

**Village of Walden
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
March 21, 2024**

Mayor Ramos called the regular meeting of the Village of Walden Board of Trustees to order at 6:00pm.

On roll call the following were:	Mayor:	John Ramos
Present:	Deputy Mayor	
	Trustees	Becky Pearson Chris Batson Kristie Hall Ralph Garrison Jr Patricia Maher

Absent: Willie Carley

Also Present: John Revella, Village Manager
Marisa Kraus, Village Clerk

Introduced Angele Steady as Code Enforcement Officer
Introduced Denise McNeely as PT Dispatcher, Vincent Wosneski as Parking Enforcement Officer and Alexis Barber as FT Police Officer

Village Manager's Report

Manager Revella: The Village Engineer, DPW Super, myself met with the state representatives to discuss continued work on the sewer system. We keep pushing forward on those endeavors and utilizing the funds they've awarded us. Also met with state reps to go over the Homeland Security Systems and security implementations we have for our water system to make sure it's protected and not susceptible to hacking. They were happy with how we were handling things here. Went over the agenda and code updates with the attorney. You'll see some of those on the agenda later. As you saw, I had a couple interviews with the Chief to go over some staffing, which we have now made hires. Went over the audit with the comptroller reps, they hope to be wrapping that up soon and have a draft report to the board. We got the budget out. Should be posted online. We tried to get it posted last night, but, it's too big of a file, so we have to get the web master to put it on for us. Hopefully, gets that on later today. All the board members have a copy. We emailed and put a hard copy in your box. Reviewed the work at the scout cabin. It's going very well. Should be wrapping that up soon, too. Should go ahead and check it out. It's really nice. And we have some plans for behind the building as well to clean up and do some more work there. Covered for different department heads for time off. I've been working on packing up the third floor so we can get the floors done. Moving tomorrow. So, starting Monday, the third floor staff will be on the second floor in the community room with limited access to things to do. For example, they won't have access to any cash to make any change but we're hoping to have their credit card machine up and accepting and processing mail. We'll try to bring as many of the other things down as we can, including handicap passes for people. Went over some of our insurance claims with Travelers and the department heads that were involved in those. Went over lighting for Bradley Park and the streets for street lighting with a lighting company to see what they can come up with for a plan for us, hopefully it's cost effective. Cameras are being installed around the village. They're doing wiring in the Village Hall today for the new camera system. That's the big stuff. Recreation & Parks, indoor

pickle ball is still going well. Basketball program ends today. Adult gym is going well. They're open for summer camp registration now. Easter Egg Hunt that was scheduled for this Saturday is pushed to the 30th due to the weather. The Building Inspector issued 21 new permits, 50 violation notices were sent out. Code Enforcement Officers sent out 45 violation notices and some follow ups and inspection, 6 CO reports and 7 certificates of compliance. The part time inspector issued 1 new permit, 2 residential fire inspections, 3 public assembly inspections, 3 commercial inspections and did follow up on the bids for the 35-37 North Montgomery Street building that's going to be demolished. Clerk's been updating Facebook and website. Following up on personnel matters and FOILs, handicap, helping out with the new staff getting acclimated with things. Working on payroll, helping out the comptroller to get the stuff in there and the election, which went smoothly. Finance Department is working on the budget with me a lot. Trying to work on bank reqs and accruals, vouchers, helping out resident complaints and getting acclimated to things as well. Public Works, trying to maintain, spring season starting, so we'll be starting more projects now. But they are working on catch basins as they can, sewer stations. Following up on complaints. Water Department did 19 mark outs, replaced 3 meters, 29 end points, 1 inspection and did 3 closings. Public Works also assisted with the clarifier repair at the sewer plant to get that in from that FEMA project from a couple of years ago. Police Department, as you saw, has staffing coming in. We're technically fully staffed. But 3 of the officers are in the academy, until they're out we still have some coverage things going on. But they did issue 21 traffic tickets, 7 parking tickets, responded to 4 MVAs, 2 arrests and 206 blotters as of the date of the report. I know that the parking enforcement officer is out there doing what he can, when he can.

Trustee Pearson: Talked about the accreditation last time, you were going to find out the follow up for me. Did you find anything out last time?

Manager Revella: There's no status update yet, but they are working on accreditation still. Nothing new. They're still going through all the policies as they come in and updating with Lexipol.

Trustee Pearson: Water and sewer bills. How many do we have outstanding? Do we still have a lot of outstanding ones bills?

Manager Revella: Bills or do you mean the meters?

Trustee Pearson: Bills. When you bill to people and how many don't pay their bills?

Manager Revella: A lot.

