



you are aware, the DEC doesn't really operate that way anymore. The Parks Department finished the write ups from the Building Department for snow removal. All departments are now doing employee evaluations and inventory. Will be starting on the budget request next week. We hope to have everything done by the end of the month. Building Department has been working on Building Permits, CO's, finishing some online schooling and setting up some more online training for the new employee. Clerk's been finishing up with some to 207c follow up with our workers comp carrier. Updating social media and the website as needed. Finance Department has been working on escrows as well, getting W2s and 1099 out for the year end and helping with union calculations as well. Public Works has been cleaning up from the storm, but also preparing. They've been doing regular maintenance as well. Flushing sewer lines, working on meters, following up on dikes, maintaining vehicles and equipment. There's been a lot of follow up at the sewer plant itself. EPA came to do a review. Will keep doing maintenance in accordance with their procedures and policies. Police Department's been reviewing overtime and staffing issues. We still have a few people out, unfortunately. Went over the police reform last night in the steering committee and also in the public. Library is still technically closed, but open by appointment. Attorney has been helping us with a complaint about a water bill and going over pandemic policy and police reform.

**Trustee Carley:** The pandemic plan, like John said, is moving along pretty good. I think we are 99%. One little thing we just got to make sure we put in there and then we'll be complete.

#### **Approval of December 15, 2020 Minutes**

Trustee Sebring made a motion to approve the December 15, 2020 Minutes. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

#### **Action Items**

##### **Liaisonships**

**Trustee Sebring:** In a way, I'd like to see our participation with our Department Heads but only as informational. No bringing back any problems or discussing anything with them. That's not our problem. That's the Village Manager's problem. As far as the outside community organizations, it probably won't hurt. Once we get back off of covid, I'd go back to the Town of Montgomery Planning Board. Then maybe I would just jump around maybe to a few other ones just to get my head in there and see what's going on.

**Trustee Baker:** I think the former way that we had done the Liaisonships prior, I think worked very well, though, with the caveat so that people don't get stagnant and especially new board members such as myself and Mr. Elliott, get an opportunity to learn all the departments. I do believe that we should come up with a time frame, I would say like 3-4 months in between rotations. I think that gives an adequate amount of time for a new Trustee to learn the different departments, as well as for the different Department Heads to learn about the board. I'm in favor of doing it the way it had been prior and then allowing us to volunteer when and where we can with whatever organizations. I don't think that there should be assignments as to where you should volunteer or as to when. I think that should be left up to the Trustee.

**Trustee Thompson:** I guess what we really need to decide, though, is does the majority of the board want to go back to doing the liaison positions the way we have been doing them or does the majority of the board want to remain not doing them and reach out to the various things that are going on in the community. I know that list was overwhelming. It wasn't that we had to do all the things on that list. I don't know if maybe people misunderstood that. Those were just some suggestions of all the different things that are going on in our community, all the different places where we could get involved. The reason I even brought that up was because I did have different community groups voicing their desire to be more in touch with the Village Board. That we were a bit detached and perhaps really didn't have a handle on all the different things that were available in

our community and that were going on in our community. They really would have liked to have support from the elected officials. I guess before we do anything else, we just really need to make a decision. Do we want to go back to the traditional ways that we have been doing? Or do we want to not go back to that? We have a Village Manager form of government. John Revella is the person that all the Department Heads are supposed to be answering to and going to with the problems in their departments. That's where it gets a little tricky, because our role is not to be interfering with what the Department Heads are doing in their various departments. That is between the Department Heads and the Village Manager. It's a little conflicted for me. And you can't tell any elected official how to fulfill their role as an elected official. So, we can't impose our will of being involved with all these other groups on all of our colleagues on the board. Those are very individual decisions on how people want to define their role as a Trustee or as the Mayor. It was just a suggestion that perhaps rather than getting into the daily activities in the various departments with our employees and our Department Heads, maybe we should focus more on some community outreach and servicing the different groups that participate in our community. I think we need to decide where we want this to go. And then if we want to do the community outreach piece of it, it's going to be strictly voluntary and maybe really take a hard look at that list and whittle it way, way down to the things that we feel are the most important at any given time, because that can change all the time, too, depending on what's going on in the community. We can add to that list, delete from that list or not even use that list. Just each of us do our own thing, do what we feel strongly about and leave it at that.

