

**VILLAGE OF ATHENS BOARD MEETING  
MINUTES – April 27, 2022**

VB meeting held at 6:30PM- Athens Fire House, 39 Third Street, Athens NY.

PRESENT: Mayor Amy Serrago, Trustee Gail Lasher, Trustee Nancy Poylo, Trustee Joshua Lipsman and Trustee Rob Scott

Clerk-Treasurer Mary Jo Wynne was present for the purpose of taking Minutes.

*Pledge to the Flag*

***PUBLIC HEARINGS***

The first Public Hearing is being held for the purpose of hearing public comment on proposed zoning changes as recommended by the Cannabis committee.

Trustee Lipsman inquired as to whether PB Chairperson Maggie Moree and the Village Attorney were included in the recommendation for changes.

Mayor replied 'yes'.

Resident Robert Brunner noted that the Agricultural district requires a special use permit. Is that for growing cannabis or for all agriculture?

The Mayor replied that it was determined that there is not a lot of space for agriculture in the village so we should make it all special use permit.

Trustee Scott noted that if the VB were to vote on this this evening he will abstain due to his position employed by the County.

Local Law #3 passed (See Resolutions).

*Public Hearing closes at 6:35PM*

*The Second Public Hearing being held for the purpose of hearing public comment on the proposed law for the NYS Stretch Code opens immediately after the former public hearing (6:35PM).*

The Mayor informed everyone that this law had already been passed last July but NYSERDA wanted revisions made to the wording of the law.

No comments from the public.

Local Law #4 passed (See Resolutions).

***CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING at 6:37PM***

*Regular work meeting begins*

**PUBLIC:**

1. *Gordon Mosher*. Re: Memorial Day Parade. No show

Mr. Mosher, a member of the American Legion submitted a letter inviting the VB to attend and detailing events of the morning. The VB discussed the Memorial Day Parade.

2. *Reginald Scantlebery*. Re: Work Vehicle. No show

3. *Kathy Jackson*, member of the D.R. Evarts Library, attended the meeting to answer any questions that the VB may have regarding her application to close part of Second Street for the grand opening celebration of the D.R. Evarts on May 14, 2022.

Ms. Jackson also wanted to get permission from the VB to plant sunflowers around the village. She thought that with so much negativity in the world right now that sunflowers, also represent support for the Ukraine might be a nice way to show a feeling of coming together with the Ukraine.

Mayor Serrago noted that it was fine as long as we know where they are planning on planting them. Sunflowers are not a favorite of hers.

Trustee Poylo also mentioned that sunflowers can become a problem as they re-seed every year and also become obstructive.

Trustee Lipsman asked whether this needed VB approval?

Mayor Serrago replied that it does if it is on Village property.

4. *James Cesario*, resident of the village, attended the meeting to discuss wheelchair accessibility throughout the village.

Mr. Cesario has been using a wheelchair for the past 7-8 years and travels throughout the village. He has noted that there are areas in the village that are difficult to maneuver in a wheel chair.

Mr. Cesario used the Riverfront Park as an example. The picnic tables are not useable for wheelchairs and the boardwalk only has steps. He noted that they do sell handicapped accessible picnic tables and a ramp would be nice. He has reached out to another resident that uses a wheelchair and they have discussed the curbs and accessibility throughout the village.

They realize that they cannot make it perfect but there are things that can be done to make it a little easier to maneuver throughout the village. He inquired as to whether the VB would be interested in forming a committee to research areas in the village that could be improved for handicap accessibility while also exploring grant opportunities.

Mayor Serrago asked if he had a group in mind?

Mr. Cesario mentioned this other person with a disability and perhaps a Trustee could be part of the group.

Mayor Serrago noted that she will put the 'word out' and put it on the website.

VB agreed that it would be a good idea to bring awareness to this issue.

#### **APPLICATIONS:**

1. Facility use application. Street closure. Applicant: D.R. Evarts Library. A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Poylo, seconded by Trustee Scott, all in favor.