Trustee Pearson: We don't put that on their taxes?

Manager Revella: Yes, we do.

Trustee Pearson: Okay. The heat in the PD. The air conditioning.

Manager Revella: They actually get charged an extra fee if they get put on the taxes too. The heat is good. But no, the part is not in and it is under warranty for sure. The labor's not, but I put that in the claim with the insurance company.

Trustee Batson: With the Police Department fully staffed, how many positions are open left in the town now?

Manager Revella: There's 1 position. The officers out on 207C. There's 1 out on Comp. But all the positions that we can fill are filled. There are 3 officers that can't patrol because they're at the

Academy.

Trustee Batson: In your notes, you had a meeting about an ethics matter. Will we learn about that later in executive session?

Manager Revella: No. That comes from the Ethics Board. If there's any update.

Trustee Batson: Okay. Again, I commend the PD. 26 stops, 21 summonses. That's a great ratio. Under the mechanic's report, our brand new backhoe has parking brake not holding. \$150,000 to be broken. I'm hoping that that's under warranty.

Manager Revella: Yes.

Approval of Minutes – February 28, 2024 Special Meeting & March 5, 2024 Minutes

Trustee Pearson made a motion to approve the February 28, 2024 special meeting minutes. Seconded by Trustee Garrison. 4 ayes. 2 abstentions (Trustee Maher and Trustee Hall). Motion carried.

March 5th, 2024 Minutes

Trustee Hall made a motion to approve the March 5, 2024 minutes. Seconded by Trustee Pearson. All ayes. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Patricia Doss: I have given you guys 4 petitions to sign. We need your help. Because every time we go to the county legislators, they ignore us. I'm with a group. I'm just videotaping this because the Orange County group is not always nice. However, if I could get your help to sign these petitions and to maybe get them to look at these petitions, maybe they will be able to, with your backing, more so than mine, because they don't look at us as people, I guess. But with your help, they'll sign those petitions, too. That's what I'm here for. I need you guys to sign these petitions because the one is for chem trails. They're poisoning us every single day for decades. I didn't even know that. Medical freedom, on the border. If you guys could help me, I would really appreciate it. If I could get those back in a week, maybe give it to your Village Clerk, I would really appreciate it. That way we have your names and you're saying we agree with you and your group, so please and thank you.

Business of the Board

2nd Annual Overdose Awareness Memorial

Trustee Maher made a motion to approve the request for the 2nd Annual Overdose Awareness Memorial. Seconded by Trustee Hall. All ayes. Motion carried.

Bid Results – Riverfront Project

Manager Revella: The bids were read today. We had 4 qualified bidders that had a complete bid package. They have the full bid amount, which is for the parking, curbing, paving, along with the sidewalk and riprap that goes in the water to help alleviate any threat of erosion. There's an alternate if you look at the sheet that was given to you, the alternate option bid is for the gazebo. I don't know if you want to include that now or later after we see how our finances pan out. We already had to contribute some funds to this now, on top of the grant.

Trustee Pearson: The grant again was for how much?

Manager Revella: The original grant was \$150,000.

Trustee Pearson: We have like \$125 left?

Manager Revella: Almost \$130...

Trustee Pearson: The extra funds would come from?

Manager Revella: Fund balance.

Trustee Batson: And the fund balance is basically maxed?

Manager Revella: It's over still at the moment.

Trustee Batson: So the delta of that would be \$70,000 out of fund balance of roughly 1.1 million?

Manager Revella: More. Unfortunately.

Mayor Ramos: Everyone has looked at the contractors. Obviously, number 1 is the lowest bid.

Manager Revella: The engineer does support the lowest bidder for this.

Trustee Pearson: And they have done work for us before. They did Oak Street.

Manager Revella: Yes they did.

Trustee Pearson: Have they done anything else for us?

Manager Revella: They did the small parking lots at Olley, at the Anita Vandermark Center. They've done other sidewalks in the past on Maple and Walnut as well.

Trustee Pearson: How often does the engineer inspect their work?

Manager Revella: They're on site daily.

Mayor Ramos: Are they DEC certified?

Manager Revella: The DEC approved our work so far.

Trustee Hall made a motion to award bid to the Consorti Brothers Paving for the Maple Street Riverfront Project in the amount of \$221,000. Seconded by Trustee Maher.

Manager Revella: And just to clarify for the board, we're waiting on the alternate because we may have another grant come in that would cover that.

Trustee Pearson: There was someone who had an issue with me voting and possibly talking about this park because I work at Millspaugh Furniture. I did write this and I want to read it into the minutes, please. *read letter into minutes*

Mayor Ramos: And he was an Eagle Scout Troop 31.

