

**Village Of Chaumont**  
**Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Board of Trustees**  
**December 20, 2022**

**Location of Meeting:**

Village Office  
12175 State Route 12E  
Chaumont, New York 13622

**Present at Meeting:** Valerie Rust, James Morrow, Jose Sosa, Michael Nichols, Dori-Ann Froelich, Karen Fitzgerald, and Erin Fulton

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Chaumont was called to order at 6:30 PM on December 20, 2022 at the Village Office by Mayor Valerie Rust.

**I. Privilege of the Floor**

Mayor Rust began the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Town of Lyme Supervisor Terry Countryman attended for Privilege of the Floor.

Supervisor Countryman opened by referencing the new municipal building, currently in the planning stages, that is meant to be shared by the Town of Lyme and Village of Chaumont beginning in late 2024. He has been talking with Michael Martin from the Department of Records and Archiving to discuss filing and retention rules. Supervisor Countryman informed the Board that The Local Government Records Management Improvement Fund (LGRMIF) is currently providing grants to local governments to assist in establishing digital records management programs. It is a competitive program, awarding grants based on the merits of applications, and the Town of Lyme would have a more successful application if they submitted a joint application with the Village of Chaumont – with both municipalities sharing in this new digital recordkeeping endeavor.

An inventory would be conducted of what files we have and where they are located, and we would be advised as to what we must keep and what can be eliminated. There are companies who perform this task in Sackets, Canandaigua, and Schenectady. Dan Villa is currently researching them. Mayor Rust mentioned that many Village records were inadvertently destroyed by water damage after the move from the Fire Hall to the current municipal building. There are still some here, but many are in cold storage or at the WWTP. Supervisor Countryman said that digital recordkeeping will behoove us both (municipalities); but if Town of Lyme applies independently there is only a 40% chance of receiving grant funding. If they apply jointly with the Village of Chaumont, the chance of being selected increases to 70% or more. \$150,000 in grant funding would be more than enough to cover entire cost – inventory, process of going digital, etc. In order to receive the grant, both municipalities would have to pass resolutions to approve digital recordkeeping and retention. Policies and procedures would also have to be updated. The grant process begins on January 4, 2023, with an application due date of March 1, 2023. The grant would provide up to \$75,000 per entity. Supervisor Countryman explained that while storage will be available in the new municipal building, it would be so helpful to have at least half of both municipalities files digitized. We would need to update the verbiage on our current

Intermunicipal Agreement to specify this new function, and Jim Burrows could help with this as he is currently the attorney for both the Town of Lyme and Village of Chaumont.

Mayor Rust said that although the deadlines and work involved with state agency grants can be overwhelming, we are in agreement that we need a new building with efficient office space. Although the Village is not in the strongest fiscal shape, this endeavor does make sense. The Board agreed to follow the Town of Lyme and Supervisor Countryman's lead. Mayor Rust asked the Supervisor to keep the VBT informed of what is needed for the new Intermunicipal Agreement and sample verbiage for the resolution. It was suggested the Assistant to the Supervisor, Robin Grovesteen, who is also the Town of Lyme grant-writer, would be involved in helping both municipalities through this process. Upon hopeful receipt of the grant, each year the records would follow the appropriate retention schedule and go into the cloud, making the new shared municipal building clean and efficient, and files easier to produce in more expedient time frames. Supervisor Countryman ended his visit by sharing the finalized building plans for the new municipal building with the Board of Trustees.

## **II. DPW Update**

Clerk Fulton presented a quote for a new radiator (for the generator) at the WWTP of \$9,827.67. She told the Board that while we'd already spent \$2,000 to fix the voltage regulator, this quote for the radiator would be to build the part from scratch as the generator – just as the Open Channel Flow Meter from our last Board meeting discussion – has been all but rendered obsolete. Buying a whole new, modern generator would be estimated around \$20-\$24,000 (more than double the current calculated cost to fix). The current generator's alternator is also a concern. Mayor Rust said she had a conversation with DPW Superintendent Greg Ingerson this afternoon about having John Hazlewood come inspect the generator to see if he could rebuild the parts for less. The Board will wait for an update on that assessment.

Following up on the Open Channel Flow Meter, since the last Board meeting Superintendent Ingerson found paper and ribbon for the obsolete machine at USABlueBook and was able to order the remaining supplies to get us buy without buying a new machine at this time.

