

Village Board of Trustees Monthly Meeting

September 11, 2023

The monthly meeting of the Village Board of Trustees was duly held on the 11th of September 2023, in the Auditorium of the Snow Memorial Building, 4917 North Jefferson Street, Pulaski, NY 13142.

Members Present: Jan Tighe, Mayor; Alan Engelbrekt, Deputy Mayor; Jeffrey Fowler, Trustee; and Scott Pello, Trustee.

Absent: Ryan McGrath, Trustee

Village Staff/Officials in Attendance: Cathy Spinney, Village Clerk/Treasurer; John Howland, Code Enforcement Officer; Michael Martin, Chief of Police, and Jennifer Gibbs, Deputy Clerk.

Guest(s): Melissa Wadkinson, Vern Sundet, Tricia Hax, Karl Hax, Steven Totten, Amy Dobrzynski, Mark Dobrzynski, Daniel Postal, Shelby Potter, Chris Weisenburger, Kristin Pratt, Terry Tanner, Janice Kozma, Angel Rodriguez, and Robin Ford.

Agenda Items #1: Call to Order

The Meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM with Mayor Jan Tighe leading the Pledge of Allegiance to the American Flag.

Public Hearings

A. Property Maintenance

Angel Rodriguez showed pictures of a property in his neighborhood that has not been mowed through the summer and criticized the state of many properties and streets in the Village that have not been mowed or maintained. He recommended hiring more DPW to maintain the upkeep of the public areas. The Village has been looking to hire more workers for the DPW. It was noted that the purpose of this public hearing is to change Village Code Chapter 100 to approach property negligence in a timely and efficient fashion. Instead of taking people to court. A notice will be sent to the property owner in violation, that person will have 12-14 days to either resolve the problem or request an administrative hearing, if not the DPW or a vendor will mow it and the cost will be applied to their Village taxes plus \$100.00. The same system will be included in the Junk/Letter Law below.

Melissa Wadkinson suggested adding language to clarify maintenance expectations and exceptions in the Property Maintenance code to match the consequences of non-compliance. The changes read under §100-3 Maintenance, exceptions:

All property occupied or vacant, improved, or unimproved, shall be maintained by the owner free of nuisances higher than nine (9) inches in front of the building to the street, on each side of the building to the property line or 10ft, whichever is less, and in the rear of the building up to 5ft. The following locations are exemptions:

And under §100-4 (D):

The area to be cut and removed will be the following: In front of the building on the property to the street, and each side of the building to the property line or 10ft and in the back of the building up to 5 feet. The actual cost of such cutting and removal, plus \$100.00.

Amy Dobrzynski recommended a community beautification day. There was some conversation about the state of rental properties in the Village and the need for more code enforcement.

B. Solar Law

Stephen Balcom introduced himself, described his life-long service to the community, and his wish to allow commercial solar development on part of his property and keep the rest agricultural. He explained that his land is in a trust, he will receive no financial remuneration for the solar development, and he has spoken to his immediate neighbors who had no complaints about the project.

Daniel Postal of AES Clean Energy Development introduced himself and gave a brief history of the company he represents. The company was founded in 1981 and is a Fortune 500 global energy company. This fact was discussed further when a resident had a question about decommissioning, surety bonds, and who would be responsible for maintenance and decommissioning if AES went out of business. Amy Dobrzynski asked about the solar fire in Chaumont, NY in July 2023. Mr. Postal explained that it was the battery that caught fire and the development planned for Mr. Balcom's property will not have a storage battery on site. Mr. Postal explained that unlike other commercial solar companies AES completes the environmental studies and other due diligence processes before they begin the permitting procedures. He explained that the proposed changes to the law will interrupt the process and deprive Mr. Balcom his wish to use his land as demonstrated above.

Kristin Pratt, of Young/Summer LLC representing AES, had questions about the process of the proposed solar code changes. She noted that the changes/amendments have not been reviewed by the county. Kristin Pratt and Daniel Post agreed to submit a basic plan so the Village would have a better understanding of the plan. Jan Tighe noted that the Village and Town of Richland Comprehensive Plan included more housing as well as green energy projects in the area and the Village has limited space, while solar projects within the Town of Richland but outside of the Village would be more agreeable. The Board agreed to assess the proposed changes and hold another hearing after fine tuning the language.