All ayes. Motion carried.

Mayor Ramos: They're going to start work soon.

Manager Revella: Yes, we have to get the contract signed and we'll get moving. They're ready to go, the contractors.

Resolution 18-23-24 Stop DWI

Trustee Pearson made a motion to adopt Resolution 18-23-24 Stop DWI. Seconded by Trustee Garrison. All ayes. Motion carried

Resolution 19-23-24 Youth Bureau Grant

Trustee Pearson made a motion to adopt Resolution 19-23-24 Youth Bureau Grant in the amount of \$14,000 for Summer Camp. Seconded by Trustee Garrison. All ayes. Motion carried.

Resolution 20-23-24 Arbor Day

Trustee Garrison made a motion to approve Resolution 20-23-24 Arbor Day scheduled for May 9th, 2024 at 12:15 p.m. at the Walden Elementary School. Seconded by Trustee Maher. 5 ayes. 1 abstention (Trustee Pearson). Motion carried.

Village Code Updates

Manager Revella: Following the last board meeting with the Village Attorney, he went through the code amendments that the board considered and these 3 draft local laws for consideration. I discussed them with him today. He wanted to make sure the board reviewed them, discussed any potential changes, corrections you might need. If you're happy with them, you could set a public hearing. If you want more time, you can wait till next meeting. There's no time constraints on this.

Mayor Ramos: Does anybody want to continue reviewing them since obviously we did this.

Trustee Batson: I just have one tiny, nitpicky little thing. Under the local law for the appearance ticket. Section 9-3. Just to make it consistent with the rest of the codes that we have, it should just say definitions rather than appearance ticket defined. It just makes it consistent with all the other sections.

Manager Revella: You want it to say appearance ticket definition?

Trustee Batson: I think the rest of the codes just say definitions. I would like it to say what is consistent with the rest of the code. I just can't remember off the top of my head, but I believe it is just definitions.

Trustee Pearson: I did have a question on that same one. Section 9-9, so Chief of Police does that. Is that where you're going to find the parking guy. Is that under there. I didn't look up that law, but we now have a parking person. Does that need to be put in here as well? Because he's going to be giving summonses out.

Manager Revella: Under the Chief of Police, are all those underneath that authority, which would be Police Officers and Parking Enforcement Officer as well.

Trustee Pearson: It doesn't say that. Is that chapter 9? I didn't read chapter 494. Is that that? Or do I have to put in because that's talking about noise, littering, all that other stuff. I just wondered if we needed to worry about that since we have somebody now doing that job again.

Manager Revella: I think when we define Police Chief, it's the Police Chief or designee. So, I'm sure that authorization under the Chief.

Trustee Pearson: Covered under all of that.

Manager Revella: I'll ask for sure though.

Trustee Pearson: Thank you.

Trustee Hall: Section 2 under purpose. Discretionary says Deputy Village Manager is discretionary, crossed out and then it says it again next to the underline.

Manager Revella: I don't know. It keeps all of the edits. Whatever he edited, he may have done it more than once with a period instead.

Trustee Hall: Okay.

Manager Revella: With the word versions, if you have them online, if you click on the little line on the left, it'll tell you what the notes are.

Mayor Ramos: Does everyone need more time to review the 3 filings or can we set a hearing?

Trustee Pearson: I would just like clarification for the appearance ticket, please, that he's able to do what he needs to do or put him in as a person because you have everybody else there.

Manager Revella: I can get those clarifications, those modifications as well from Dave for next meeting. If you want to just pause till then, that's fine.

Mayor Ramos: Let's pause until we get that. Is the Parking Enforcement Officer considered a Peace Officer?

Manager Revella: I don't think so. I'll ask Chief to clarify that. I don't believe they are.

Liquor License Application

Manager Revella: The board received a liquor license application for 81 East Main Street, Suite D. Had a prior liquor license under a different name. I don't think the board had any objections to the last one. If you don't have any objection, there's nothing to do. Thank you.

Public Comment

Sue Taylor: First, I'd like to thank Trustee Maher and Trustee Carly for their service to the board. I know it's not an easy job. Trish, frankly, with kids and the fact that you're a caregiver, I don't know how you had the time to do what you did, but it was appreciated. I'd like to congratulate Becky Pearson on being reelected. Also Liz Kyle and Bill Taylor. All I can say is, never forget that you're representing the people of the Village of Walden. That's who you work for. No one else. Also, I know this equipment is old, but I have to tell you, whenever I meet people who try to watch these meetings and be involved. Which is why we did this system to begin with, they cannot hear what you're saying. They find it very difficult if you turn your head to talk to a colleague on the dais. You lose everything. I don't know enough about the sound system to know where exactly the sound is coming from. But if we're doing this so people can be involved in our local government, they need to hear what you're saying. Try to be mindful of that when you're speaking, please. I found an interesting quote that I'm going to end with. "The truth does not mind being questioned. A lie doesn't like being challenged." Keep that in mind as well. Thank you.

