

**Village of Walden
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
March 23, 2021**

Mayor Taylor called the regular meeting of the Village of Walden Board of Trustees to order at 6:30pm.

On roll call the following were:	Mayor:	Susan Taylor
Present:	Deputy Mayor	John Ramos
	Trustees	Brian Sebring
		John Elliott
		Cheryl Baker
		Lynn E. Thompson

Absent: Willie Carley

Also Present:	John Revella, Village Manager
	Marisa Kraus, Village Clerk
	Kelly A. Kelly, Village Treasurer
	Dave Donovan, Village Attorney

Village Manager's Report

Manager Revella: We had our final Police Reform meeting and review. Since that time, we've had one public comment that came in that we shared with the Board. It contained some attachments and potential adjustments. As I said to that person, the document is a living document and adjustments and amendments can be made at any time. I'm sure the Board will address that as they see fit. Attended a Transportation Council meeting to update the tip amendments, projects throughout the county that are funded through federal and state funds. Went over the budget with Departments, the Treasurer and submitted those to the Board of Trustees. The potential capital project list went out today. Went over the Hill Street Bridge with the Town Supervisor and with our attorney and engineer. We did have a meeting with the PBA trying to work on some things there, so we keep that door open for negotiations. Also went over issues with the EPA and DEC, trying to make sure we're in compliance. There are some items on the capital project list that address those. Music in the Grove Committee met and we do have a schedule for bands throughout the season. Went over some Climate Smart items with Trustee Thompson and also reviewed some items online. Trying to keep that updated. Had a meeting with the state DOT, DPW Super, the Railroad Company and utilities to upgrade the crossing on Coldenham Rd. It's going to get the arms for the railroad crossing. They're trying to do that this spring. They're just waiting for all the different companies on board to agree, but it is slated to get done soon. In that, I also got an update from DOT on maintenance. They are planning to do what's called "Mill and Fill" on Rte. 52 through the Village. They just take off top couple of inches and put back a new top couple inches, which should alleviate a lot of the pot hole problems. It's not the best thing to do, but it will definitely put some longevity into the road and alleviate some of the problems that our residents are dealing with. Went through Code Enforcement with the Building Inspector and timeline for compliance, since the Code Enforcement Officer is in training pretty much for the next several weeks for Building Inspector training. Went over the Community Center plan updates. We're supposed to have the final plan soon. We're waiting to get those in from architect. I know that the Mayor Elect and I will be meeting with DOT and with a couple other entities soon to go over some things for updates on projects that we talked about. Went over the land use agreement with the attorney regarding Walden East. Rec Department has been working on upgrades and getting everything ready. Everything is de-winterized. Tennis, Flag

Football and Summer Camp registrations are open online. Building Department is working on CO's, municipal reports, permits, fire and safety. Every department went through the budget as well. Clerk has been working with me and special counsel on worker's comp matters and 207c issues. Had the election, that went flawlessly, thankfully, doing a few updates on Facebook and the website as well. The next bi monthly calendar will be coming out soon. That's finalized as well. Treasurer has been working hard on the draft budget with me and escrows for the Building Department, reconciliation's and getting ready for the audit, as well as getting the retro calculations done for CSEA. We did work on some loan payments and repayments from the rehab loan program. DPW has been working on the capital project list with us, which we got kind of set today, flushing, jetting. Working on the EPA and DEC matters, going over the meter upgrades. The meter company has to update the endpoints to the new 5G network. We'll be getting those switch outs coming up soon as well. Police have been working on staffing and coverage because we're short staffed right now, accreditation standards, special details. Court did have a session they're trying to get things back to normal. Hopefully, they open up fully soon, but they are starting to have sessions now. Library is still technically closed, except for online issues and for appointments, they're looking to upgrade and update that soon. The Librarian is out this week, she'll be back next week, so we should have an update for our next board meeting. Our Attorney has been working on the resolutions and user agreement for us.

Deputy Mayor Ramos: Did the pedestrian light that we talked about, get fixed?

Manager Revella: I emailed her on that one. Told her to address it. She said they were having the department address the crosswalk lights.

Deputy Mayor Ramos: It's still out today.

Manager Revella: They're on notice.

