

**Village of Walden  
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting  
August 17, 2021**

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

On roll call the following were:	Mayor:	John Ramos
Present:	Deputy Mayor	Willie Carley
	Trustees	Brian Sebring
		Cheryl Baker
		John Elliott (late)
		Lynn E. Thompson
		Patricia Maher

Absent:

Also Present:	John Revella, Village Manager
	Marisa Kraus, Village Clerk
	Dave Donovan, Village Attorney

**Anthony Mirando:** I can report actually, in addition to what we provided in our August 13th submission letter, we appeared before the Planning Board last night and good news, we obtained a site plan approval from the Planning Board. As we go forward, we now have a site plan approval that has conditions on that approval for obtaining the Department of Health approval, the DPW approval with the Village for the sewer and the Department of Transportation for the highway work permit, which we need to be able to do any work in the in the right of way for the sewer and water infrastructure. We have continued to follow up with the Department of Transportation through phone calls and emails to different departments. We noted those dates and those connections in our letter. In addition to that, we made a full submission back to the DOT to just make sure they have everything. The latest plans, the latest information, and to try to poke it forward a little bit. We copy the Village on those communications. We started pushing on the DOT back in December and we just haven't really received the substantive response, but we were able to get through the Planning Board process. I think we have to go maybe go back in September because they want to change a couple of notes in the resolution of approval that they adopted. But otherwise, they told me, I could tell you that we did get site plan approval last night.

**Mayor Ramos:** Thank you for your briefing us every month and I see well done progress and we'll see you in September.

**Manager's Report**

**Manager Revella:** We did finalize and get out the PBA retro pay. Working with the Village Office, including the Clerk on the office desks. With the help of DPW, we were able to have the office rearranged a bit. There's still more work to do in there, but we're making progress. Did meet with Sgt. Werner for PD interviews for a full time position and for dispatcher part time. I had a conference with Montgomery IDA, regarding the Falcon's Rest project, which is on the agenda tomorrow at the IDA and to reiterate the board's position that they're not in favor of granting any pilots or tax abatements. Had a labor management meeting with CSEA regarding grievances that were filed. Had a meeting with the Village Engineer and DPW regarding the DEC updates and consent order. Advised them of all the applications we put in for grants and loans so that we could

continue to work on the projects for I & I and meet their consent deadlines. Orange County Transportation Council policy meeting to approve funding for paving around the county, including in the Village of Walden. I asked them for dimensions for the paving project, they'll get back to me this week. Had a closeout meeting for Ulster Avenue. There's a couple of touchup punch list items that need to be finished in order to close it out. Had several meetings and conferences with the Village Clerk and special council regarding 207c and worker's comp. Attended the year end summer camp event. Summer camp is complete. The Parks Department is waiting for DEC approval for the waterfront park on the end of Maple St. Assisting in the planning of Harvest Fest, Music in the Grove and now they have disc golf and pickle ball available to the public. Building Department has been working on COs and misreports, building permits. The Code Enforcer is now able to assist with permits and inspections. Clerk has been working on different updates, Facebook, 207c, workers comp and assisting the Finance Department with transition. Finance Department's been working on accounts receivable/payable, payroll, bank recs, vouchers, usual stuff. They'll be working on the AUD now until that gets done and it's due now in October. DPW has been working on vehicle maintenance, meters, flushing and jetting sewers, responding to resident complaints, catch basin repairs and patching, just getting as much done as they can before the weather turns. The Police Department has been working on special details, trying to fill in vacancies with people out on 207c and with the new hiring. You'll see them out on different details. We're trying to rotate so they're not in the same place every time. They did a good detail on South Montgomery Street. They'll go to another place next and we'll keep rotating them around for traffic details. Court's open on regular schedule. Library is on regular schedule. They require a mask to enter their facility. The attorney's been helping work on the Verizon contract review, reviewing the tax certs that we got in that the town assessor has to protest and work on some local laws and some code revisions.

**Trustee Sebring:** Ulster Avenue. The last time that was discussed, there was a conflict between the state and the contractor about an amount of concrete that was used. Did they rectify that to where they were being paid, the full amount that the contractor had wanted? Did they come to an agreement?

**Manager Revella:** They came to an agreement on that. There was an issue with the number of tests they were doing and how frequently they were testing. That's what we were disputing. We have some discussion going on regarding that.

**Mayor Ramos:** Who do we contact with the DEC about the waterfront project?

**Manager Revella:** I have a memo that I can give to you. We have a special engineer working on our end to make sure they're pushing it through DEC.