**Deputy Mayor Ramos:** The Liaisonships was incepted about 8 years ago. Because of that, the rationale was to allow a conduit between the board and the particular department. It's not a sounding spot. It's not a direction. It's just providing information to the rest of the board members, because obviously we can't be at every place every time. We understand that the Village Manager has the overall operational responsibility for each of the departments, but it was great to hear other Trustees getting involved in their particular areas. Whether you call it an assignment or not, I think it's just a conduit. The ability to listen to what the heartbeat of the Village is. You got to tread carefully when you're dealing with Department Heads, when you have a manager that has the overall responsibility, but we can listen. I feel that we should go back to our original Liaisonship process. Why don't we do it for 4 months each so that everyone on the board can get a semblance of how the different areas work? I feel that we should have some representation in each of the departments, not as a monitor, but as a person that will listen. I found it really comforting knowing that my responsibility was the school board and the Parks and Recreation. I felt good about what they did. I was really vocal about it in the Village. We pick a name out of a hat. We rotate it on a 4 month basis. As for the outside areas, that should be volunteer basis. If you want to become part of the Walden Community Council, which some of us are already and some of the other agencies that are around the area of the Village. Now we have the Greater Montgomery Business Association, I believe that's the right terminology. We're expanding and 33 was a lot of areas to look into. We're all involved, every single one of us. Whether it be sports, athletics, Community Council. I like the idea that we should go back to the original set. Let's pick out of a hat on which ones we're going to do and do the best job that we can. I know Trustee Carly didn't have much to say at the beginning, but if he has something, we're all ears.

**Trustee Carley:** Thank you. Appreciate it. When I came on board many moons ago, when we were doing the Liaisonship, I was with the Rec Department and I was fully integrated into Rec's stuff and no complaints or if somebody wanted to complain, it was an ear just to listen. I have no authority. Long story short, if we just learn to gauge ourselves as Trustee, we don't overstep our bounds and somebody says, "hey, I have a complaint", you can listen, but you make it very clear you have no authority and your job is not to go in here and tell somebody if they're doing something right or wrong. So, with that being said, I'm comfortable with whatever direction we go in, but I believe it's important for all the Trustees to be involved in the community. How we divide that up, I'm open to that, too. I was looking at the economic growth and development and the community service is like

7 areas that were outlined in the email. Which I thought was pretty good. when we want to change it and slice it this way and that way, I'm fine with that too, but the point is, it does narrow it down so you can have 7 Trustees doing 7 things, 7 areas, and then I think rotating every 4 months is a good thing, too, because you'll learn the Village. I believe interacting with the community, Chamber of Commerce and everybody else in the business side is important as well, so I think that's something that should be there. But as Trustee Baker said, we've got to make sure we manage this appropriately so we don't overstep. We could choose where we want to go to a meeting instead of being dictated to. I think that will make it more amicable so everybody will be open to doing it and doing it well. I think it's a good thing, but that's my 2 cents. I appreciate it.

**Deputy Mayor Ramos:** Let's put this to bed. Let's do a roll call on how you want to do it and we'll forge through what we can. We pick out of a hat on what areas that we would pick. Then choose, whichever outside community and let the rest of the board members know which ones are you going to go to so that we don't become redundant. Nothing wrong with going as long as 4 of us are not in the same room. I miss the liaison program. I feel kind of out of place. The only time we get information is if we ask or from the Village Manager.

**Trustee Carley:** I don't know if anybody knows of the original roles. I'm seeing something different from the original roles. Are you talking about the original roles that we had before? John or somebody could outline that. Select those and then we add to that? Or are you talking about from this 7 areas that was in the email, like economic growth and development, community service, financial oversight. Are you talking about those?

**Trustee Thompson:** I think you're confusing this. Either we go back to the original liaison roles with the Village, with the departments. There were a few things that were not in the Village, like the school board, the Town of Montgomery. Everything else was within the Village and the Library was on that list. The other things that Willie is talking about were the things that we had added if we were going to do a redefining of the liaison roles. Those other things, like the economic growth and development and some of those other things on that list, those were separate. That's where we have to make a decision. Do we want to go back to the traditional liaison roles that involve the departments here in the Village or do we want to go the other way and do the items or some of the items? Not all 33 items. We can't physically do all 33 items, but we can reshuffle that and go in that direction toward things that are not directly involved with the daily functions of the departments in our Village and leave that to John Revella.

