Controls as sole source and professional service; made by Trustee Detzel, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Trustee Ostrander. All Ayes, No Nays

**Unfinished Business and New Business:**

Trustee Detzel states that the fire department was contacted by Habitat for Humanity. They would like to provide materials and instructions in a kit to make a wall that would go in front of the fire department as a tribute to President Jimmy Carter's work for Habitat for Humanity. It would be left up for a predetermined amount of time and then donated to the fire department to be destroyed at their will. He asks if the village would support this.

Trustee Cropper questions about the survey for the fire siren.

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

Adjournment: 8:25 pm

Respectfully Submitted,  
Jessica Thomas  
Clerk/Treasurer