#### **Approval of August 3, 2021 Minutes**

Deputy Mayor Carley made a motion to approve the August 3, 2021 minutes. Seconded by Trustee Baker. 6 ayes. 1 abstention (Mayor Ramos). Motion carried.

#### **Public Comment on Business of the Board**

**William Taylor:** 80 East Avenue. I've been a resident in the Village for 35 years. Regarding dispensary's being located in the Village of Walden, I'd like to share a story about a young boy and his family that I think is relevant to the discussion. I know there's been much discussion on the subject matter of the pros and the cons associated with allowing a dispensary to be placed in the Village of Walden. I'm not here to debate either one of those issues. A 12 year old boy came from a good family, one who I coached in football. One day, came home slurring his words, throwing up, couldn't stay awake. Mom and dad being somewhat naive, they didn't know what to do. They took him to the emergency room. While being treated in the emergency room, it was determined that he had ingested and/or smoked marijuana. This took place in his middle school with the janitor in the

boiler room. Once again, mom and dad being a naive, they didn't know what to do. They found a rehabilitation facility and that facility agreed to accept him into it, being the youngest person that they ever brought into the facility. Fast forward through the next 22 years. The young boy was in and out of rehab facilities throughout that period of time. It was all due to the exposure that he had received in the basement of his middle school, 22 years ago. Only now he wasn't chasing the high that he got at the age of 12. He was chasing a high as a result of fentanyl. One day, his mom and dad get a phone call on their answering machine. Their son had left the facility that he was currently in and he was in another one roughly 50 minutes away. Mom immediately tried to call, obviously left a phone number so she could talk to him, hey, what happened? Why did you have to move? She got a hold of somebody at the facility. They said he's in his room, we can't wake them up. At this point, mom's intuition kicked in. She hung up the phone and called 911 and explained the situation. Approximately 30 minutes later, dad called. Dad gets a police officer on the other end of the phone. The officer advised him that the EMTs were there and apparently they were unable to revive his son and he regret to inform him that his son had passed. His dad had to deliver the news to the boy's mother, that her only son was gone forever. I indicated in the beginning that I was this boy's football coach. What I didn't tell you. I was dad. He's currently laid to rest at the Wallkill Valley Cemetery, where he passed away at 34 years old, September 8, 2002. A horrific end whose beginning started 22 years earlier with his innocent exposure to marijuana. My point, as I said, I'm not here to debate the pros and cons of allowing a dispensary in the Village. There are those that are of the opinion that marijuana is not a gateway drug and there's people that are of the opinion that it is. Whether or not you have a dispensary here or not is something that you're all going to have to decide upon. Once that door is open, many may attempt to walk through it. That debate will go on forever. But I can tell you firsthand, I've experienced the so-called gateway and it does exist. Is it going to happen to everybody? Maybe not. I would ask, when you cast your vote on this issue, if you can reflect on this story and ask yourself, what would I do if that was my son, my daughter, my niece, my nephew or anybody else that were potentially exposed innocently and the impact that they may have on themselves and their family? Ask yourself, could this possibly happen to one of your constituents? Maybe. And if the answer is yes, then you know what the right thing to do is. Vote with your heart, not your wallet. There is absolutely no amount of revenue that could possibly be generated that would be worth watching another family go through what I've experienced. It's a wound that never heals. It's a pain never goes away. I'm in hopes you will do the right thing on behalf of the residents of the Village and their family's safety and not the almighty dollar. Addiction takes hold when and where you least expect it. Take a stance, say, loud and clear "Not in my Village". Thank you for your time and consideration.

### **Action Items**

#### **Marijuana Dispensary**

**Manager Revella:** We do need to take some kind of action quickly, because if you don't, it'll sunset and we won't have a choice. We want to make sure that you're able to have that opportunity to vote one way or another without it being forced on you.

**Attorney Donovan:** If you do nothing, the dispensaries are permitted. If you wish to opt out, you're allowed to do that. You need to do it by the end of the year. You have to do it by local law. Then there's a 45 day period after that for a permissive referendum. That's enough signatures that could be gathered to place the matter on a ballot for a vote. Since you only have to the end of the year and you need to have a public hearing, if you're considering opting out, you want to act sooner rather than later to schedule a public hearing or introduce local law.

**Manager Revella:** To give the Board the option of opting out, even if they're going to say yes, to even have the option, you should have the next agenda introductory local law to opt out in case you choose that route.

**Trustee Thompson:** I sent an email to several people on the board, I don't think I hit everyone. The information that I saw online that was fairly recent led me to believe the county is not even so sure that they would like to opt in at this time.