On November 30<sup>th</sup>, Mark Jessman of Jessman's Trash removal called Clerk Fulton to request that the Board of Trustees consider a Village of Chaumont bag limit for trash removal. He believes around ten (10) bags would be acceptable per residence, yet has had many residents far superseding this number (i.e. one residence put out 29 bags one week and another 33 bags the following week for pickup). The Board agreed this was unacceptable and asked Clerk Fulton to look into other villages' guidelines to gauge their bag limits. They agreed that 5-7 bags seemed fair, and was in line with other municipalities. Mayor Rust asked that the residents please be informed of the 5-7 bag guideline on our website, Facebook page, on the back of the next water bill, and in the next Lyme Light publication. She told Clerk Fulton to inform Mark to leave any bags of refuse over 10 bags, and inform the Village Clerk's Office so we can follow up with the resident if this happens.

## **III. Motion to Approve Abstract #7 of 2022/2023**

Trustee Nichols made a motion to approve Abstract #7 of 2022/2023 and Trustee Froelich seconded the motion.

#### **IV. Motion to Approve Minutes of the November 15, 2022 Board Meeting**

Trustee Sosa made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 15, 2022 Board Meeting and Trustee Froelich seconded.

#### **V. Water/Sewer Report**

Clerk Fulton informed the Board that the Village of Chaumont's water program, UBMax, which was owned by Softline Data, Inc., has now been acquired by gWorks. After meeting with our new Account Executive for the software through the new company, Clerk Fulton learned that UBMax will be "sunsetting" at some point in 2023. We will most likely need to look for a new water program which operates with our current meter reading hardware, as the program with gWorks is a full software suite that could prove to be fairly costly.

Paula Petroske requested meter installation postponement at the old milk plant through March 2023. The Board agreed this was fine, waiting a couple more months is not a big deal.

Clerk Fulton presented an issue to the Board on behalf of Dale Hubbard. During the last water billing cycle, Mr. Hubbard's apartment building had an abnormal usage rate of 31,000 gallons over a 2-month period, when it averages 8,000 gallons. Our DPW went over to examine for any leaks, and it was determined that whatever leak may have occurred had since resolved. The water had indeed gone through the meter and nothing was amiss. Mr. Hubbard/Ms. Greene are certain of an error.

Clerk Fulton also presented an issue to the Board on behalf of Lisa Simard. During the last water billing cycle, Ms. Simard had an abnormal usage rate of 25,000 gallons over a 2-month period, when she usually averages 6,000 gallons. Our DPW has yet to get a confirmed time to visit and help the resident examine her home for any leaks, but will follow up with their findings before the next meeting.

Mayor Rust said if a leak does not go through the sewer, then a resident should not be charged for sewer usage, but otherwise a municipality cannot be held liable to cover the water leaks and usages of residences. Everyone must be conscientious about leaks, running water, etc. While a municipality does not pay leak overages, there is compassion from the Village Board of Trustees. While it is an audit exception and could have a negative impact from the Office of the State Comptroller, the Board agreed to a one-time credit, waiving \$140.00 from Mr. Hubbard's bill (splitting the cost of the overage). They will make a determination for Ms. Simard after the DPW Crew's findings.

Deputy Clerk Fitzgerald and Clerk Fulton gave an update on delinquent water & sewer accounts to the Board. Certified letters went out to residents on December 2<sup>nd</sup> asking for either 1) payment in full, 2) proof of application to NYS LIHWAP (Low Income Water Assistance Program), or 3) a signed contract payment plan to bring account current by February 15<sup>th</sup>, 2023. These letters received a very positive response, with most delinquent accounts choosing one of those three options by the December 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. On December 16<sup>th</sup>, about seven (7) notices were hung on doors of residents who had not responded, informing them of water shutoff on December 30<sup>th</sup>. At this time, only four (4) accounts remain under threat of shutoff at the end of the month.



## **VII. Old Business**

Clerk Fulton provided an update on the Village of Chaumont's Notice of Claim from Stanley Law. The Village of Chaumont's counsel from Burden, Hafner, & Hansen, LLC, Donna Burden, came to the Village of Chaumont municipal building on December 13<sup>th</sup> and conducted a 50-h hearing in the court room with the claimant, Susan Roof, and her representative from Stanley Law, Paul Hofmann. After the hearing, Donna spoke to Paul and gave him copies of the code provisions from the Village of Chaumont placing the responsibility for the care and maintenance of the sidewalks on the property owner. She confirmed that we responded to his FOIL request and confirmed that no notice of defect as to this sidewalk was given to the Village. She closed by asking him to withdraw the Notice of Claim, and will follow up with him on this in the near future.

Property Maintenance Code issued were followed up on, and certified letters were agreed to be sent out to noncompliant residences per last month's meeting directive. A home on Water Street was given 24 hours to remove a non-operable vehicle from the street, and a home on NYS Route 12E was given a deadline of April 15<sup>th</sup> to correct their multiple violations.