C. Junk/Litter

There was no public comment on the proposed junk/litter law.

D. Sign Law

The proposed sign law intends to add the attachment of the schedule/chart of permitted and unpermitted signs to the body of text of §160-66 for ease of access.

A question of what signs would be included in a vendor's application fee and how the Village would consistently implement compliance, was made by Tricia Hax. It was noted that we are currently in the process of hiring an additional Code Enforcement Officer.

Ms. Hax would like to place a 4' by 8' vinyl banner on a piece of wood and place it on the corner of Route 11 & Route 13 and questioned whether the sign should be included in the vendors license while it looked like other business in town had not applied for signs. In her foil request just 3 sign permit applications were approved in the last few years. It was noted that many sign permits were included business site plans.

It was agreed that the sign law changes should be tabled until the sign portion of the code is revised to not contradict itself and to apply evenly and fairly to all vendors/businesses.

E. Peddler's Permit (Surety Bond)

Tricia Hax had several questions about the transient vendor law fee schedule and the signs allowable with the permit. She noted that she was incorrectly informed of the requirement for a permit. The Village Office agreed that they gave her the wrong information and apologized and explained that they had reached out to all the present transient vendors operating in the Village to request they apply for said permit. The vendors have since complied.

The changes that the Board was holding the public hearing for was to drop the requirement for vendors to secure a surety bond unless they were selling alcohol. Which the public collectively agreed made sense.

Other suggestions are to change the vendor fee schedule to include both longer options such as 1-year terms or shorter, 3-day terms. It was agreed that the permit application should be updated to include these options, as well as ascertaining what signs would be included in the fees.

Steven Totten informed the room that he did not take issue with the vendor permit process or fees.

Alan Engelbrekt made the motion at 9:11PM to end the public hearing for the above proposed changes to the Village Code.

Agenda Items #2: Public Comment

Vern Sundet reviewed the monthly report from the Salmon Rivers Council of Governments.

Agenda Item #3: Approval of Minutes

Alan Engelbrekt made a motion to approve the August 14, 2023, minutes. Jeffrey Fowler seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor. The minutes for the August 18, 2023, will be available by the next regular meeting. There was a question of how minutes for board meetings were produced. The process is recorded and/or notes are taken. Then the notes and/or recording are transcribed with a summary for each agenda item. If a member of a Board requests something specific noted in the minutes, it would be added. Each Board votes on the previous meetings minutes at the following regular meeting.

Agenda Item #4: Approval of Staff Reports

Jeffrey Fowler made the motion to approve the DPW, Code Enforcement and Police reports from August 2023. The motion was seconded by Scott Pello and passed 4-0. There was no discussion.

Agenda Item #5: Approval of Vouchers

The motion to accept the Vouchers was made by Alan Engelbrekt and seconded by Scott Pello. The motion passed unanimously. There was no discussion.

Agenda Item #6: Approval of the Treasurer's Report

Alan Engelbrekt made a motion to approve the Treasurer's Report with a second from Jeffrey Fowler. The motion passed with all in favor.

Agenda Item #7: Old Business

- A. There was no report from the Haldane Center.
- B. Mayor Jan Tighe, project engineer representative from BCA Corey Reid, Peter Payne and Mike Sacco chairperson of the Water Board, and Bill Noreault the DPW Supervisor walked through the Village to inspect the results of the restoration of Phase I of the Water System Improvement Project. Most of the complaints regarding the restoration were on Port Street and included sidewalk and turf problems.
- C. Vern Sundet of the Tug Hill Commission summed up the September 2023 monthly report of the Salmon River Council of Governments.