**Manager Revella:** Correct.

**Trustee Thompson:** There was also part of that research that said for all of the people that think this is going to be a big moneymaker, maybe not so because they are finding that municipalities are going to incur more police costs. Depending on what those costs are, it could even significantly lower the amount of tax revenue that communities might be thinking they're going to get. I found it very interesting that the city of Middletown opted out. I read Mayor DeStefano's comments. I don't know how many of you are familiar with upstate New York, but there is a municipality up there, Tonawanda and their council is leaning toward opting out. They are very close to the City of Buffalo. So, their thought is anyone in their community that would like to partake in recreational marijuana can go to the City of Buffalo and purchase whatever they would like. They are also interested in hearing how their community feels and they are going to do a public survey before they make their final decision. While the council is leaning toward opting out, they still would like to get feedback from their residents to see how they feel about it. I did have a discussion with 2 people in our community that have addiction issues. They were not aware of some of the things that surround the dispensary. They did not realize that if you say yes, you can't get out. They did not realize that there are certain zones where this has to be placed in and that you cannot tell a business that they can't open here if the zone is appropriate. They asked me, does that mean we could have one or a hundred and one? We wouldn't have one hundred and one in our Village, but we could definitely have more than one. I explained to them what Trish explained to us, that businesses that are already established can also ask for licensure to sell products in their existing buildings. The first woman thought about it and she said, I don't know if I think marijuana is a gateway drug. She said in all of her encounters with people that had addiction issues, she only knew one that claimed everything started with the use of marijuana. The other person also did not have an issue with marijuana, but talked about addiction, that it's not what you're addicted to. It's the fact that you're addicted. They both felt that the Village should opt out. My only reason, the only one for considering opting in is that the marijuana that's being sold now on the streets, is very often laced with other substances and people don't know that. And that's where a lot of the problems come from. With a dispensary, you would have quality control, the product would not be tainted. That, in my mind, is the only plus. But I would like to see the Village opt out knowing that at some point next year, after we see what's happening in neighboring communities, we would still have the opportunity to opt in if we chose to do so.

**Trustee Maher:** I agree with Lynn, I'm in favor of opting out for the Village of Walden. In addition to everything she said, I've spoken to numerous police officers, both in the Village and outside, as well as some recovering individuals. At the end of the day, there's not enough concrete evidence out there on how this is going to be regulated. The regulatory governing body, if you will, hasn't even been finalized yet. I just feel like there's just so much misinformation and lack of concrete information on how this is going to be regulated. That we can't make a clear decision at this point. I'm going with my gut and what I know of the opioid crisis, with my role with Hope Not Handcuffs, I am very confident that I'm making the right one for the Village.

**Trustee Baker:** I had also reached out to multiple individuals in the community. It was very evenly split. Some were very for it and others being totally against it. Part of it was that others were concerned of those that were against it, if we have a dispensary, considering how many other Villages and municipalities have turned it down, like Middletown, they were afraid of bringing in the wrong kind of clientele or people seeking out marijuana. They didn't want that kind of traffic coming through the Village, which I understand. I agree with Lynn, the one positive and that's the

line that I was going with, the things that are on the street are often times laced with other product, which is what's really harming people. If they get from the dispensary you know it's not going to be laced with anything. As far as the financial impact, we really don't know whether it's going to be a positive or not, because there's just not enough out there on that. I'm mixed on it. I can see the pros and cons of both, but since we have the option, if we opt out now, we always have the option of opting in as we see how this develops over time. I would say opt out for now.

**Trustee Sebring:** I read the article that Lynn sent concerning the marijuana and what it does to a number of calls in your Police Department. Then if you have a traffic stop and there's suspicion of marijuana in the car, they would want to call another Police Department that has the dog. That's going to be time consuming. Your number of calls related to that would increase because now it's out in the open. You can buy it anywhere. The thought of having it laced which is a detriment to anybody. You would have to train your police officers, I believe, in the detection of it. Sending them to school, more cost to the court, more problems with the families if they have young kids that can get it anywhere because the young kids will get it if it's sold in the store. All it takes is an older person to go in there for them. It happens now would the alcohol. My personal opinion, because of what the negative things are about it, is that we opt out at this time and we can always change it. More and more towns are putting in the paper as to what they are doing. I read the article from Middletown and then a few other towns around here that are opting out of it for the same reasons. Employers will want to do a drug test on all new employees or ones that are looking for a job. That will be a detriment to employers, because right now you can't get people to work now and it would be worse later. I'm in favor of opting out now, but in the future, I don't think I could even say opt in at another time, no matter what the cost is and what the benefits are for money for us. I don't believe that the money is worthwhile. If the County of Orange is opting out, that's enough for me.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** I stand with everyone else, I opt out. Having a lived experience with people and family and everything, I don't see benefit from the recreational use of drugs or alcohol, period. I've seen both of them destroy families.

