

**VILLAGE OF CASTLETON-ON-HUDSON
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING**

December 13, 2021

PRESENT: Mayor Joe Keegan, Trustee/Deputy Mayor Jenifer Pratico, Trustee Sharon Martin, Trustee Lissa D'Aquanni, and Trustee Erik Samarija

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Attorney Benjamin Hill, Foreman Daniel Lebrecht, Foreman Kenneth Meyer, Foreman Joseph Garavelli, Building Inspector Gary Ziegler, Fire Chief Chris Carner, Library Director Melissa Tacke, and Clerk-Treasurer Padraic Ellis.

PUBLIC: 0 (in person), 10 (via Zoom)

CALL TO ORDER: A regular meeting of the Board of Trustees, Village of Castleton-on-Hudson was held at Castleton Village Hall, 85 South Main Street on December 13, 2021. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Mayor Keegan with the Pledge of Allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

- Mayor Keegan, Trustee Martin seconded, motion carried to accept the revised minutes of the November 8, 2021 Regular Meeting.
- Mayor Keegan, Deputy Mayor Pratico seconded, motion carried to accept the minutes of the November 22, 2021 Regular Meeting, with the addition of stating interference from Zoom participants to the meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mayor Keegan moved, Trustee D'Aquanni seconded, motion carried to open public comment. Suzanne Donnelly, of the Castleton-on-Hudson Main Street Association, stated that COHMSA would be holding a Winter Lights on the Hudson gathering at Riverfront Park on January 22, 2022 with food, beverages, and fire pits. Ms. Donnelly also stated that Scenic Hudson will be having a presentation tomorrow about revitalizing Main Street and that she hopes Village officials will participate. Mayor Keegan moved, Trustee Samarija seconded, motion carried to close public comment.

TRUSTEE REPORTS:

- **Mayor Keegan:** Mayor Keegan reported that he signed the contract with VBH Consulting to determine if there are any other possible designs for the Riverfront Park Bridge that would not include elevators. The meeting to discuss river access that was planned for January 24, 2022 at the Castleton Firehouse will be moved to February 28, 2022 to make sure that the results of VBH Consulting's report are available. Instead, on January 24, 2022, the Board will book the Firehouse for a discussion on sewer rates. The Village reached residents with 1,160 text messages, 286 robo-calls, and a Facebook post that reached over 2,000 regarding the water main break that took place the previous week. Mayor Keegan reported that the volunteer appreciation lunch was well attended and that he is communicating with the Town of Schodack regarding sewer connections.
- **Deputy Mayor Pratico:** Deputy Mayor Pratico reported that the leftover food from the volunteer appreciation lunch had been donated to the residents of Castle Hill. Deputy Mayor Pratico

thanked the Castleton Fire Department for their assistance during the water main break and reported that there will be a Fire Department Meeting the next day.

- **Trustee Martin:** Trustee Martin reported thanked Clerk-Treasurer Ellis and Deputy Clerk Better for their help with the volunteer appreciation lunch and the Fire Department, the Castleton Public Library, and the Castleton-on-Hudson Main Street Association for their help with Holidays on the Hudson. Trustee Martin reported that paving was complete at the Waste Water Treatment Plant.
- **Trustee D'Aquanni:** Trustee D'Aquanni thanked the Castleton-on-Hudson Main Street Association and the Library for hosting Holidays on the Hudson and the Department of Public Works for assisting with the set up. Trustee D'Aquanni reported that the Village hosted a parade for Grace Davis to celebrate her 100th birthday and was presented with a resolution signed by the Mayor. Trustee D'Aquanni reported that the Comprehensive Plan website was up and that residents and other interested individuals could participate in the survey there. Trustee D'Aquanni reported that the Capital District Regional Planning Commission approved \$9,000.00 to conduct a traffic, demographic, and development study for the Village.
- **Trustee Samarija:** Trustee Samarija reported that the Eastern Rensselaer County Solid Waste Management Authority has mailed out the 2022 Village calendars and that extras would be dropped off at Village Hall.

REPORTS:

1. **Library Report:** Director Tacke reported that 50 adults and 30 children attended Holidays on the Hudson.
2. **DPW Report:** Foreman Lebrecht reported that leaf pick-up was finished but residents can still bag up their leaves from DPW to pick up. Foreman Lebrecht reported that new parking signs had been installed at the Village Hall and that DPW will be picking up the flower boxes from Main Street.
3. **Water Report:** Foreman Garavelli reported that only one resident lost full service during the water main break and the service to the Village residents should be getting back to normal within the next few days. Foreman Garavelli reported that he has supplied the Mayor with estimates on the needed replacements for all Village water pipes.
4. **Wastewater Report:** Foreman Meyer reported that paving has been completed at the Waste Water Treatment Plant and that the new equipment start-up was beginning.
5. **Building Inspector:** Inspector Ziegler reported that he has been completing apartment inspections as the effects of COVID begin to ease.
6. **Code Enforcement:** Absent.
7. **Fire Department Report:** Chief Carner reported that the donation pick-up for the Anchor went well and that firehouse breakfasts will continue on the first Sundays of the month.
8. **Clerk-Treasurer Report:** No further report.