Agenda Item #8: New Business

- A. A second round of requests for Letters of Support will be sent out. Mayor Tighe suggested that the Village Board members provide a letter, if interested by Sept 25 or 26th at the latest. Three additional agencies have agreed to review the DRI/NY Forward application for the Village which is due by September 27th.
- B. Three bids, from Riccelli Norther, Ruston Paving, and RJ Green Pavement Sealing & Striping, were submitted for paving Lewis Street North, Bridge Street, and Park Street. Riccelli Northern came in with the lowest bid at \$90,464.00. Alan Engelbrekt made the motion to approve the bid from Riccelli Northern and Scott Pello seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.
- C. Scott Pello made the motion to hire William Hamacher as a part-time code officer at \$22,000.00 per year with the condition of a 90-day probationary period. Alan Engelbrekt seconded the motion and it passed 4-0.
- D. The Town of Richland and Village of Pulaski Joint Comprehensive Planning Board is looking to recruit a new volunteer. Shawn Doyle resigned from the Board.

- E. Mercedes Whiteside of Services to Aid Families, Oswego County Opportunities, asked the Village if it would be interested in participating in Domestic Violence Awareness Month by hosting the Survivor Flag Display at the Snow Memorial Building. Alan Engelbrekt made the motion to approve the display and Jeffrey Fowler seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

- F. It was decided that the current Building Maintenance worker will move over to the DPW where they require more help, and the Village will look for a cleaning service for the cleaning of the inside of the Snow Memorial Building. The Village DPW will still be responsible for outside maintenance and inside repairs. The money is available in the budget.

- G. Other.
 - 1. The Village within the Climate Smart Community is attempting to partner with the Town of Richland for the Heating and Cooling Community program. Anyone that installs a heat pump within the 13142 Pulaski zip code the Village and town would receive points toward the Climate Smart Community program and grants. If there are 5 installations, we get \$5,000.00 and if 10 are installed, \$10,000.00.
 - 2. Scott Pello made the motion to accept the changes to the Property Maintenance code with a second from Jeffrey Fowler. It was decided that the changes will be tabled to strike any other laws within the Village Code that conflict with the proposed code.
 - 3. Alan Engelbrekt made the motion to accept the proposed junk litter law and Jeffrey Fowler seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.
 - 4. The Solar law has been tabled for more research as noted above.
 - 5. Scott Pello made the motion to vote to approve adding the chart to the body of the Sign portion of the zoning code. Jeffrey seconded the motion, but it was agreed that the entire sign code needs to be streamlined before voting. Jeffrey Fowler withdrew his second.
 - 6. Scott Pello made the motion to change the language of Chapter 96 of the Village Code, Peddlers, Solicitors, and Transient Vendors, §96-4 C. to read:

Before such license is issued by the Village Clerk-Treasurer, if selling or distributing alcohol, the applicant will be required to post a surety bond in an amount of \$2,000 with a surety company licensed to do business in this state. Said bond shall be approved as to form and sufficiency by the Village Attorney and Village Clerk-Treasurer before such license is issued.

Jeffrey Fowler seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor. The Board also agreed to review and update the code and license application.

Agenda Item #9: Other

- A. Thank you notes went out to Dawn Holyniski, David Turner, Tom Jennings, Kern Yerdon, and Brian Murtha for their Letters of Support. Thank you notes were also mailed to American Legion, Deatons Ace Hardware, Dr. Thompson, and repairs on the blue House on Glenn Ave, stairs on Lake Street, stairs at the Methodist Church, the windows at the Flashy Flamingo, and the improvements to Cornell's Greenhouse on Rome Rd.
- B. Scott Pello made the motion to approve Donald Quehl to hired as a full-time Police officer for the Village of Pulaski. Jeffrey Fowler seconded the motion and it passed with all in favor.
- C. Melissa Wadkinson suggested working with a Board member or two to streamline the Village Code regarding signs. Alan Engelbrekt and Scott Pello agreed to work with her.

Agenda Item #10: Executive Session/ Adjournment

There was no need to hold an Executive Session. Jeffrey Fowler made the motion to adjourn at 9:47 PM with a second from Scott Pello. All were in favor.

Next Regular Village Board Meeting and Public Hearing will be on October 9th, 2023, at 7:15 PM.

Presented & Approved

Jennifer Gibbs

Deputy Clerk