**Mayor Ramos:** I have a couple of phrases that I like to pass on; "cannabis use may increase the risk of developing schizophrenia, depression and psychiatric disorders." "Smoking marijuana can damage lung tissues, cause respiratory problems. Even secondhand smoke is also dangerous." Research shows that smoking one marijuana joint is as damaging to the lungs as five tobacco cigarettes. It contains five times as much carbon monoxide concentration than three times as much as tar and tobacco. Everybody knows that I had a career in law enforcement and I, too, have knocked on many of mom and dad's doors to tell them that either their son or daughter has perished because of either alcohol or drug use. It is not easy. Sometimes it wrecks its ugly head at night. But I think the government itself, by legalizing this, I don't know what they were thinking about and they just created yet another monster. I was just recently at the at the shore and they've legalized it in public. I can smell it as my children walk past these puffs of smoke. I turn away and get my kids away from that. I strongly oppose and opting out of this of this endeavor from New York State and I don't think that's going to ever change. Mr. Donovan, what is it that we have to do?

**Attorney Donovan:** Our typical process for the local laws, you authorize me to prepare local law and bring it back to you. You make sure it's in proper form that you want. Then you schedule a public hearing. We could do that or this is a very simple local law. In fact, NYCOM has come out with a standard form standard for all municipalities that are considering opting out. And I can I can read to you what it says because I have one for you. \*read into the minutes\* This is not an endorsement. This is not a vote for the law. You would be authorizing a public hearing on September 7th. This would be available provided to the Clerk, will be posted online, will be available to all. So, that is the local law.

**Manager Revella:** It doesn't prevent anything with cultivation, correct?

**Attorney Donovan:** No. Example, Hamptonburg has a facility that manufacturers and cultivates. They have a special license which is limited from the state.

**Mayor Ramos:** Trustee Maher made a motion to schedule public hearing for cannabis opt-out for September 7, 2021 at 6:30pm or shortly thereafter. Seconded by Trustee Sebring. All ayes. Motion carried.

### **Village Cell Phone Policy**

**Manager Revella:** As we discussed last time introduced, we need to update the cell phone policy to what our actual cost are. Now, since the first time it was introduced, we had actual costs on our cell phone bills. We don't anymore. Just modernizing the policy. If the board is okay with that. I can introduce it to the unions so they can make their comment on it.

**Trustee Thompson:** The last time we talked about this, there was a little bit of dialog about the definition of what is an emergency and having to get permission to make an emergency call. After reviewing it again, I think we should leave that out, because I don't know how we could really regulate that. Every employee is going to have a different definition of emergency. I just think we should eliminate all of the emergency language in here. My other question is, can you, John, clarify the village cell phone and the employees that have a village cell phone, but it's also their personal cell phone. That's where I'm a little confused on how you regulate usage of that phone for an employee that has that situation.

**Manager Revella:** You mean like abuse of use?

**Trustee Thompson:** No. If someone has a village cell phone issued by the village. They're to use it for village business. We have some employees who carry two phones. They have a personal phone and a village owned phone. If I'm reading this properly, they shouldn't be using their personal phones excessively while they're at work. Their village phone is for village business. What about the employees that have one phone and they use it as their personal phone and their village phone? Those two rules apply, but when they're on their own time, they use that as their personal phone. Is that correct?

**Manager Revella:** That would be correct.

**Trustee Thompson:** I was just a little confused about that. If someone loses or damages the village phone, they have to replace that or it comes out of their paycheck?

**Manager Revella:** If there's a cost to the village, they have to reimburse us for that cost, but usually is not a cost to the village. We get free upgrades every year. So if the phones more than a year old, it's free. But if there's a cost they do have to reimburse. There's been two employees that had to reimburse us in the past.

**Trustee Thompson:** If someone would like to use the village phone for their personal phone, but they want a different phone than what the village supplies. Are they allowed to upgrade that phone and that cost is also on them?

**Manager Revella:** That's correct. The other policies and procedures still apply as well. So you can't do certain things on the phone regardless of whether its personal use or village use.

**Trustee Thompson:** I'm okay with the policy if we get rid of all the emergency language. I just

think that's a little too unenforceable.

**Trustee Maher:** I'm in favor of the updated cell phone policy.

**Trustee Baker:** I agree with Trustee Maher.

**Trustee Sebring:** I'm in agreement with the updated policy for the cell phone use.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** I agree with Lynn on the excessive use of the emergency side. If it's taken out, then it'll be clear cut, personal use versus business use.