**Deputy Mayor Ramos:** Originally, we would like to see if everybody would like to continue with the past liaison process of Building Department, DPW, Parks and Rec, School Board, Finance, Village Clerk. Or we can venture out and add on to others where the economic development groups, et cetera. Let's get this rolling. Trustee Carley, how would you want to proceed?

**Trustee Carley:** I like the new categories, personally. I like the categories. I'm wondering if all the categories have the Village departments in there, too. I see some of it. I like the new way, personally.

**Trustee Elliott:** I'm not familiar with the old way, but I do like the old way better than venturing out all over the place. I still think we can do that. It just doesn't have to be official as a liaison. If you want to go say hi to the Knights of Columbus, by all means, do that. I would say keep it to the traditional old method.

**Trustee Sebring:** For the 2 newest Trustees that haven't been in Village politics, I would think that them going to the different departments in our Village would be helpful to them. Willie's been around, he knows what's going on also. So, he can pick and choose what he wants. Myself, I would

like to go back and forth through the different departments, plus go outside to the different organizations and just see what they're doing and what we can bring back to the board about them. That's my thought.

**Trustee Baker:** As before, I'm in favor of the way it was done prior and then being able to volunteer where I can with whatever organization when I'm able to. I think it would be a very missed opportunity to not be able to learn of the different departments. I think that would be a disservice to both myself and Trustee Elliott.

**Trustee Thompson:** I would like to redefine the roles and less focus on the daily operations in the Village. I feel that that is the responsibility of our Village Manager. I would like to try a little bit more community outreach.

**Deputy Mayor Ramos:** I'd like to continue with the liaison program and obviously venture out to other areas on a volunteer basis. It is a disservice to Trustee Baker and Trustee Elliot that they don't get the full knowledge of the operations of a Village and all they're hearing is things that we talk about it normal meeting. I think by them getting involved in different aspects of the Village government, I think we should continue with the liaison program as it sat prior to us changing it. We pick different areas on a 4 month basis so that we can get acclimated to different areas within the Village. That would be 8 types of meetings that prior to our Village board meetings. I think we should go back. Marisa, what was the count on that?

**Manager Revella:** There was no motion. That was just discussion.

**Attorney Donovan:** If I can make a suggestion, because my count was 3 for the old, 2 for the new and Brian was in both. Maybe it was the motion and if this is okay with you, traditional is the old way, nontraditional is the new way. Does that work?

**All:** Yes.

Trustee Sebring made a motion to adopt traditional Liaisonships on a 4 month rotation. Seconded by Trustee Baker. 5 ayes. 1 oppose (Trustee Thompson). 1 absence (Mayor Taylor). Motion carried.

**Deputy Mayor Ramos:** Middle of the month will pick names.

**Manager Revella:** I think the board needs to discuss what those roles will be for each one of the areas you're looking at. It's not really defined. It wasn't defined to begin with.

**Deputy Mayor Ramos:** Let's give everybody the opportunity tonight to write down what their feelings are about the Trustee liaison position and get it to Marisa by Friday and we can hash it out.

**Trustee Thompson:** If we're going back to the old way, is everyone clear on what the old liaison rules were? I think you should spell it out what they were. The new people don't know.

**Deputy Mayor Ramos:** It wasn't defined in the first place back then. I think we should redefine it now by everybody jotting down what we can and defining what we're supposed to be doing or what we can do and what we can't do.

**Trustee Carley:** Can I make a suggestion? So that we all can work from the same sheet of music. John, the liaison roles that was before, do you have any type of what their criteria was, what the goals were, what the objective of it was? I don't know if everybody knew all the departments that the liaison supposed to have and so we need to know that too.

**Manager Revella:** There was a general category, 1 was Building Department, 1 was the Public Works. But within that there wasn't a lot of description. That's part of the problem last time as well. But there were those general categories that you discussed earlier.

**Attorney Donovan:** If I can just interject for a second, New York State law nor the Village of Walden code provides for the creation of Liaisons. So, there are no guidelines. It might be a good idea to just briefly set forth something. What does the liaison do? What are the roles and responsibilities? I think you could probably do it in a few sentences as a general guideline and you could establish the \*inaudible\* so that it's in writing for everybody. So there's no disagreement between the Trustee and the Department Head and how that's going to function, telling them what to do, I assume that would be one of the guidelines. But just so everyone knows exactly what's expected of them in that role. I think it's a good idea to do that, to my understanding, ask John Revella to correct me if I'm wrong, I don't think there was anything in writing before. I think it was just historically at a re-org meeting, so-and-so is Parks and Rec, so-and-so is Building Department, so-and-so was PD and you didn't really know what it is that you were supposed to do, correct?

