

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

July 2, 2012

A regular meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Highland Falls was held at the Highland Falls Fire House, 9 Mountain Ave, Highland Falls, New York on July 2, 2012.

The Meeting was called to order by Mayor D'Onofrio at 7:00 P.M.

Members present were:

Mayor Joseph E. D'Onofrio
Trustee Harold Brown
Trustee James DiSalvo
Trustee Patrick Flynn
Trustee Joseph McCormick

Also present were:

Village Clerk, Regina M. Taylor
Police Sergeant, Ken Scott
Fire Chief, John Rush
Water Plant Operator, Kevin Hurst
Chief Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, John Jones
Village Street Superintendent, James Patterson
Members of the Police Dispatching Unit, & Police Department
Members of the Town of Highlands Ambulance Corp.
Planning Board Chairman, James Ramus
News of Highlands Editor, Mary Jane Pitt
William Trainor, Nugent & Haessler, PC
Approximately 75 Community Residents

Trustee McCormick motioned to approve the below listed minutes as follows:

a) Regular Meeting- June 18, 2012

The motion was seconded by Trustee DiSalvo and unanimously carried.

The Mayor reported that the Village Clerk has presented to the Mayor and Village Trustees a copy of the NYS Comptroller's Report of Examination for the period June 1, 2010 to September 29, 2011.

The Police Department Report for June 2012 was presented to the Board for review. Sergeant Scott commented that meter collection is down because the Department is waiting for new deposit bags from 1st Niagra Bank, which recently took over for HSBC. The Mayor responded that a committee to look at meter collections and the meters will be formed to see if a new system is warranted to make meter collection more efficient.

Mayor D'Onofrio motioned the following:

Resolution
Village of Highland Falls Board of Trustees
Appointment of Kenneth Scott
Chief of Police

to promotionally appoint Sergeant Kenneth Scott to the position of Police Chief, contingent upon satisfactory completion of 26 weeks probationary period, effective 7/2/2012 at the salary of \$92,500/yr. (\$44.4712/hr).

The motion was seconded by Trustee Brown and on a roll call vote, the results which follow:

5 ayes 0 nays

motion carried. (a copy of this resolution is appended to the minutes)

Chief Scott thanked the Board for their vote of confidence.

Trustee McCormick motioned to appoint Thomas Kleveno a Full Time Police Officer at the starting salary of \$31.0760 per hour, step five in the full time police officers contract, effective 7/3/2012, with the maximum probationary period for a transfer officer, 26 weeks.

The motion was seconded by Trustee DiSalvo and on a roll call vote, the results which follow:

5 ayes 0 nays

motion carried.

Trustee McCormick motioned to appoint Joseph Mercurio a Part Time Police Officer at the starting salary of \$19.65 per hour, step one in the part time police officers contract, effective 7/3/2012, with the maximum probationary period of 52 weeks.

The motion was seconded by Trustee DiSalvo and on a roll call vote, the results which follow:

5 ayes 0 nays

motion carried.

Trustee DiSalvo motioned to accept the resignation of Part Time Police Officer Stephen Berean, effective June 29, 2012.

The motion was seconded by Trustee Brown and unanimously carried.

Trustee DiSalvo motioned to complete the probationary period of Village Street Superintendent, James Patterson, effective 7/1/12.

The motion was seconded by Trustee Brown and unanimously carried.

Mr. Patterson thanked the Board, the Town Highway Supervisor, the Village Department Heads and the Village residents for their confidence and support.

Trustee DiSalvo motioned to approve the request from the NY Law Enforcement to use Roe Park Field for a Women's Softball Tournament on July 28th & 29th from 9am to 5pm, pending all paperwork is turned into the Village Clerk prior to the event.

The motion was seconded by Trustee McCormick and unanimously carried.

Trustee Brown motioned to approve the Mayor to sign the Stipulation of Settlement regarding the PBA and the Village Employee Handbook.

The motion was seconded by Trustee DiSalvo and on a roll call vote, the results which follow:

5 ayes 0 nays

motion carried. (a copy of this settlement is appended to the minutes)

Trustee McCormick motioned to approve the Mayor to sign the Contract Between Luster National, Inc. and the Village of Highland Falls, New York, for Professional Development & Consulting Services.

The motion was seconded by Trustee Brown and on a roll call vote, the results which follow:

4 Ayes 0 Nays 1 Abstain (Flynn)

Motion carried. (a copy of this agreement is appended to these minutes)

Trustee McCormick motioned the following:

Resolution
Village of Highland Falls
Board of Trustees

Resolution Supporting the Local Development Corporation
in their Application of a Main Street Grant for the Renovation of
Mixed-Use Buildings and Streetscape Enhancement in the Business
District of the Village of Highland Falls, NY

The motion was seconded by Trustee DiSalvo and on a roll call vote, the results which follow:

Mayor Joseph E. D'Onofrio	aye
Trustee Harold Brown	aye
Trustee James DiSalvo	aye
Trustee Patrick Flynn	aye
Trustee Joseph McCormick	aye

The Mayor declared the Resolution adopted on a vote of 5 Ayes, 0 Nays

Dated: July 2, 2012

A motion was made by Trustee Brown to approve the bills and claims from the following listed funds: FY11-12 for \$10,061.83

General Fund	\$ 8,466.52
Water Fund	\$ 382.88
Sewer Fund	\$ 1,212.43

FY 12-13 for \$94,491.23

General Fund	\$24,757.93
Section 8	\$61,244.79
Water Fund	\$ 987.26

Sewer Fund \$ 7,501.25

The motion was seconded by Trustee DiSalvo and on a roll call vote, the results which follow:

5 ayes 0 nays

motion carried.