**Mayor Ramos:** I think the policy is pretty well written, taking the emergency issues out.

**Manager Revella:** I have to get the two unions to review first before I can do anything. I want to make sure the board is okay with the format so I can send to the unions and then I'll get it back to us.

### **Resolution 3-21-22 – Budget Transfer**

Trustee Baker made a motion to approve Resolution 3-21-22 – Budget Transfer. Seconded by Trustee Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

### **Resolution 4-21-22 – Accepting Youth Bureau Funds for Summer Camp**

Trustee Thompson made a motion to approve Resolution 4-21-22 Accepting Youth Bureau Funds for Summer Camp. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

### **Discussion – 9/11 Ceremony**

**Mayor Ramos:** I was tasked with the spinning up of 9/11 ceremony, which is the 20th anniversary here in the Village of Walden. I've been tasked by Reverend Van Houten because he is not going to be present for this. He will be in Colorado spearheading another event for that particular day. We are tentatively going to set up the ceremony for 7pm on 9/11. We have a number of resources that are going to be available to us. Screen TVs so that we can pipe in the ceremony that Reverend Van Houten had given us for this event. I would appreciate everybody's support on this event. It is going to be our 20th anniversary. Father Calucci will be down in New York City, who was present at the time of the incident on 9/11. I'll be seeking other resources to help us facilitate this. I'm hoping that the board is all in consensus on providing the ceremony for us and I will continue to spin up and get everything ready for that day.

**Trustee Thompson:** Where will this be held?

**Mayor Ramos:** At the Firemen's Monument. If any member on the board would like to assist me, I'd greatly appreciate it. We're halfway done. Just the minor issues that we're going to get to the date. Hopefully we'll have a great evening. There won't be a rain date.

### **Public Comment**

**Brenda Adams:** 31 Valley Ave. I just wanted to thank the Mayor for following through. We had this conversation a few months ago and I'm very happy that you have followed through and that the board is being supportive at such an important event, especially in the light of what's going on right now. I'm very happy with this. Thank you.

**Becky Pearson:** 167 Walnut St. Question on wells. How are we doing? We're doing all right?

**Manager Revella:** Perfect. Our water table is actually high right now.

**Becky Pearson:** Okay, good. You talked about hiring new police officers. Are you also looking at a sergeant position that's empty or not?

**Manager Revella:** We have to fill our full time position first. We have 3 people on to 207c before we consider sergeant position. We don't have an active list internally, so I don't know whether we want to go with the countywide list yet or not. We're considering it, though. But yes, there is an open sergeant position.

**Becky Pearson:** Thank you. Last meeting we talked about the attorney was possibly going to find information on Article 15a versus 4-400 that the Village works under. I don't know if he's gotten back to the board or any board member has asked that question. Has the attorney gotten back to you guys? We talked about the responsibilities of the Mayor versus the Manager form of government and what we worked under.

**Attorney Donovan:** With all due respect, I don't think we talked about anything.

**Becky Pearson:** I thought the board was going to direct you to check that out for who appoints and who doesn't appoint and/or what law we're under.

**Attorney Donovan:** Thought we answered that question pretty definitively.

**Becky Pearson:** I went back through some minutes, 2005, April 12th, I happened to be Mayor. I happened to be reading Section 4-400 in a review which was through the NYCOM book. And the NYCOM book says that the attorney is appointed and the appointments are done by the Mayor. Well, of course, I was put down for that because it's not the code we're working under. This is since 2005. In the minutes it states "Mayor Pearson stated the whole thing came about because she was looking at possibly going for a different attorney at the time and who makes the appointments." Because I was reading that book, it said "the Village Clerk, Village Attorney and Village Treasurer shall be appointed and their salary compensation fixed by the Board of Trustees. That is under our Chapter 32-3. Mr. Dowd, the attorney at the time, he said "yes, the Village new law says the Mayor appoints point subject to the Board of Trustees. However, over 40 years, the Village determined to local law and public referendum to establish a Village Manager form of government." And when they did that, Chapter 32, the Village Code was enacted and it takes most of the executive administrative powers away from the Mayor and vest them in the Village Manager. That law was adopted 40 plus years ago. Also supersedes Village law as it pertains to the Village Mayor role. Your code supersedes as you go by the code and the code specifically says the Manager shall have all the appointment powers and the employees in the offices except for the Board of Ethics, Village Clerk, Village Attorney and Treasurer, not by the Mayor consent, but by the entire board." That's minutes from 2005 from an attorney. Then we also had in that same month of September, more minutes. There was a gentleman, Robert McVoy, professor at SUNY New Paltz and Rockefeller College. He indicated that he did read the Village law and it was very clear that the local law establishes a council Manager form. The law was very clear to him that it follows the exception, where if you already had a local law before the new legislation that your local law remains in place. The new law was not intended to change, especially if adopted by a referendum. Which this one was. Down further, he also states that in this chapter shall not be deemed to repeal or otherwise affect the provisions of any special or local law. You did a local law ordinance in any county. Meaning the only time you can change the law is when you change it, not the state. Then it says, this was from 1962, "whatever the law says, it's the word by word by word. The only way to change it, to bring the board to have a vote. And it might require a referendum." So, as far as I know, are still working under old law. Which the board appoints and not just one person. That's why I was asking the attorney whether he did any more research. But that was from two other people at the