**Manager Revella:** Yes.

**Attorney Donovan:** I think if you take a little bit of time to just explain and I think John Ramos's idea just maybe everybody put forth briefly what they think it should be and then you can develop a set of brief guidelines, just being guideposts for people to act in their responsibility for their 4 month appointment.

**Deputy Mayor Ramos:** Agreed.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

**Manager Revella:** The state has required us to do an emergency preparedness plan, which we have drafted now. Most of the items are what we've already done by practice. This is really just putting it into a plan format. There's some additional language we need to work on for the PPE and how that's disseminated, because we have to go through, it's kind of like a clearinghouse when we go into pandemic mode as to when we can get materials for PPE. It was going through the county at that time. It wasn't really a lot on paper. We're trying to get something written down, so we have a written plan on that part as well. The rest we have pretty well organized organizational chart, chain of succession and alternate locations. If there was some issue at this building or other sites and how would we work around that.

**Attorney Donovan:** I think right now, no action is required by the board, but maybe just take a look at it at a timeline point of view. This needs to get to the Villages unions by February 1st and then needs to be adopted by April 1st. I think you just want to get familiar with it and Trustee Carley has done a great job at putting this together to get it to the unions in plenty of time, get their feedback so it can be adopted by April. That's the time horizon you're looking at.

**Manager Revella:** It will be on the next agenda as well just so you know.

**Deputy Mayor Ramos:** John, does any of the Trustees benefit from the FEMA courses that are given for free just to better prepare themselves? Especially in the emergency preparedness plan and just to get familiarization with emergency operations center and the hierarchy of what certain things to do. If we can put that out to the Trustees, get them to sign on to FEMA and possibly take some of those courses.

**Manager Revella:** Trustee Baker, have you taken any FEMA courses yet?

**Trustee Baker:** I have not.

**Manager Revella:** Everyone else has got the 100 and 700, I think, so far. So, we'll just make sure you get those links for that. Everybody else has done the basic courses so far. Obviously, you're welcome to take any other courses you can think of. There's links on there for free classes and you just say you're a public employee, municipal employees and go through that route.

### **Police Reform**

**Manager Revella:** We had our 2nd meeting last night, we went through the 2nd set of policies. They are online and available for public review. There was an issue with the link yesterday, apologize, but they're up now for review. We went through domestic violence prevention and transmission of communicable diseases, dispatching communication procedures, prisoner debriefing, advance taser use, body armor, electronic recording of interviews and identification procedures for photo arrays and lineup's. Obviously, any topic we've gone through to date is open for discussion. We haven't had much feedback from the public yet. We have gone through the policies and noted some areas that needed updating, just some were grammar and some are just outdated. If anyone else has any other points to make, we're more than happy to look through those, but just haven't had a lot of public feedback from anyone yet.

**Deputy Mayor Ramos:** John, just to clarify our technical difficulties during our past 2, if we can get them to work on the audio portion so that people can hear. I've been hearing a lot of feedback from Village residents that they can't hear our dialog. If we can work on that, I'd greatly appreciate it.

### **Payment of Audited Bills**

Trustee Sebring made a motion to approve Payment of Audited Bills. Seconded by Trustee Elliott. All ayes. Motion carried.

### **Correspondence**

**Trustee Carley:** Nothing other than what everybody else received concerning the shared resources.

**Trustee Elliott:** The same as Trustee Carley.

**Trustee Sebring:** Same thing about the shared services.

**Trustee Baker:** Same email.

**Trustee Thompson:** Yes, I had that and I also had an email from Supervisor Maher regarding some things he was sharing with us about the Hill Street Bridge, which John Revella can elaborate on if he'd like to.

**Manager Revella:** We got the reports from the engineers regarding the replacement of the Hill Street Bridge. We have our engineer looking through it just for our own education. They didn't like the plan that was presented so far and are looking for other options. 1 report is pretty thick. The other 1 is pretty thin.