Trustee Thompson: John, your focus has been on completing the railroad tracks on Coldenham Rd. Have we gotten any update that you can share about the other set of railroad tracks that are getting worse by the day?

Manager Revella: Grant St. They told me, that it's not slated for upgrades any time soon. I told them that we're trying to keep the holes filled and they said any time there's holes, they'll come and throw stuff in the hole to make sure there are not huge holes. I told them that they need to have the ties replaced at least at that intersection. They're looking at possibly at least getting that done for now because they're pretty rotted.

Trustee Thompson: We have no timeline on that?

Manager Revella: Nothing and no control. That's DOT controlled and paid through railroad and DOT.

Trustee Thompson: Can everyone on the Board start contacting them directly, individually? Would that be of any use?

Mayor Taylor: It's really out of your scope. If you want to write a letter as a Board, you can certainly do that and send it to the DOT. I would also suggest you contact Skoufis. Because don't forget, as individuals, you really are just a legislative body. If you really want to use more power as a Board, then you do it as a collective group.

Manager Revella: I wouldn't recommend going too crazy on them until we get Coldenham done. I

don't want anything to delay that. Let's get that done and then we can start on them about Grant St. I forgot to mention earlier that there are some dog waste signs coming in. We'll be installing in different areas of the Village to make sure people are picking up after their dogs.

Approval of March 2, 2021 Minutes

Deputy Mayor Ramos made a motion to approve the March 2, 2021 minutes. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

Action Items

Discussion - Hill St Bridge

Manager Revella: The last meeting, there was a presentation from the Town on the different options for the bridge. They really wanted feedback from the Village Board on which option they should pursue. Obviously, it would be great if they get a grant to cover it, but that grant will likely take between 3 and 7 years to materialize and in that meantime, you'll have a bridge that's still not functional. Talking to the engineer and the attorney, our best and quickest option is for them to use the Tappan Zee panels, to get something at least installed so it's usable again. That's up to you, though.

Trustee Baker: In regards to paying for the bridge, if we didn't go through the grant, is he still trying to find an alternate avenue where the Village pays for it or is this still on Montgomery to cover it?

Manager Revella: We won't know which way they're going to try and pay for it until they start doing it. I know they made that suggestion, but that's not anything concrete either way right now. Obviously, we would fight that if they tried to.

Trustee Elliott: It's my understanding and correct me if I'm wrong, those bridges are not ours, so we're technically not responsible for them. So, the Village paying for them is not a question, correct?

Manager Revella: Them trying to make us pay for it is not a question. They may still try to do that. That's why I said we would fight them if they do try.

Trustee Sebring: I agree with John that between the alternatives that were given, the panels from the Tappan Zee Bridge would be the quickest and easiest, and it is the lower cost of the other 2 scenarios. Even though I'm still in favor of the prestressed, but if they're not going to go that way, then the panels from the Tappan Zee Bridge, that's the way I vote for then.

Trustee Thompson: I'm in favor with using the panels, but there was discussion the last time about how far this repair was going to go. Is it just the section that shut down or are they going to go for the whole thing, since the other span also going to be failing shortly? When you talk about repairing, what exactly is it they've agreed that needs to be repaired?

Manager Revella: They brought up both scenarios, they didn't say they were going to do anything, they wanted our recommendation on what the Village Board wants to happen. I don't see a reason why, we wouldn't ask them to do both now while they're there.

Trustee Thompson: I just wanted to be crystal clear that if we're going to go this route, we should get the entire project complete. That's my opinion.

Manager Revella: I think we should push that as well, if the Board agrees with that.

Deputy Mayor Ramos: I'm agreeing with Brian and everyone else, the responsibility for that Bridge solely rested on the Town of Montgomery since 2013. A red flag that there was no upkeep and no repairs to the bridge during that time frame. Signatures were gathered in a petition asking the Town of Montgomery to expedite the repair of this Bridge and the Tappan Zee Bridge panels came as another resource for us to fix it. I suggest that we all stand ground with having the Town of Montgomery repair it as expeditiously as possible. If Elm Street and Hill Street gets mingled in with that, it's a win win for us.

