

Village Of Chaumont
Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Board of Trustees
March 14, 2023

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, Erin Fulton, Robin Grovesteen, Jennifer Sosa, & Gunther Schaller

The regular monthly meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Chaumont was called to order at 6:33 PM on March 14, 2023.

I. Privilege of the Floor

The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance. There was no Privilege of the Floor.

II. DPW Update

Mayor Rust shared that she and the Village of Chaumont DPW staff are not in favor of utilizing a worker from the summer youth program through The Workplace this summer, as the water and sewer licensing training for Trevor Weston will be taking a considerable amount of his and Superintendent Greg Ingerson's available time. Deputy Mayor Morrow agreed and the board discussed looking into this program again next year.

III. Motion to Approve Abstract #10 of 2022/2023

Trustee Nichols made a motion to approve Abstract #10 of 2022/2023 and Deputy Mayor Morrow seconded the motion.

IV. Motion to Approve Minutes of the February 21, 2023 Board Meeting

Trustee Froelich made a motion to approve the minutes of the February 21, 2023 Board Meeting and Trustee Sosa seconded.

V. Water/Sewer Report

Mayor Rust asked Deputy Mayor Morrow about the recent DANC meetings. He explained the process of DANC trying to work out a fair system with EDUs, but as Dexter and Brownville were against it, it was not approved to move forward at this time.

Mayor Rust, Deputy Mayor Morrow, and Clerk Fulton met with BCA engineers today about surplus waterline project funds and priorities to use these funds. The Church St. waterline (laterals) that consistently freeze during the winter months should be replaced and insulated, new hydrants and valves on Mill St. are necessary, and a hydrant at the end of 12E near the meter pit. Finally, a waterline replacement on County Route 125 near Pat Reome's. There is currently a hodgepodge of waterlines (plastic, copper, etc.) in that area. The Village is looking at replacing about 250 feet with a new 10 inch line, although this is the least priority with the surplus funds.

Clerk Fulton brought up Christian Life Center/First Steps daycare water and sewer delinquency in the amount of approximately \$1000.00. The outstanding balance cannot be relieved onto a tax exempt property, and the Village Office is hesitant to serve a shut-off notice to a church/daycare. The Board recommended setting up payment plan in the form of a notarized contract.

VI. Treasurer's Report

VILLAGE OF CHAUMONT															
FEBRUARY RECEIPTS															
YR ENDING <i>May 31, 2023</i>															
	REAL PROP TAXES	LIEU OF TAXES	PEN/INTEREST	SALES TAX CO.	GROSS UTILITY TAX	FRANCHISE FEE	CLERK FEES	REGISTRAR FEES	BLDG/PERMIT	UNCLASSIFIED	BEACH	STATE AID	STATE AID MORT	CHPS	TOTAL
	A1001	A1081	A1090	A1120	A1130	A1170	A1255	A1603	A2555	A2770	A7140	A3001	A3005	A3501	
					13.45					142.98					156.43
					27.51										27.51
					30.06										30.06
					0.95										0.95
					32.83										32.83
					0.01										0.01
					19.57										19.57
															0.00
															0.00
															0.00
															0.00
															0.00
															0.00
															0.00
															0.00
															0.00
															0.00
TOTAL	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	124.38	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	142.98	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	267.36
BUDGET															
METERED WATER	O&M AND DCC	INT AND PEN	METER FEES	SERV CONNECTION	RET CK	TOTAL	USAGE FEE SEWER RENT	DEBT SER	INT AND PENALTY	O&M AND CONNECTION	TOTAL				
F2140	F2142	F2148	F2144	F2145	FEES	WATER	G2120	G2122	G2128	G2770	WASTE				
4,442.01	1,381.51	32.85				5856.37	2,754.41	3,856.06	32.84	2,918.39	9561.70				
7,638.33	2,142.80	34.27				9815.40	4,010.49	5,622.17	34.28	3,945.42	13612.36				
397.40	165.00	12.48				574.88	300.55	499.76	12.48	320.53	1133.32				
345.70	117.34	5.00				468.04	126.00	299.40	5.00	174.00	604.40				
309.53	140.00	32.85				482.38	137.00	426.15	25.00	315.00	903.15				
1,246.16	60.00	15.00				1321.16	796.35	1,332.43	15.00	141.16	2284.94				
						0.00					0.00				
						0.00					0.00				
						0.00					0.00				
						0.00					0.00				
						0.00					0.00				
						0.00					0.00				
						0.00					0.00				
						0.00					0.00				
						0.00					0.00				
						0.00					0.00				
14379.13	4006.65	132.45	0.00	0.00	0.00	18518.23	8124.80	12035.97	124.60	7814.50	28099.87				
WEBPAY															
LIHWAP (transfer from General Fund)															

VII. Old Business

Short-Term Rental Unit Law

The Board discussed the Short-Term Rental Law suggestions and recommendations from the Village Planning Board with VPB members Robin Grovesteen and Jennifer Sosa, who attended the meeting. Clerk Fulton agreed to type the new law with all agreed upon recommendations for an upcoming Public Hearing in April. In order to maintain consistency within the village, the Board requests even current STRU owners register.