Discussions held during public comment included the following :

Mr. Koutsourades, (156 Main St.) asked if each Board member read the copy of the State's audit report. He remarked that the audit stated the Village was the 50th worst in taxation in the state. Trustee McCormick immediately corrected Mr. Koutsourades by stating the report said we are 40th highest among Villages in the State for debt as a percentage of fair market value . Trustee McCormick also pointed out that the Village has a very old infrastructure and water and sewer departments that need to be maintained and repaired if necessary. Mr. Koutsourades asked if the Board has started putting money aside, and why did the Village spend so much on a labor attorney for negotiations.

The Mayor responded that reserve funds are being set up in the budgets and full time police force contracts differ from part time contacts and the Board, at that time, decided to try a labor attorney. The Mayor also pointed out that many other Villages do not have water or sewer departments or support their fire departments like our Village does. Many have Fire Districts that set their own tax rates, or are supplied water or sewer services through their Towns. He further commented that other Villages have towns or state police support, not a local department.

The Mayor stated that he was one of a few who called the State Comptroller's Office and welcomed their audit. He responded that many of the bans and bonds discussed in the report period have been paid off since the audit or will be paid off shortly. The Mayor also pointed out that the report does not acknowledge the refinancing that was just done at a savings of \$391,000 to the Village residents. The Mayor further pointed out that many of the recommendations in the report have been done or there has been progress made towards completing them.

Mr. Ray Deveraux, 48 Ondaora Parkway, commented that the Board should have Capital Reserves set up for much of the infrastructure, even if the life span is over 25 years or more.

Trustee DiSalvo commented that the audit report is a tool to help the Board do better. He responded that no one on the Board is afraid of the report and that the Board will utilize professionals to help do whatever is necessary to make the Village better.

Mr. William Trainor, Nugent & Hauessler, PC, tried to put the report in perspective for the attendees of the meeting. Mr. Trainor asked the people to look at if money is being spent wisely and correctly. He pointed out the report found no money missing and the Village did nothing wrong in the way the bans and bonds were obtained. He stated that the report is suggesting ways to improve by putting an operational & financial plan into place and prioritizing items. The report also requires a corrective action plan and assured the attendees that the Village Board is working on this. He further commented that this report is not very bad when compared to others he has seen from the Comptroller's Office.

Mr. Alyward, 13 Church Street, asked the Board what they intend to do regarding the recommendations in the report. He suggested that residents be allowed to offer suggestions. Trustee McCormick responded that the Board will look into that.

Mr. James Titolo, 95 Mountain Ave., asked about the status of his suggestion for a tree lined sidewalk all the way from the old bowling alley to the Village's welcome sign on the south end of Route 218. Mr. Titolo commented that he encourages the Board to bond projects that otherwise would increase the tax rate as long as interest rates remain low.

School Board President, Mr. Kevin D'Onofrio, 29 Ondaora Park, commented that he would like to see the sidewalk extended all the way to the High School if possible.

The Mayor responded that the Village is applying for a grant for a sidewalk, with the help of the Village Engineer.

Mr. Merv Livsey, 107 Mountain Ave. reminded the Board that hurricane season is here and the anniversary of hurricane Irene is fast approaching. He asked the Board what to expect regarding his property and surrounding area that was hit hard from the storm. He commented that he has spent a lot of money on damages incurred last year.

The Mayor reported that FEMA funds have been approved for much of the damages that occurred in the Village due to the storm, to include the area around his property and that he will have the Street Superintendent speak to him about what to expect will be done there.

Mayor D'Onofrio thanked the whole 4th of July Committee for all the work done in preparation for this year's celebration. He thanked the Fire Department for the way they handled a serious gas leak on Main St this past week. He reported that he and Trustee DiSalvo had attended a Disaster Preparedness meeting. The Mayor reported that he will initiate a committee to work with Trustee McCormick on a Master Plan for water and he introduced a LDC grant opportunity for businesses and explained how it will be administered.

Trustee McCormick read the Water Department Report for June 2012. Trustee McCormick reported that he would like the Board to look at the health insurance costs of the Village. He welcomed the West Point class of 2016 and their families and reminded residents to say something if they see something.

Trustee DiSalvo reported that he had spoken to Allen Wierzbicki at the County 911 System and that Mr. Wierzbicki has received the letter from the Village and is working on the numbers to present to the Board. Trustee DiSalvo commented that he is working with the Disaster Preparedness Committee and reported that crack sealing and line painting of streets are being done. He reminded residents that the pool is opened and that he and the Street Superintendent are working on a long term street plan.

Trustee Brown read a memo from the Chief Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator, John Jones, regarding a recent unannounced visit from a DEC Inspector that states how impressed he was with the collection system maintenance at the Sewer Plant and that he wished other municipalities would adopt such a system. He also commented that everything at the facility looked great.

Trustee Flynn thanked Mr. Dunlap, Ms. Searles and Mr. Pepe for their work on the 4th of July Committee. He thanked all the participants at Village Board meetings. Trustee Flynn commented that the debt of the Village is alarming according to the auditor and pointed out a section of the audit report that deals with multiple year financial planning. Trustee Flynn encouraged everyone to get involved and ask questions.

Trustee McCormick motioned to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Trustee Brown and unanimously carried.

The meeting closed at 8:35pm.

Regina M. Taylor, Village Clerk