Mary Ellen Matise: Happy winter again. I noticed, on Facebook, of course our local newspaper,

Facebook, the morning paper that the school was having another walk through tonight and 2 more coming up. I'm wondering if we've made any overtures yet to them to come and talk to us. I don't think that we want to be at the end of the trolley and find out, this is what we're going to do. This is the third time I'm bringing it up. I'd like to see the village make some overtures to them to meet with us. To be here in this room and tell us what's going on, what they have in mind. Budget coming up, which means the garbage contract is coming up, isn't it?

Trustee Pearson: We did that last year.

Manager Revella: Last year. It's a 3 year.

Mary Ellen Matise: Then there's no chance of getting them to put the garbage cans back right.

Manager Revella: Absolutely, there is.

Trustee Hall: I just can't deal with it anymore. It's just getting really ridiculous. It's like a slalom course when you drive down our streets. I don't know, we've go over this with them constantly. They get constant complaints, a list constantly made up and it just never changes. I don't get it.

Payment of Audited Bills

Trustee Hall made a motion to approve the payment of audited bills. Seconded by Trustee Garrison. All ayes. Motion carried.

Miscellaneous Comments from the Board of Trustees

Trustee Pearson: I would like to say thank you Trish and Willie as well. You welcomed me 2 years ago and it's been a pleasure to work with both of you. I know he's not here tonight, but maybe he'll watch it and see. But thank you for welcoming me and it was a pleasure to work with you. Enjoy your family and work and whatever else you're going to do. But you'll be still involved, I'm sure. Thank you. The other thing is, Mayor, are you going to talk about the petitions that Mr. Doss gave us or we're going to talk about that at the end?

Mayor Ramos: In brief, because this is the first time I'm seeing this. There's a lot of reading.

Trustee Pearson: I didn't know, 2 weeks later and discuss it at a meeting.

Mayor Ramos: She was looking for a week. Right? When are they going to introduce them to the legislature?

Patricia Doss: I'm not 100% sure because my group has to know when they're in session and all that stuff. I haven't gotten a hold of them to find out, but when they do, I really would like to have those petitions. That's why I asked for about a week.

Mayor Ramos: When is our next meeting?

Manager Revella: Your next meeting is April 2nd.

Mayor Ramos: We have plenty of time. We'll have a definitive answer. Is that good enough? Because I know they're not meeting until the middle of April. At least gives us a chance to review it, digest it.

Patricia Doss: I have a constitution I gave Miss Pearson. It's a color coded constitution. It's all the things that have been violated with other people. You guys are really good. That's why I asked for

your help. Thank you.

Mayor Ramos: Thank you.

Trustee Pearson: I'll give that to Marisa, she can make copies and put in everybody's box.

Trustee Pearson: I just wanted to thank the community for voting. It's hard to get people out to vote and we appreciate people coming out to vote. Thank you for the support. I'll do my best for you. Thank you.

Trustee Maher: I did want to let everyone know our 31st Hudson Valley Honor Flight is April 13th. Coming up quickly. Please come out, as you always do and just show our Veterans the support and the love. We have our meet and greet scheduled for this Sunday at the Walden Firehouse. This is my last board meeting. Feels so weird after 3 years. It's been quite a journey and I've learned a lot from all of you. I've learned a lot from our community members and I don't feel like you're not going to see me any less or hear any less from me. I think, if anything, you might see me a little bit more, because there's still a lot that I want to do. Just because I won't be on the board doesn't mean I still won't be actively involved. So if anyone has any feedback or wants me to get involved, just give me a call because I have no problem raising my hand and showing up at a meeting. Thank you to all my supporters and voters out there who did trust me to make some hard decisions and I look forward to coming back one day. Congratulations to all the winners. Thank you to everyone for coming out to vote, because it's a struggle. We can still do better with that. Thank you.

Trustee Hall: I wanted to say, thank you for welcoming me and being a pleasure to sit next to you for the last year. I'm going to miss you. Congratulations to Bill and Liz and to Becky. Thank you to Marisa. I know that Election Day was a very long day for you. As I was watching, as we were going on, I was watching the live feed and I've seen, somebody had mentioned the dog park, so that would be something I would like to look into. Is it possible when we go into exec to have the Trustee Elects to go in with us?