Mayor Taylor: I'm in agreement with everyone else. These are clearly the responsibility of the Town of Montgomery, unfortunately, for whatever devices were missed, there wasn't a fund established by the Town to do maintenance on these 2 bridges. I would hope that they would repair both of them, because it sounds like the evaluations have said that that both bridges need to be repaired so they're usable in the Village of Walden. I agree that it should be paid for by the Town. They should be maintained by the Town. They're their responsibility. I would agree that the Board and the Manager need to do whatever they need to do to make sure that that happens for the residents of the Village.

Discussion – Walden East

Mayor Taylor: We did receive a few documents about this subject that they wanted placed in the record.

Manager Revella: We had discussed last time options and the legal counsel has giving us options as well for moving forward. I believe the consensus of the Board was to grant a 6 month extension. The conditions of that extension was something that was being debated and I'm not sure if the attorneys are able to share anything now or if there's some points he needs to make an attorney client.

Attorney Donovan: When we left off last meeting, the Board had authorized the 6 month extension subject to certain terms to be incorporated into an amended agreement. I prepared that agreement forwarded to council for Walden East, as well as counsel for the bus company. I guess it's fair to say we didn't have agreement on all the terms. I think it appears that Walden East and the bus company are asking for some additional time. If the Board's inclined to do that today and when I say additional time, it looks like I'm understanding correctly through September of 2022 and that may or may not be a reasonable circumstance. They have a lot of work to do. Kind of what I've outlined to the Board is if you wanted to just give a 6 month extension instead of the current agreement, we can certainly do that. If there are other avenues that you may pursue along continued negotiations, then I would not want to discuss those negotiations or legal strategies or legal advice on those in the public session. We could go to an attorney client session. You could table this matter for this evening, because I've made you aware, unfortunately, because this was switched to the fourth Tuesday, I do have a conflict. I don't know how that how the Board wants to proceed. You could just give a 6 month extension and deal with this again, because it's certainly not going to have any connections or you could table this matter for further negotiations.

Mayor Taylor: I would say to give the Board time to review those documents that came late today so they can read those over. In my opinion, I would say you need to table it so you have time to review the documents and you can have a proper attorney client so you can discuss whatever negotiations moving forward on this issue. Agree?

All: Yes.

Police Reform Plan

Manager Revella: Based on the plan that was posted to the website, Facebook, etc for comment.

As I said earlier in my report, we did get a comment, but that should not preclude us from passing and adopting the plan and certifying to the state now. This plan obviously can be continually reviewed and amended as needed. Dave we have some notes we have to go over today so that we can comply.

Attorney Donovan: The Police Reform Collaborative Plan is meant to be a living document. The report itself says is a living document. It's not something that's supposed to be done, put on a shelf and never revisited. A number of comments that came in just this past Monday, take the time to take a look at those and see what you may or may not want to do. We have a deadline as April 1st. So, my suggestion to the board is that you adopt the plan as is. There's a certification that needs to be filed with Albany. Then as we go forward this year and in subsequent years, we continue to revisit the document.

Trustee Elliott made a motion to adopt the Police Reform Plan. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

Manager Revella: I just want to note for the record. The Police Chief is here in the room along with the Village Treasurer.

Deputy Mayor Ramos: Page 8, third line from them from the top, it reads "estate". It's supposed to be State Executive Law, not estate.

Manager Revella: Okay.

Mayor Taylor: Thanks, everyone, for your hard work, the Committee that worked on this and make sure that everybody sees those questions and adjustments.

Schedule Budget Sessions

Manager Revella: We're looking at the 7th, 8th, 12th, 13th, 14th and 15th if needed at 6pm.

Mayor Taylor: Are you anticipating they'll be done remotely?

Manager Revella: We will be in person starting on the 6th. The next board meeting will be in person as well, as was requested by the incoming Mayor.

Mayor Taylor: I did see an alert today from Steve Neuhaus, that Orange County's numbers are still way up there. I just thought I'd mention it. In fairness, you should probably do them online as well. If you want to have in person, that's certainly your choice, but a lot of people mentioned to me today that they hoped that we would continue the online because they would like to attend, but they're not happy about having to come into the Village Hall in person, given the numbers that Orange County has.

Manager Revella: Our Board meeting will be live streamed as well on April 6th as well as the re-org meeting.

Manager Revella: They just want to make sure that any questions that they present will be answered as they come in during the meeting.