Volunteer Firefighter Real Property Tax Exemption

The Village of Chaumont received notice from Jim Borrows regarding a Volunteer Firefighter Real Property Tax Exemption along with sample application, if the Village chooses to make a resolution for this exemption. Specifically, Real Property Tax Law § 466-a, which allows for an exemption of up to 10% of the assessed valuation of the primary residence of volunteer firefighters and/or volunteer ambulance workers. The application must be filed annually in the assessors' office. The exemption applies only to the tax levy of the unit of local government that opts in. For example, if a village opts in but the town does not, an eligible volunteer firefighter or volunteer ambulance worker would be entitled to an exemption on their village taxes but not their town taxes. Basic eligibility requirements apply: the property must be owned by the volunteer firefighter or volunteer ambulance worker; the volunteer must reside in the jurisdiction served by the fire company, fire department, or ambulance entity to which the volunteer belongs; the property must be the primary residence of the volunteer firefighter or volunteer ambulance worker; the property must be used exclusively for the volunteer's residential purposes, or if used for other purposes, only the volunteer's residential portion is entitled to the exemption; and, the authority having jurisdiction must certify that the volunteer is an enrolled member of the fire company, fire department, or ambulance service, as applicable. In order to implement the exemption, the Village of Chaumont must establish a minimum service requirement of between two years and five years of service, as well as develop a procedure for certifying that such volunteers are eligible. The Board agreed they would like to do some further research on this, including what type of certification would be required, and Mayor Rust would like to reach out to Jim Borrows. It was discussed that eligibility within the Village would be based on (5) years of service, and applicants must be an *active* member.

Property Maintenance Code

The VBT looked at current Property Maintenance Law and updated suggestions from ZEO Jim Millington from another local municipality. Deputy Mayor Morrow suggested that the Board examine them both to decide what they'd want to keep from the current law, and new things they'd like to add from the suggested one. Mayor Rust agreed – it must be tailored to our village with specific revisions. The VBT would like to schedule a special workshop for this discussion, then a public hearing before adopting a new, updated Property Maintenance Law. Robin Grovesteen requested copies of both and questioned whether the Board had considered incorporating the Property Maintenance Law into their Land Development Code, but Mayor Rust expressed reservations with incorporating property maintenance into building code.

Clerk Fulton reminded the Board that the resident at 12234 NYS Route 12E has a Property Maintenance citation deadline of April 15th, 2023.

Town of Lyme Veteran's Park Complaint

Mayor Rust addressed Mr. Gunther Schaller directly, and assured him that the issue at hand had been being worked on from the moment he brought it to the VBT's attention. She explained that the alleged violation of village law was an oversight that has been rectified – a landlocked parcel owned by RJ and Hartley Schweitzer near Veteran's Park has been corrected. Attorney Mark Gebo and Mike Battista, the surveyor, helped correct this oversight with a Schedule A in the deed combining the landlocked parcel with another parcel owned by the Schweitzers abutting the road. The other issues that were brought up regarding lack of Public Hearings and VPB minutes – these claims were unfounded. The Village Office

has copies of Public Hearing notices, and minutes of those meetings are online for public perusal. Mayor Rust went through an email from Mr. Schaller point by point, and answered questions directly. Mr. Schaller explained that he volunteered these questions/overview in what he felt was an absence of a constructive endeavor to investigate his allegations. He was hoping to aid the VBT in investigating his claim. He clarified that he provided allegations, and expected the Board to substantiate whether the allegations were correct or not. He admitted he could be in violation of defaming someone, and just wanted the facts. Mayor Rust again make clear that the VBT addressed the landlocked parcel that Mr. Schaller felt was done in error, and it has been corrected. She believes the Village Board has done its due diligence in answering Mr. Schaller's questions and rectifying the situation.

