

## VILLAGE OF ATHENS BOARD MEETING JANUARY 10, 2024

**Present:** Mayor Serrago, Trustee Phoenix, Trustee Lipsman, Trustee Scott and Trustee Lasher

Meeting began at 6:30pm

### **Department Heads:**

**Water/Sewer- Joe Myers-** Joe spoke about a high flow event that recently occurred. He told the board that the filter in the underdrain system had failed. This happened on December 31<sup>st</sup>. He said the good news is the parts will be here in 12 to 15 weeks.

Mayor Serrago said that the replacement was in our plan which we were funded for. The Department of Health said to go ahead and fix it as it will be covered through our funding.

Joe said the flows in December were above the monthly allotment. He said the rain amounts have been up, that December was very wet and the past 48 hours has not helped.

Trustee Lipsman said he looked back through his emails and saw one about the asset management plan and would like a treatment plant inspection checklist.

Joe said he is still waiting for information on this.

**DPW-Chris Sprague-** Chris said they made it through the water issues this week. He said that some residents did get water in their basements. He said there was a disgruntled resident that blamed the DPW for their issue due to paving. He said their sump pumps were not in the hole correctly and the AVFD did pump their basement. He said there was a private drain put in that goes across the street and it was working. Chris said that there is another resident past the old firehouse on North Franklin Street that has a drain in the back of her property that goes behind houses and goes to a catch basin on Market Street. It is either collapsed or blocked. I told her that I do not know if this is the Village or a private drain. Some basements are connected to this. If this is private the owners would have to pay to have fixed.

The Village Attorney was asked if this was the Villages responsibility as he was attending the meeting by phone. He said a title search would need to be done of the three properties. This would show if there were rights or easements on the deeds.

There was a brief discussion on how these residents should discuss further with the board.

Mayor Serrago said the Village will probably get a few more water problems from residents.

Chris said they left a pump with another resident today. He said there is a valve leaking out on Schoharie Turnpike. He said he has been working on future infrastructure stuff. He said the plan is to complete drains from Vernon Street to Franklin Street. He said he spoke with Jamie Herman from Rural Water. He said he has a GIS mapping for the sewer, but not for the water. Jamie said to send a letter for assistance funding to Matt Curry of DOH. He would help and then send to Albany.

Mayor Serrago said to reach out to Jason.

Chris said that a piece of sewer needs to be replaced on Franklin Street and the money received should be used for that. He said he received his water license and will sign off on it with Matt Curry. He said that the lead pipe assessment needs to be done by 10/2024. He said that Anthony is willing to work part time to do the leg work. He said we don't have enough time to do the scratch test. He said if the Village does 4 a day we will be done before the deadline, He said Anthony can work Monday and Tuesdays. He said each residence would take about 10 minutes. He said he would fill out a form and take a picture of it with an IPAD because it is mandated that a picture of every scratch test be taken. Chris said that MJ and Dawn have graciously said that they would input the information.

Mayor Serrago said she may have an IPAD that would work for the assessment.

Chris said other than that they are doing normal duties and are helping Joe with the water filters.

Mayor Serrago said that Joe said that the water filter is working for now with a temporary fix. It's a gamble we must take for now.

Chris said there was flooding as the locks were opened. He said Catskill gave us a heads up. He said he went to Innovative Solutions in Delmar to look at materials and liquids for snow melt. He said he found a molasses additive to use on the salt. He said this would activate the salt quicker and has good reviews. He said it would cut down on salt usage as well. He said there is no hazardous material in it.

**Athens Volunteer Fire Department-Wayne Butterworth-** Wayne said last year was the highest for calls (147) they have had. He said that last night the fire company we went to Seconds as the fryer had been left on for 2 days and this morning pump outs. He said they are going to a lot of mutual aid calls.

Trustee Lasher mentioned the fire contract with the town.

Mayor Serrago said that the Town wants the accounting a certain way.

Trustee Phoenix said she is going to sit with MJ and go through it.

Wayne said that they received two grants from the Athens Community fund and will be purchasing gear.

Mayor Serrago asked how the DASNY grant was going.

Wayne said that the firefighter grant ran out of money, and they are still trying to get a ventilation system.

**Athens Police Department—Noone present**

**Code Enforcement-Noone present---attending training.**

Trustee Lipsman asked about the Police Reform Committee.

Trustee Lasher said she is waiting on the Village Attorney.