Manager Revella: For the budget sessions? No. That will be at the public hearing for the budget at the following meeting.

Mayor Taylor: They're talking about if they can't attend or they don't feel safe enough to attend,

they're not happy about having to wait for their questions to be answered.

Manager Revella: During public comment we will receive the comments. Usually we don't respond to questions, but we'll make every effort.

Trustee Thompson: I may have a conflict on the 15th, I think I can be there, but I might not be able to be there right at 6 o'clock, if we need that additional session.

Manager Revella: That's our wrap up day, just in case.

Trustee Elliott: I might have a conflict on the 13th also.

Manager Revella: We'll work on that.

IWS Contract

Manager Revella: Our current year's contract expires on May 31st. We do have another year option. The Board needs to motion to extend for an additional year. Otherwise, we have to go out for bid again. Not too inclined to do that at this time, but it's really up to the Board if they want to, but we do have that one more year option where we know the pricing is secured.

Trustee Sebring made a motion to extend the IWS Contract for one year. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Ramos. All ayes. Motion carried.

Resolution 17-20-21 – Stop DWI

Deputy Mayor Ramos made a motion to accept Resolution 17-20-21 2021 Stop DWI. Seconded by Trustee Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

Arbor Day – April 29th 9:30am

Deputy Mayor Ramos made a motion to set Arbor Day for April 29, 2021 at 9:30am at Olley Park. Seconded by Trustee Sebring. All ayes. Motion carried.

Trustee Thompson: This is going to be a virtual experience, correct?

Manager Revella: For other people, yes, but we'll be meeting at Olley Park to put the trees in.

Trustee Thompson: That's interesting, because I sent an email to Rebecca and I was led to believe that we would not be needed there. I'm happy to go. I just wanted to clear that up.

American Legion Request – Memorial Day Ceremony/Parade

Deputy Mayor Ramos made a motion to approve American Legion Request for Memorial Day Ceremony/Parade. Seconded by Trustee Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

Payment of Audited Bills

Deputy Mayor Ramos made a motion to approve Payment of Audited Bills. Seconded by Trustee Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

Correspondence

Deputy Mayor Ramos: I received an email from a resident regarding 2009 memo stating the turning radius is on various streets within the Village. I'll forward this to the Village Manager and the Village Clerk for their input and guidance.

Trustee Sebring: I received the same one that John just mentioned.

Trustee Baker: Same email.

Trustee Thompson: I did not see that email, but I will look again. I had correspondence with Rebecca Pearson about Arbor Day and I received a thank you email from the Winum family for all of our support with the Walden East and to thank everyone for participating with everything that happened with their son.

Trustee Elliott: The same with the fire department turning radius.

Miscellaneous Comments from the Board of Trustees

Deputy Mayor Ramos: Today's the 23rd, it's the Mayor's last formal gathering and I remember 5 years ago where somebody brought me into the diner and talked me into getting involved in this. And after about 5 cups of coffee, she had me corralled and I was all in. I'm all in today and I'll be all in the next 2 years. But if it wasn't for her tutelage and her guidance and her support from all of us, we couldn't have done a better job or been an effective Board. I think we have a good team here and Mayor, feel confident that we're going to continue to do your job that you entrusted us. Thank you.

Mayor Taylor: Thank you very much. I'm going to miss all of you. It's been a wild ride for the past, I think 12 years. I just want to thank, I have spoken to most of you personally, but I really have to thank the people of the Village of Walden. Thanks for your support and your confidence in and what our Board does. I tell everybody that I'm one of 7. I can remember somebody asking me what my accomplishments were and I was very honest and sincere when I said I accomplished nothing while I was here, it was a cumulative effort from Board Members, Manager, Attorney, employees. No one does anything by themselves when it comes to the Village of Walden. I want to thank everybody. Wild ride. I'm looking forward to April 5th and some retirement time.

Executive Session – Personal History of a Particular Person, PBA Negotiations

Trustee Baker made a motion to enter into executive session for personal history of particular person & PBA negotiations. Seconded by Trustee Sebring. All ayes. Motion carried.

Reconvene

Deputy Mayor Ramos made a motion to reconvene the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees. Seconded by Trustee Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

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Motions & Resolutions**

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