Manager Revella: You can invite anybody you want in. But they haven't taken the oath as a Trustee yet. I don't know if there's something you want to discuss in particular.

Trustee Hall: If they're going to be there and we have things that we need to vote on and appoint within the next couple of weeks, I didn't know if they needed to be a part of to kind of see what's going on beforehand or are they going in blind?

Trustee Pearson: You can invite anybody in, the board chooses.

Trustee Hall: That's just a thought there.

Trustee Garrison: I'll follow suit with everybody else. Thank you, Trish and Willie, who's not here. I picked up a lot from you over the years, so I do appreciate that. Congratulations to Bill, Liz and Becky again. Looking forward to working with you guys. For at least the next year. We'll see how that works as we get closer. Shout out to the DPW. Saw a lot of them out there putting in new drains and things like that. They're out there working pretty hard. Stop to give them some water. Said hello. Don't forget to say thank you to those guys. They do put some hours in even though sometimes it doesn't look like they are. It's good to know the PD's getting better staffing. Last thing I have is if you're riding a bike in the village, you do have to follow the laws of the road. Do not run red lights, do not run stop signs, don't make lefts in front of cars or go around vehicles. With that being said, also the weather's getting warmer. Be on the lookout for kids and people on bikes and

scooters and skateboards and all that good stuff. Especially with the warmer weather coming up. But other than that, congratulations again to the people that won the election.

Trustee Batson: Pretty much the same update again. Thank you, Trish for being a mentor to us as we came along. You gave us a lot of great advice. That was really helpful. And congratulations to all the new winners. I do have one more thing. If you could pass it down. A couple of meetings ago, I brought up the idea of a little bit of project management, especially as it relates to the budget. We tend to ask a tremendous amount of questions in John's Manager Reports about projects. It also came up during candidates meeting. This is a very, very basic example of something that I would like for us to discuss, to see. It's just simply, what's the project name? What's the project year? Where's the source of the budget? What was the budget? What was the actual? Any variance when it goes out for bid, who the vendor was to complete? And then if there are any updates? Again, I'm not trying to make this overly administratively complicated, but at least from my perspective, I feel like this will help us to be a little more organized and make sure that we're asking the right questions and that we have a little bit of an easier understanding of the budget impacts of some of these. I'm not looking for anything today. Maybe feedback, email doesn't have to be meeting.

Trustee Hall: I love this.

Trustee Pearson: I do too.

Trustee Batson: I try to make it simple. Something that I'm more than happy to, there are projects listed in the new one. I'm more than happy to work with the Treasurer to put them in there. More than happy to work with her putting the old ones in there again. It's Excel driven, so it's super simple just typing in a box. But that's my proposal on that, if you will.

Trustee Pearson: Thank you.

Mayor Ramos: Excellent idea. We should work on implementing something like that, if you don't mind. A couple things I have. Today I had a great conversation with the new owner of the old Walden Diner. Mr. Leno DeLeon. He plans on, a tentative opening date for after May 7th.

Manager Revella: He's hoping after Cinco de Mayo, because he has his other places have huge events going on.

Mayor Ramos: The place looks very clean. No more rugs. Every time you have rugs, they stay on for a long period of time, just like we have here, they get dirty. They did an excellent job in renovating the whole area, kitchen. He's doing a phenomenal job and I can't wait till he opens.

Manager Revella: He has 2 things left to do, the signs, get approval and his liquor license.

Mayor Ramos: He's, collaboratively, we spoke about, we do have another Mexican restaurant, so we're like talking since we have Zona Rosa here, I don't want him to over shield our small mom and dad restaurant. He totally understands. We'll see if we can work together on making this place great.

Trustee Batson: Any update on 35-37 North Montgomery Street?

Manager Revella: They have the bid docs from our engineer to include potential for asbestos and lead and I'm not sure if there was something else.

Read Community Events into Minutes

Mayor Ramos: I'd like to thank Trustee Maher and I like to thank my Deputy Mayor for their guidance, their spiritual guidance for me. With the reverend. They did a lot of hard work in the timeframe that they were here, made the village better and I'm going to miss both of you. Welcome Bill Taylor, fellow veteran. I'm happy. Won't hold it to you that you were a Navy guy, but now it's Air Force and Navy. Good football game.

Executive Session - Discuss the Employment History of a Particular Person

Trustee Batson made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss the employment history of a particular person. Seconded by Trustee Garrison. All ayes. Motion carried.

Reconvene

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

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Motions & Resolutions**

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