Mayor Serrago said we cannot make Roger or Gail get it together. We cannot make people meet and only one came to the meetings. She said that Stephan rounded up the group, he oversaw it and it was required for a 2020 executive order that went out.

Trustee Lipsman asked that a final email go out to the committee.

Trustee Lasher said that there have been no complaints or police issues. She said she will send out an email. She also said that the Code Enforcement Training is costing quite a bit.

Mayor Serrago asked how much as no one knew.

**PUBLIC:**

Kathleen from HALPS attended the meeting to discuss celebrations for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the lighthouse. She is looking for ideas and input. She said the goal is to bring communities together and connect the lighthouse between them.

**APPLICATIONS:**

1. Facility use Application- Athens Community Center Meeting Room. Applicant: Political Party.

A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Lipsman, seconded by Trustee Lasher all were in favor.

2. Facility use Application – Athens Riverfront Park- Community Day. Lighthouse Church.

A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Lasher, seconded by Trustee Phoenix to allow use of the park for Community Day, all were in favor.

3. Facility use Application- APAC to use the park. Applicant: Robert Smallwood

A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Scott, seconded by Trustee Lasher, all were in favor.

**RESOLUTIONS:**

1. Proposed Resolution Approving Minutes from Village Board Meetings

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Village Board approve Minutes from the VB Meeting held on December 13, 2023:

Offered by: Trustee Lasher

Seconded by: Trustee Scott

Record of vote: all were in favor.

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

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

Offered by: Trustee Lasher

Seconded by: Trustee Phoenix

Record of vote: all were in favor.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

1. Capital Bicycle Racing Club – Tom Gordon. Re: 2024 Trooper Brinkerhoff Memorial Race Series.

(awaiting facility use application and insurance certificate).

2. New York State of Opportunity- Direct Energy. Re: Fuel Sources and Air Emission to generate your Electricity
3. Sleepy Hollow Lake – Laurel Wolfe (Associate Manager). Re: Updated Emergency Action Plan (EAP)
4. HALPS handout from the committee for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Lighthouse.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

1. Remote meeting law
2. Public Hearing scheduled for next meeting.

Mayor Serrago said the Village did not win the NY Forward grant. She said there would need to be a Public Hearing at the next meeting for Veteran and elderly income limits as well as a Public Hearing for hybrid Meetings.

**Trustee Lasher** asked if we received grant money from the Community Foundations for the cultural center, recreation program, and the gym.

The clerk let her know that we did receive them.

**Trustee Lipsman** showed the board a Green purchasing certificate. He spoke about the Community Solar campaign and Solstice. He spoke about Clean Energy Programs and a Community Forestry Grant. He spoke about a field trip the CAC took to Green Bee Treehouse. He said the Village needs a street tree inventory. He also said he would like to see the Athens Museum moved to another room in the building which was bigger. He said currently an artist has her studio there.

Mayor Serrago said that herself and Trustee Lasher are going over the needs of the building with the Town.

**Trustee Phoenix** said the bank would like to do a promotional banner on the outside of the bank. She said the bank asked her to speak at the board meeting. She said she called Ed and Jeff, and they said it needed board approval. She will send a letter to the board with the size, where they would like it and for how long it will be up.

**Trustee Scott**- did not have anything.

**Mayor Serrago** spoke about the purchasing policy and said that Chief Masse would like to see it changed. She said she has sent it to Tal to approve a higher amount. She said she was told a bit of water came into the gym again. She said she will need to look for contractors to work on the gym.

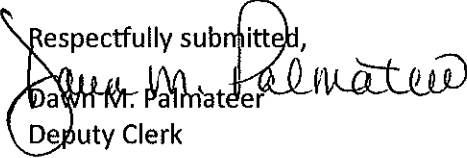
Wayne and Chris said they want to take up the sidewalk as they think that may be the problem. Chris said he would like to direct the water towards the catch basin and add dirt. Wayne said to put the gutter to a catch basin too.

Mayor Serrago said to lose the sidewalk. She mentioned that the NY Forward grant went to Hoosick and Schuylerville. She said she has set up a meeting with Margaret Irwin to go over the application. She said the Village did get the LWRP Loan funding and she is waiting for a DASNY update. She also said the Revolving Loan Fund needs to be worked on as someone would like to utilize it. She also mentioned

Lighthouse Church would like to use the gym and do some of the work in the gym that needs to be done. She said she will be speaking with the Pastor.

A **MOTION** was made by Trustee Lasher, seconded by Trustee Scott to end the meeting at 8:15pm, all were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn M. Palmateer

Deputy Clerk