## **VIII. New Business**

Clerk Fulton presented a request for a grant of easement from Tioga's Ryan Day, the project engineer for the bridge replacement project. Tioga is leasing the quarry property on Co. Rte. 179 as a staging area for the Rt.12E bridge replacement project and are trying to get electricity there without having to run a line down from Co. Rte. 179. The easement that National Grid is asking for is to install a new pole and anchor at the Village's WWTP and run an electric service to the quarry property from that so they (Tioga) can dock their barge at the quarry for winter. Deputy Mayor Morrow made a motion to approve the easement, which was seconded by Mayor Rust.

## **IX. Correspondence**

Clerk Fulton presented monthly correspondence.

- Notice of 2023 Dental Health Insurance Premium Rate Changes
- Thank you from the Lyme Free Library for the Village of Chaumont's 2022-2023 financial contribution as well as the clearing of snow
- Notice of deadline for SLFRF funds to be obligated (12/31/24) and spent (12/31/26)
- Kimberly Wildman of USDA requested to still be included in pay apps and how things are progressing with the Betterment funds, as they will need to do a final inspection upon completion
- NYSLRS acknowledges receipt of our new Electronic Authorization Form dated 11/25/22
- The County Transfer Station/Recycling Center are increasing tipping fees for municipal solid waste by \$7.00 per ton to now be \$80. Municipal recycling pickup fee will increase by \$15 to now be \$75

- Riverside Solar, LLC Public Hearing Notices
- Received Crescent Yacht Club Junior Division's signed and notarized Grinder Pump Installation and Maintenance Agreement
- Compensation Disclosure Form from Fuller Insurance
- Recommendations for the Village of Chaumont from Henry van den Heever of NYMIR after his recent risk assessment walk with Superintendent Ingerson and Clerk Fulton
- The Village of Chaumont was awarded \$990,000 for the George Brothers Buildings Redevelopment of four vacant buildings in downtown / Main Street into seven (7) upper floor apartments and ground floor commercial space. The Town of Lyme was also awarded \$700,000 to demolish the blighted former gas station at 12319 NYS Route 12E and construct a new 4,000 sq. ft. diner
- From KWB Law informing us that during the pandemic a State of Emergency was declared pursuant to which Municipalities were authorized to conduct various municipal meetings by videoconferencing, but that latitude ended once the State of Emergency was lifted. Meetings of municipal boards must once again be conducted according to the typical procedures of New York's Open Meetings Law unless an adoption of the appropriate Local Law allows them to continue to use videoconferencing for Public Meetings
- A representative from Norbut Solar Farm is looking for the Decommissioning Bond. While it was Norbut's responsibility to get this bonded per our Solar Law, we were supposed to receive the proof or a written contract stating the terms which it appears we do not possess. The fact they are looking for it shows it may have never been executed. We will be reaching out to NYCOM and NYSERDA for guidance in moving forward

### **X. Mayor's Report/Committee Reports**

No Youth Commission report.

No Village Planning Board report.

Mayor Rust presented her Village Checklist and what she's working on administratively, and with various Village of Chaumont components such as personnel, buildings, highways, sewer system, water system, beach, grounds and parks, and property maintenance. She also continues to work on accounting for the annual report. She asked Clerk Fulton to schedule a Budget Workshop for the first week of March.

An email has been sent to our village attorney, Jim Burrows, for guidance in how to proceed with the new Outside Water User Agreements for Hart Road. We are still waiting on recommendations from the VPB in regards to a new Short-Term Rental Unit Law, as well as a corresponding application form.

We should soon receive an Asset Management Plan from Gregor of BCA, but the Village of Chaumont also needs something in place (a Capital Plan) for plant and lift stations. This should be done by the new budget. Even though Marcellus did all distribution work, another company installed all of these parts that are becoming obsolete at the WWTP. The plant is only 22 years old, and the repairs are crippling us. We need to start putting money aside – this is the reason why municipalities have capital programs in place.

Superintendent Ingerson has shared DPW checklists for the months of January, February, and March while he is working remotely. It has been requested by our office staff and the Mayor that the DPW crew sign and designate purchasing and receiving receipts going forward to be matched with invoices for accounting purposes.

Clerk Fulton offered to respond to the NYMIR Risk Assessment recommendations email.

### **XI. Motion to Adjourn Meeting**

Mayor Rust said she'd accept a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:58 PM. Trustee Sosa made a motion, which was seconded by Trustee Nichols.

Respectfully Submitted

*Erin Fulton*

Erin Fulton  
Village Clerk/Treasurer