**Trustee Thompson:** I believe I asked the Mayor and John Revella last week to reach out to the Town because it was 2020 the end of the year and they hadn't gotten back to us. These were reports that I believe they got in the fall.

**Manager Revella:** I don't see a date on the one, but it seems that way. The one from GPI had the 3

different options for replacement in kind. That's just the cost analysis. Then there's a detailed scope of services, design, construction, support, inspection of the bridge. With a timeline for replacement through 2021. This one is September 21, 2020.

**Deputy Mayor Ramos:** Where does that leave us?

**Manager Revella:** Right now, they have to accept one of the plans and put it out for a bid if they're going to go that route. We haven't heard back from them yet. We just got these the other day.

**Deputy Mayor Ramos:** Is there a timeline for them to talk about it again?

**Manager Revella:** We haven't been given any update on a time that they're going to discuss it again.

**Deputy Mayor Ramos:** Would you be able to reach out to Supervisor Maher and try to ascertain the time frame so that we can move forward with this?

**Manager Revella:** Absolutely.

#### **Miscellaneous Comments from the Board of Trustees**

**Trustee Sebring:** I'd like to give kudos to the DPW. They did an excellent job on a snow storm and the snow removal we had. There were right on top of it, as usual. Kudos to them.

**Trustee Thompson:** I agree with Brian about the wonderful work clearing from that snowstorm. I would also like to commend Mike Bliss with the program that he put together for New Year's Eve. The response from the community was very positive and I participated in that. I tried to get a watch party going and look at the fireworks and all that. It was really good, because it's just really hard to celebrate the holidays this year with covid. I think that that was a very well thought out, well received program. Thank you to everyone involved in that. I missed the very beginning, so may I ask a question of the Manager now? John, do you have any new information for us on the Community Center? I know I had been going back and forth with John from Lanc & Tully about some of the options for green heating and cooling. We had a brief discussion about solar energy. I was just wondering if there's been any new information?

**Manager Revella:** Not yet. They were waiting for the updates from the architect and the architect got covid. Hopefully, he's out of it pretty soon. Delayed us a little bit because he couldn't get updated mechanicals and plans to even talk about doing some green initiatives. But obviously, it's on our agenda to do that. We're hoping to get updated plans as soon as he's recovered and move forward.

**Trustee Thompson:** Have we ever gotten any information about the grant we put in for the electric charging station?

**Manager Revella:** No.

**Trustee Thompson:** Is there anything to report on what's going to be taking place with some of the renovations in the Library? Is there any like is that still on target? Are we still on schedule?

**Manager Revella:** The Library board is still pushing that capital project forward. It's really going to be renovations and upgrades to the 2nd floor. The heating cooling system and just esthetics really for that room.

**Trustee Thompson:** It was my understanding that the Library was looking for some help from the Village, maybe with the air conditioning or something with the heating.

**Manager Revella:** She presented that to the board and was going to get us some more information and numbers, but we haven't heard back from them yet.

**Trustee Thompson:** I did send the email also about the Rail Trail, but I did not get a reply about that. I guess the Supervisor was going to talk to Mr. Meres about that, but I did not get any feedback on that. Thank you for your work on the submission for the Climate Smart. I want to see our name up in lights when we get our first big group of points. Hopefully, that's coming shortly.

**Deputy Mayor Ramos:** I can't reiterate enough on the New Year's Eve celebration. Keith Hunter, Dickie Baxter, our very own Dan Brother and Mr. Bliss. It was a very, very nice event. He has 25,000 views, but I'm pretty sure it was over 30,000 with the locals out in the porches and back decks. It was truly touching to have everybody so happy that the Village partook in this event just to give them a moment of pause, especially coming 2021. It's not going to be an easy year either, but kudos to them. DPW, between the windstorm, the snowstorm, absolutely fantastic job. Your hard work does not go unnoticed.

#### **Executive Session – Litigation**

Trustee Sebring made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss litigation regarding a water bill. Seconded by Trustee Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

#### **Reconvene**

Trustee Sebring made a motion to reconvene the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees. Seconded by Trustee Elliott. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Village of Walden Board of Trustees  
Regular Meeting  
January 5, 2021  
Motions & Resolutions**

**Approval of December 15, 2020 Minutes**

Trustee Sebring made a motion to approve the December 15, 2020 Minutes. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Liaisonships**

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