

SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
OF THE VILLAGE OF HIGHLAND FALLS

April 23, 2009

A special meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Highland Falls was held in Village Hall, 303 Main Street, Highland Falls, New York on April 23, 2009.

The Meeting was called to order by Mayor D'Onofrio at 6:00 P.M.

Members present were:

Mayor Joseph E. D'Onofrio
Trustee James DiSalvo
Trustee June L. Gunza
Trustee Joseph McCormick

Member Absent was:

Trustee Harold Brown

Also present were:

Village Clerk, Regina M. Taylor
Village Treasurer, Ralph J. Walters
Police Chief, Peter Miller, Police Officer, Steven Bookstein
Dispatcher, Gina Borra
Village Street Superintendent, Gary Boyce
DPWEA President, John Jones
News of the Highlands Editor Emeritus, Fred Brennan
Resident, Julia Rose - 20 Cedar Lane

Trustee McCormick motioned the following:

Resolution
Village of Highland Falls Board of Trustees
Public Works Forman to Wastewater Treatment Plant Maintenance Worker

the motion was seconded by Trustee DiSalvo and unanimously carried. (A complete copy of this resolution is appended to these minutes).

Treasurer Ralph Walters presented a memo to the Board with changes that were discussed at prior budget workshop. Sales tax information was provided that indicate sales were down, but not as much as expected. The fourth quarter figures seem to indicate sales tax figures are holding up therefore Mr. Walters recommended adding \$20,000.00 back into the sales tax revenue code.

Trustee DiSalvo brought up for discussion the metal storage container at the Water Plant. Kevin Hurst recommends that the Village purchase this container out of the current budget and remove his request of \$2000.00 for a storage shed out of the tentative budget for 2009-2010. Trustee DiSalvo pointed out the metal shed may cost a little more, however, its useful life will be much longer, storage capacity greater and security tighter.

Trustee DiSalvo motioned that the Village purchase the roll-off storage container from National Metering for the cost of \$2,858.00 with current budget funds and remove \$2,000.00 out of the tentative budget for 2009-2010.

The motion was seconded by Trustee Gunza and unanimously carried.

Discussion was held on keeping the midnight shift dispatcher position. Trustee DiSalvo responded that he thought there is still too much uncertainty with the 911 system and after talking to the Treasurer, the cost to keep the position would only be .35¢ per thousand on the tax rate. He felt more time should be investigated into the operations of the 911 system and how it would work in the Village. The Mayor agreed with Trustee DiSalvo.

Trustee Gunza responded that the dispatcher position was to be filled with a Police Officer. The shift was not being eliminated.

Trustee DiSalvo had concerns about an officer being on the desk when he is trained and paid to be on the streets.

The Chief was asked about a schedule proposal submitted by Officer Might that would have an officer on the dispatch desk for the midnight shift. The Chief responded that the proposal could work, however, it would create in-house and contractual issues.

Street Superintendent Gary Boyce reminded everyone that the midnight shift is important. He pointed out that Dig Safely regulations require that a municipality be notified 24/7 before any digging takes place.

Trustee Gunza responded that they were not talking about eliminating the shift, only reshifting of personnel.

Trustee DiSalvo responded that he did not want to see a Police Officer covering the shift.

The Treasurer responded that if a Police Officer fills in the dispatch position and he adds back \$20,000 to sales tax revenue the result would be a tax rate of \$14.54 and a percentage increase of 12%.

The Mayor asked the PBA President to see if the members would agree to the schedule that was proposed and to get back to the Board as soon as possible.

Trustee Gunza asked the question that if the tax rate was not changing that much because a dispatcher is kept in and the Unions have not consented to giving back anything, why should the non-union people have to go without some increase?

Trustee McCormick asked the question, what would you do if it was your business? The Chief responded that this is his business and he was hired to provide the best service he can to the community and his budget reflects what he needs to accomplish that.

The Mayor reminded the Board that the DPWEA has still not settled. Trustee McCormick suggested that the Federal Cost of Living increases be the guide to use. The Treasurer reported that he is comfortable with the salary numbers he has put in for the DPWEA.

Mrs. Julia Rose asked the Board, how do they think people can afford these taxes. The Treasurer responded that the County ensures that the municipalities receive their taxes.

Trustee McCormick proposed that the Village look into putting the Village Code online, through e-code services provided by General Code. He recommends it be done in the current budget.

Trustee McCormick responded that he would like snow overtime be removed from the budget and offer a onetime pay increase, to be determined, with the use of comp time to cover the additional hours.

Trustee Gunza wants to see how the Police Department will be affected after tonight's discussions before deciding on other issues.

The Mayor set Monday, April 27th at 6:00pm for a budget workshop.

The Mayor brought to the Board's attention that the Pellwood Lake Homeowners Association sent him a letter regarding the Town not adhering to the stop work order on the ambulance building that was issued and what is the Village going to do about it.

Trustee McCormick responded that he believes the Village Attorney and the Town Attorney are to discuss the matter. The Building Inspector has said the work done inside complies with Building Codes.

Trustee DiSalvo motioned that the Board enter executive session to discuss the salary of a particular employee and the union contract

The motion was seconded by Trustee McCormick and unanimously carried. The Board entered executive session at 7:25pm.

Trustee McCormick motioned to come out of executive session. The motion was seconded by Mayor D'Onofrio and unanimously carried. The regular meeting reconvened at 7:43pm.

Mayor D'Onofrio motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Trustee McCormick and unanimously carried.

The meeting closed at 7:43 pm

Regina M. Taylor, Village Clerk