time. We have not changed any laws since 2005 to that respect. My question is, what laws are we following? I don't have that answer yet. Thank you very much. I appreciate your time.

**Attorney Donovan:** I'm pretty sure we answered that question last time. There was a resignation, which creates a vacancy. The vacancy in office is filled by the Mayor the balance of the term. Then a reappointment at the reorganization meeting is made by the Village Board. It can be designated by the Mayor, but has to be approved by the Village Board. That's clear in our local law. The difference of distinction is there was a resignation. Which creates a vacancy in the office.

**Mary Ellen Matise:** 54 Gladstone. Interestingly, Becky Pearson as Mayor, thought she had more power than she really had. So, we went into pretty extensive research about it and you said public officers law, Dave. I don't know what section of the state law that is. I think you quoted it last time, and I don't know if I wrote it down. It became a big issue because certain Board Members started accusing Becky and myself of wanting to change the Village government. This went on even after September because McEvoy from SUNY Albany. He was part of the IMA, the Managers Association. He was here, of course, supporting the Manager, but under the new village law, even he didn't know that we were still operating under the old village law. Which by public referendum in 1972, the Village of Walden decided to stay under the old village law. We had two referendums in 62 establishing the Manager form of government and then again in 72, when the state law changed. They gave each municipality the opportunity to stay with the old law via referendum. That's in the Citizen Herald and if you look it up on the library website for the Citizen Herald, you'll find all the articles relating to it, including the vote. The only way we finally got the information about how our Manager form of government operates, because it operates differently than the newer manager forms of government or the municipalities that opted to operate under the new village law, was from an attorney in the Department of State. His name was Larry Weintraub, who since retired. Finally, the information that is in this rebuttal letter that I sent to Wallkill Valley Times and tried to explain the manager form of government to the general public. We got the information from him. For the public I think it's confusing, too, because when I first was a resident of the Village, I don't know if Patty Dwyer was manager. Meetings were still down in Scofield Street. It was confusing for the public and I think it still is that you come in and who do you bring an issue to? Do you bring the issue to the Board? Do you bring the issue to the Manager? If it's about a pothole in the street, should I bother Brian with it or should I just call John? I think the public is still confused about it and obviously, 16 years later, the Board is still confused about it. And yet if anybody read the minutes from 2005, you wouldn't be confused about it and you'd know just what your powers are, where everything lies and even despite the whole thing of midterm appointments, there's a lot of rumors going around out on the street and the rumors aren't very nice. They involve power and authority. And questioning what's going on up here on the 3rd floor. I just hope that things aren't in a situation where people are trying to create situations so they can exercise power that's really not their own. Let's go on to trash talk. Garbage cans on the streets, on the very narrow streets where we have the garbage truck with a rear lift. Maybe we should just fine these people every time that they leave the garbage cans in the street. If they haven't been in the street and they've been on the curb, because they have to move them to get them to the rear lift and then when they bring them back, where do they put them? It's an obstacle course driving down Clinton Street and Ridge Ave. Then you've got all these Amazon trucks making deliveries and big water trucks making deliveries to people's houses. It's just becoming a nightmare. In the middle of the summer, it's 95 degrees, they leave the lids open on people's garbage cans. It's disgusting. It sits like that all day because people are at work. Flies are going in and out of their garbage can and then landing on your barbecue. Any word on the Hill Street Bridge?

**Manager Revella:** They were hoping to get on the infrastructure stimulus, which is a lot quicker than Bridge New York or anything else. They're hoping to get in on that and fund it through that instead of spending taxpayer dollars, our tax dollars.

**Mary Ellen Matise:** That'll be nice. John, about two years ago, I gave you all that information about Joel Cook and rededicating the gazebo. When are we going to do that? Maybe before Veterans Day or something like that. Every time I see the POW flag, it's because of him and that should be rededicated to him.