VIII. New Business

Outside Water Area Letters / New User Agreements

A letter will be sent to each property owner in the Permissive Outside Water Area on Hart Road within the Town of Lyme. Mayor Rust has been approached by Kim Heiselman and Jamie Nichols regarding responsibility and maintenance of the waterline on their road. There is a thought by some town residents in that area that the Village of Chaumont should provide maintenance for the perpetuity of the line. This is incorrect and not how Outside Water Areas are handled by the Village of Chaumont. Mayor Rust shared the following summary from the letter:

The Village entered into an agreement dated 3/13/1962 between Robert Hart and the Village of Chaumont. The agreement conveyed portions of his property to the Village of Chaumont for the purpose of constructing a water plant pumping station and installing an 8" water line placed along Hart Road to establish a public water system for the Village of Chaumont. Sections 2 and 3 of the agreement stipulated that the Village of Chaumont would install, without charge, laterals and meters and sell water to 5 residential properties on Hart Road as well as maintain the private road. Section 7 of the agreement required premises to be returned to their prior condition if the project is abandoned. This agreement was in effect and all terms were met until 1996 when the pump station was no longer viable and the Village of Chaumont connected their village water system to the NYS Development Regional waterline. The pump station was dismantled and the property was restored to its prior condition. In February 2017 the deed was amended and the parcels of land and right of way on Hart Road, conveyed for the Village public water supply system, were reverted back to Robert Hart and his successors since the Village had ceased using the public water system in 1996. Because of this the waterline is now considered an outside permissive water area.

Mayor Rust has rewritten the Village of Chaumont outside water agreements to be enclosed with this letter. The draft will also be sent to the Village attorney for his recommendations and edits before they are executed. The Village of Chaumont plans to re-file all of the outside permissive water areas with the NYS Dept. of Conservation, and in order to do that, all outside agreements must be in place.

Watertown Lions' Club Cardboard Boat Race

Karen Strife, President of Watertown Lions' Club, called to say that last year's Cardboard Boat Race was so successful that they were hoping the Board would be amenable to letting them have it at the beach again this summer. They are potentially looking at August 26th 2023 with proceeds benefiting the Food Pantry in Chaumont. They will provide proof of insurance with Village of Chaumont as additionally insured. The Board was all in favor.

IX. Correspondence

Clerk Fulton presented monthly correspondence.

- Henry van den Heever with NYMIR wrote the Board to recommending the VBT strengthen existing law that requires property owners maintain the sidewalk in front of their building – possibly making property owners financially liable for injuries sustained due to lack of maintenance. *The VBT does not wish to proceed with this.* A similar letter from Village attorney Jim Burrows stated a NYS law provides a measure of protection to municipalities by requiring prior written notice of an alleged defect as a precondition to any potential liability, but questioned is the VBT would like to adopt a local law, as well. Mayor Rust requested Clerk Fulton send a copy of this correspondence to her email to follow up
- USABlueBook, which was acquired by Home Depot, Inc. in December of 2020, has a new W9 population as HD Supply, Inc. d/b/a USABlueBook
- Advocate Drum is requesting help in obtaining the AOT support in their request for state funding. The Village of Chaumont is not affiliated with the Association of Towns (AOT)
- On April 16, 2021, New York enacted the Comprehensive Broadband Connectivity Act of 2021. The Public Service Commission will hold virtual public statement hearings on March 21, 2023 to solicit input and comments from communities regarding the required annual study on availability, reliability, and cost of high-speed broadband in NYS
- Clerk Fulton shared the March-April 2023 edition of the Lyme Light newsletter, and clarified that the “From the editor” note in her section was not written or indorsed by her before publishing

X. Mayor’s Report/Committee Reports

Trustee Nichols brought up stop sign and street signs on Washington Street and NYS Route 12E, which was determined is NYS responsibility by Greg Ingerson. Mayor Rust is unsure about this – a sign from a village street leading onto a state highway is DOT? Deputy Clerk Fitzgerald believes it is. Trustee Nichols will culminate a list and Deputy Clerk Fitzgerald will determine responsibility.

No Youth Commission report per Trustee Sosa. He did bring up a resident issue where a local teacher was injured when slipping on the street as the sidewalk of her neighbor was unkempt and impassable. Clerk Fulton said she’d made a call to the alleged violators requesting they shovel and maintain their sidewalk for future use.

Dawn Williams contacted Mayor Rust regarding a gourmet hot dog stand on Memorial Drive. Although the Village of Chaumont does not have vendor permits, it was suggested she could apply for this venture with SPR by the VPB. Greg Ingerson will make sure frozen, damaged waterline there is repaired and DPW will have park all cleaned up.

XI. Motion to Adjourn Meeting

Deputy Mayor Morrow made a motion to adjourn at 8:21 PM, which was seconded by Trustee Sosa.

Respectfully Submitted

Erin Fulton

Erin Fulton
Village Clerk/Treasurer