#### **RESOLUTIONS:**

1. Proposed Resolution Approving Minutes

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Minutes from Village Board meetings held on April 13<sup>th</sup> and April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022 be approved:

Offered by: Trustee Lasher  
Seconded by: Trustee Poylo  
Record of vote: All in favor

2. Proposed Resolution Approving Payment of Vouchers as Presented on Abstracts

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Village Board approve payment of the following vouchers as presented:

GENERAL – Abstract #2093, vouchers numbered #9921588 through #9921607 in the amount of \$18,730.38

WATER – Abstract #10524, vouchers numbered #9921609 through #9921617 in the amount \$24899.02

SEWER – Abstract #10508, vouchers numbered #9921618 through #9921629 in the amount of \$24640.02

Offered by: Trustee Scott  
Seconded by: Trustee Lasher  
Record of vote: All in favor

3. Proposed Resolution Approving Tree City USA Proclamation (see attached)

Offered by: Trustee Lipsman  
Seconded by: Trustee Lasher  
Record of vote: All in favor

Trustee Lipsman noted that in order to be part of the ‘Tree city USA’ the Village will need to hold a celebration soon in order to retain this status.

4. Proposed Resolution Approving the Adoption of Local Law #3

WHEREAS, the Cannabis Committee has recommended changes to the village zoning as per attached and therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that Local Law #3 amending village zoning be passed;

Offered by: Trustee Poylo  
Seconded by: Trustee Lipsman  
Trustee Lasher votes aye  
Mayor Serrago votes aye  
Trustee Scott abstains  
RESOLUTION passes

5. Proposed Resolution Approving the Adoption of Local Law #4

WHEREAS, the VB passed the Stretch Code law in 2021 and after review by NYSERDA it was determined that there needed to be some revisions made to the law before it would be accepted by NYSERDA and,

WHEREAS, the revisions have been made and a public hearing was held, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Village Board approve the adoption of Local Law #4 of 2022;

Offered by: Trustee Lipsman  
Seconded by: Trustee Lasher  
Record of vote: All in favor

6. Proposed Resolution Approving the Budget for fiscal year ending 5/31/23

WHEREAS the village has determined the Appropriations for fye 5/31/23 to be estimated at \$1,750,777.84 and the Revenues minus tax receivables to be estimated at \$446,621.96, and

WHEREAS the village has appropriated \$120,000.00 of fund balance towards operating expenses and \$25,000.00 of appropriated fund balance towards the purchase of equipment and,

WHEREAS the amount to be raised by taxes equals \$1,159,155.88 (tax levy) and the assessed valuation of the Village equals \$167,795,125.00 bringing the tax rate for fiscal year ending 5/31/23 to 6.9082 per thousand;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the tax rate for fiscal year 6/1/22 through 5/31/23 be set at 6.9082 per thousand of assessed value:

Offered by: Trustee Lipsman

Seconded by: Trustee Poylo

Record of vote: All in favor

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

1. Greene County Veterans Service Agency. Re: Invite
2. Greene County Treasurer Tax Department. Re: Petition and Notice of Foreclosure.
3. Marya Warsha/Jane –Cole Raftery. Re: Third Annual Pride Flag Raising and Celebration
4. Williamson Law Book. Re: Contract for software support/Buildings and Codes
5. Ramona Waters. Re: Parking – Third Street. The Mayor noted that she will need to get more information about this and then respond.

**BUSINESS:**

1. Budget discussion – adopted (see RESOLUTIONS)

A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Lasher, seconded by Trustee Poylo, all in favor, approving the promotion of Officers Jeffry Ruso and Charles Cole to the position of Sergeant with the APD.

Trustee Poylo noted the following items:

Punchlist from the town of Athens

Tree on Third Street

Cat tractor is broken down. Fixing it will cost approximately \$20,000.00

Cost for installation of wifi in Riverfront Park

Trustee Lipsman noted the following items:

CAC recommended taking down the tree which has been discussed at a prior VB meeting located on 32 N. franklin St.

Forwarded the tree law to the VB. He would like the VB to consider it and put on the agenda for the next meeting

Electronic Charging Station project update

Trustee Scott:

Shrubs have been removed from the firehouse, paperwork for leasing is underway and the Firemen's banquet dinner will be held this Saturday at 4:00pm

**ADJOURNMENT:**

A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Lasher, seconded by Trustee Scott, all in favor, to adjourn tonight's meeting at 8:00PM