**Mayor Ramos:** It'll be on my serious to do list. It'll be done.

### **Payment of Audited Bills**

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

### **Correspondence**

**Trustee Thompson:** I received an email from a gentleman on Maple St about trash cans.

**Trustee Elliott:** I received the same correspondence,

**Trustee Maher:** I also received the same email. I've also been going back and forth with the Negron family regarding the Ride for Kids and we are seeing some Walden businesses out there just spreading the word and trying to get as much support as we can.

**Trustee Baker:** Last meeting, I put a plea out there for dog waste bags, dispensers that they had been replaced and to please respect them all. 24 hours after they have been replaced by Park and Rec Department, someone went through and bashed them again and stole the boxes of bags of dog waste bags. They replaced them again so far, they have been left alone. But again, it's completely and utterly unnecessary to do that. Each roll has 200 bags. You can't possibly go through that amount of bags in a week. They're there for everybody to keep our street clean. Please be respectful. Our Parks and Rec Department takes the time to build those boxes. They're checked regularly. They don't run out of bags. We're pretty much on them. Please just be respectful of the property in the Village. I had some correspondence from some people in regards to the public trash cans that are on the street. There was a couple, especially by where Lillo's once was. That one is perpetually overflowing with garbage out on the street and they seem to be putting raw garbage in there. When you walk by there it literally smells like something died. I don't know if it's the apartments that are up there. Maybe, perhaps it would be best to remove that particular one. That one seems to be the most offensive for some reason, maybe take that one away.

**Manager Revella:** It was the can further down that was doing that. We removed it and now it's that can. I don't know if we're going to keep removing all the cans. But it's a definitely been a problem.

**Trustee Sebring:** I received the same email as Lynn.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** Same email as everyone else.

**Mayor Ramos:** I received a flier for Orange County Senior Health and Fitness Day on September 14th, 10 am to 2 pm at Thomas Bull Park.

Read community events into minutes

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

**Trustee Thompson:** I have commented at several meetings that I would really like the Board to consider about talking to the Village Manager about a maintenance schedule for Village properties. I've noticed a few more things, I won't go into great detail, but I really think for budgetary reasons,

for esthetic reasons, for safety reasons, I really believe that we need to think about maintenance schedules on our properties. It seems like the more we neglect things, the more repair, the more labor intensive, the more cost expensive the repair becomes. Just feels like there's too many things that need attention. I think we should work on that and maintain things so we don't have these enormous things hitting us all at once that need attention. I brought up at the last meeting looking at the Department Head reports, once again, the Building Department was out. They had 17 lawn citations in 9 days and again, only 3 property code violations. I'm just finding it hard to believe that if you're out in the Village looking for the properties that need the lawns mowed, nothing else is being noticed? Discussed with residents. Violations cited. I think we can do better than that. Reading the Parks Department report, I, too, would like to thank Brian Sebring for taking his own time and his own vehicle and going down to Haverstraw to get the tank for the Parks Department to use for watering. I would also like to mention that a Village resident made that happen. Tilcon Haverstraw donated that tank. The tank came about because of the people that are trying to beautify the Village, pressed really hard to get a source of water and now we have it. So thank you, Brian. Thank you, Tilcon. Thank you, small committee that I hope will grow. Please use my Village email if you'd like to sign up for beautification. Love to have you. Then the New York Stretch, which perhaps John can explain it better than I can, but it's part of this Climate Smart Community. It's a big initiative. I only found out about it very, very recently. It has to do with energy efficiency and it makes you eligible for grant funding. However, the deadline to accept this program is December 31st. It's pretty involved. The things that they would like you to commit to. Warwick has been contemplating this, doing their homework on this for months and months and still have not committed to it. I don't know of any other communities in our area that have agreed. Right now, we're doing New York Energy. This is like a step above. I don't know if we would have the time at this point to do our due diligence to get involved in the program. The way it's stated, if you don't get in by December 31st, the grants are done. There are no more funding opportunities. It was disappointing to see that we really didn't get information until very recently.

**Manager Revella:** It's an update on building code. Anything you could think of. I had the Building Department review as well. They're concerned about the cost involved. Things are pretty costly right now, regardless of materials. This would likely put a 60% price tag on top of that. It's just a huge cost to be able to do it from what they gave us so far. You're not recuperating hardly any of that in the grant. It's a partial grant. It's not a full grant. So, to spend 60% more to get 50% back didn't make much sense.

**Trustee Thompson:** Plus, it would require a lot of training for our Building Department. They would have to go for special training. That's more time away from work, more expense.