Mayor Keegan moved, Trustee Samarija seconded motion to approve all departmental reports.

BUSINESS:

- 1. COHMSA Holiday Banners:** The Castleton-on-Hudson Main Street Association proposed assisting the Village in buying additional Holiday Banners for Main Street. Foreman Lebrecht stated that the Department of Public Works is already busy enough at this time of year and that additional banners would create even more work. It was agreed between the Village and COHMSA that the purchase of replacement banners for Main Street would be looked into for next year.
- 2. Delaware Proposal for Town of Schodack:** Delaware Engineering has proposed a \$3,000.00 agreement with the Village to write a report details the effects of the Town of Schodack requests to add additional customers onto the Village's sewer system. Mayor Keegan moved, Trustee Samarija seconded, motion carried for Mayor Keegan to sign the agreement with Delaware Engineering to complete a study on the effects of the Town of Schodack adding additional customers to the Village sewer system.
- 3. Village Hall Phone System:** Clerk-Treasurer Ellis distributed a quote from the Village's current phone system provider to the Board. The matter was tabled until a quote for comparable service could be provided from Spectrum.
- 4. Castleton Fire Department LOSAP:** After discussing various different scenarios regarding the Village's LOSAP contributions, the majority of the Board decided on increasing the LOSAP contribution for 2023 by \$100.00 per person and the then to evaluate additional \$100.00 annual increases over the next four years. Trustee Samarija moved, Mayor Keegan seconded, motion carried to have Firefly Admin draft the needed paperwork to place the \$100.00 LOSAP increase on the March 2022 ballot, with Deputy Mayor Pratico voting against.
- 5. ERCSWMA Service Agreement Resolution:** Trustee Samarija moved, Mayor Keegan seconded, motion passed to accept service from the Eastern Rensselaer County Solid Waste Management Authority for 2022, with the approval of Attorney Hill and the correction of a typo that listing the Village as "Valley Falls."
- 6. NY Heritage Digital Archive Agreement:** Trustee D'Aquanni moved, Trustee Martin seconded, motion carried to sign the agreement with NY Heritage to digitalize the Village's historic photographs and documents.
- 7. Library Board Appointments:** Trustee D'Aquanni moved, Deputy Mayor Pratico seconded, motion carried to accept the reappointment of Patrick Cartwright and Laurie Knaack, as well as the new appointment of Colin Strainge, to the Castleton Library Board.
- 8. Sewer Rate Update:** After providing the Board with initial numbers for the sewer rate increase, Clerk-Treasurer Ellis asked for the use of Delaware Engineering to assist in determining operation and maintenance costs as well as a possible incremental rate schedule. Trustee Samarija moved, Mayor Keegan seconded, motion carried to sign an agreement with Delaware Engineering for no more than 15 hours to assist in the determination of sewer rates.
- 9. River Access Update:** Mayor Keegan stated that the contract with VBH Consulting had been signed and that they will be reviewing the Village's river access options. The Meeting at the Firehouse to discuss river access will be rescheduled for February 28th to make sure the report from VBH is completed. The Board discussed the need to present all options to the public at the February meeting but to make clear that the bridge option is the only one that has been offered to the Village by New York State Department of Transportation.

7. APPROPRIATIONS: Mayor Keegan moved, Deputy Mayor Pratico seconded, motion to approve payment of the abstracts.

Abstract # 8 – Vouchers # 292 - # 345 in the amount of \$ 47,101.10.

General Fund: \$ 34,564.69

Water Fund: \$ 2,227.89

Sewer Fund: \$ 10,308.52

ONLINE BANKING TRANSFERS: Deputy Mayor Pratico moved, Trustee Martin seconded, motion to approve the online banking transfers according to the schedule presented to the Board.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Mayor Keegan moved, Trustee D'Aquanni seconded, motion carried to open public comment. Suzanne Cecala, of the Main Street Association, stated that all options for river access need to be presented to the public. Mike O'Neal, of the Planning Board, stated that a coyote has been seen in the Village and that it is out during the day and that people are approaching it. Suzanne Donnelly, of the Castleton-on-Hudson Main Street Society, stated that she will provide Clerk-Treasurer Ellis with the number for the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation reporting center to inform them of the coyote. Ms. Donnelly stated that all options for river access should be presented to the public. Ms. Donnelly asked if the Board had discussed replacing the tree at Village Hall to which the Board responded that it had not. Susan Megna, of the Planning Board, stated that the river access meeting in February should be well advertised and that, while all options should be presented for river access, there is only one plan that is available to the Village. Carol Stockman, of the Comprehensive Plan committee, stated that the traffic analysis study will be helpful for developing the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Stockman stated that have a Comprehensive Plan will assist in the Village's goal of river access and that she does not like the speed of the trains or the design that has elevators. Mark Wochinger, of the Planning Board, stated that while the residents should hear all the options for river access, they also need to hear all the facts and know that only actual commitment is the bridge proposed by the New York State Department of Transportation. Mayor Keegan moved, Trustee D'Aquanni seconded, motion carried to close public comment.

ADJOURNMENT: At 9:07 pm, Mayor Keegan moved, Trustee D'Aquanni seconded, motion carried to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted,
Padraic Ellis
Village Clerk-Treasurer