**Manager Revella:** Some of the concern I saw was changing our Village Codes to make these building requirements on all residents. I don't think we can do that to our taxpayers. Not right now anyway. We just don't have the right information in time to be able to do that.

**Trustee Elliott:** I drove by Bradley Park, I noticed that they cleaned up the fields. I just want to thank them. I'm not sure who actually did the work there, but they did a pretty good job.

**Trustee Baker:** I know I've spoken to you about the street lights and how they don't look very nice because of paint. I remember I asked you what kind of metal those ones were. What are they made out of that particular those?

**Manager Revella:** Aluminum.

**Trustee Baker:** The newer ones where you had an estimate, what are they made out of?

**Manager Revella:** There were 3 different kinds. They have a cast type, which is what we would prefer. They also have aluminum. Which we don't want. Then there's a plastic composite. I just don't think that would be very efficient. It's probably would get destroyed pretty quickly. I didn't even consider it.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** Just want to say thanks to the Town of Montgomery. We were to reach out and work with Ms. Skinner on something for Edmunds and just to make sure everything was in alignment to what Treasurer duties and so forth. That connection was done and from my understanding and everything, that everything went very, very well. The doors are open so that the dialog can go back and forth if there is anything she need for that area.

**Mayor Ramos:** I'd like to also thank the Town of Montgomery for shedding some assistance with us. I want to give gratitude, thanks to Miss Barbara. I was over at Walden House on Sunday. I was really happy to get a personal tour of the building and look at all the history that's between the main building and the secondary building that they have. There is an abundance of items in there that we should categorize and have them presented here in the Village Hall and along with the Jacob Walden house. There is a meeting on August 24th at 3:30 pm. We have an Eagle Scout female and we are going to discuss the relocating of General Bradley's mantle within the building. It'll be a collective meeting with whoever wants to join us and see where we can place the mantle. I look forward to that with the historian, Carolyn and we'll see what we can work on. Summer camp picnic went well. We had a great turnout, good kids, and it was a successful year. Tomorrow on August 18th, 5:30 pm, we're there at the IDA to discuss the pilot program for Falcon's Rest here in the Village of Walden. Myself and the Village Manager will be there vocalizing our strong opposition and I hope that we have a collective audience there from the Village of Walden. I assure you that we've done our homework and our due diligence and whatever we're going to present to them, they will have to listen to us and depending upon how loud they'll listen. If anybody's available, please come out and support us. We're going to ensure that this doesn't happen here in the Village of Walden.

**Trustee Thompson:** Did we ever get an online petition up and going for that?

**Mayor Ramos:** It was too soon. We couldn't do it. I've gotten a number of responses from, obviously Village personnel and Village residents that this hasn't happened historically and it's not going to happen now. We'll see how it transposes tomorrow. I think we're well loaded on our arguments. We'll pursue what we have to pursue.

**Trustee Maher:** I'm unable to attend tomorrow night, but I do have a letter.

#### **Executive Session – Personal History of a Particular Employee**

Trustee Baker made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss personal history of a particular employee. Seconded by Trustee Sebring. All ayes. Motion carried.

#### **Reconvene**

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

**Trustee Thompson made a motion to allow the Police Chief an extension of time to become a Village Resident until June 30, 2022. Seconded by Trustee Elliott. 6 ayes. 1 nay (Mayor Ramos). Motion carried.**

**Village of Walden Board of Trustees  
Regular Meeting  
August 17, 2021  
Motions & Resolutions**

**Approval of August 3, 2021 Minutes**

Deputy Mayor Carley made a motion to approve the August 3, 2021 minutes. Seconded by Trustee Baker. 6 ayes. 1 abstention (Mayor Ramos). Motion carried.

**Marijuana Dispensary**

Trustee Maher made a motion to schedule public hearing for cannabis opt-out for September 7, 2021 at 6:30pm or shortly thereafter. Seconded by Trustee Sebring. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Resolution 3-21-22 – Budget Transfer**

Trustee Baker made a motion to approve Resolution 3-21-22 – Budget Transfer. Seconded by Trustee Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Resolution 4-21-22 – Accepting Youth Bureau Funds for Summer Camp**

Trustee Thompson made a motion to approve Resolution 4-21-22 Accepting Youth Bureau Funds for Summer Camp. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Payment of Audited Bills**

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

**Executive Session – Personal History of a Particular Employee**

Trustee Baker made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss personal history of a particular employee. Seconded by Trustee Sebring. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Reconvene**

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

**Trustee Thompson made a motion to allow the Police Chief an extension of time to become a Village Resident until June 30, 2022. Seconded by Trustee Elliott. 6 ayes. 1 nay (Mayor Ramos). Motion carried.**