

The minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Village of Haverstraw Board of Trustees on Monday, October 21ST, 2013, beginning at 8:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL	Trustee Batista	- Present
	Trustee Bueno	- Absent
	Trustee Watson	- Present
	Trustee Dominguez	- Present
	Mayor Kohut	- Present

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor opened the meeting with the first Public Participation inviting the public to ask questions or make comments.

Noel Rappaport, 31 New Main Street: Mr. Rappaport informed the Board that he witnessed a car speeding past a school bus that was stopped at the "STOP" sign on New Main Street and Maple Avenue. He believes if there was a sign at the corner of Clove Avenue coming down the hill into the Village it might avoid people speeding in this area.

Larry Levine, 1414 Round Pointe Drive: Mr. Levine suggested installing lines from the new overpass exit to Maple Avenue and also installing a camera in that area to catch the drivers that are not stopping or are speeding through the overpass exit and down the road.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor believes that George White, DPW Supervisor, is trying to get the County to come in and pave lines wherever needed throughout the Village. Trustee Watson will check on that.

Larry Levine: Mr. Levine mentioned that he has seen more "speed humps" around the Village. He then stated that the other villages and towns highly promote all their events to make the public aware of their happenings in order to get a substantial amount of people to attend. He feels the Board should be promoting the Village in the same manner, stating that rarely, if ever, does he read about Haverstraw events in the paper. He believes that whatever it takes to get events or any items of interest publicized, the Village should be moving on it. He feels the Village needs to start promoting itself and mentioned there are several free publications that it could utilize to do so.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor responded that the Board has been talking with other villages and towns about self-promotion. He informed Mr. Levine that several years back there was a free publication issued strictly about the North Rockland area that was left at libraries, Village & Town Halls, etc., which gave the public a look into events, story lines, restaurant openings, etc. happening in the North Rockland area. He mentioned that the Board is checking if that person would be willing to start up that monthly publication again.

Mel Post, 1422 Round Pointe Drive: Mr. Post suggested that the Board look at the different websites of other towns and villages to see some of the ideas they are using to promote happenings in their municipalities. He then inquired if the Board will be doing anything about the homes that are in disrepair around the Village, specifically one located on New Main Street.

Terence Watson, Jr.: Trustee Watson responded that an application has been submitted to put siding on that particular house.

Clemente Ferrera, 4 Union Street: Mr. Ferrera inquired why the taxes are so high in the Village of Haverstraw.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor responded because the services the Village provides are greater than what most villages provide to their taxpayers, as well as the long standing issues being addressed that have caused the taxes to rise.

Clemente Ferrera: Mr. Ferrera feels this is one of the poorest villages in the County and cannot understand why the taxes are so high.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor responded that the Village has high expenses including continuing retirement expenses, services are provided that other villages do not provide, and Haverstraw does not have the same kind of tax base that other villages have, including big retail spaces, malls and other commercial properties that offset the taxes. The Village of Haverstraw has a very small retail base compared to others throughout the County.

Ramon Soto, 13 Broadway: Mr. Soto inquired about some missing items from the Village and wanted to know if an investigation was being performed.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor responded "it is a personnel matter that is being addressed and the Board cannot make any comments on the matter".

Ramon Soto: Mr. Soto inquired if anyone has been arrested.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor responded "no comment".

With no further input from the public, the Mayor continued with the meeting agenda announcing a Public Hearing to adopt a law concerning the residency requirement of the Deputy Clerk/Treasurer. He invited Counselor Jay Hood, Jr. to present the proposed law.

Jay Hood, Jr., Esq.: Counselor Hood explained that the new law would simply change the hiring practices for the position of Deputy Clerk/Treasurer from residing in the Town or Village to residing anywhere within Rockland County limits, which would simply broaden the base for candidates applying for this position.

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to open the Public Hearing.

RESOLUTION #186-2013

Motion by: Emily Dominguez

Seconded by: Terence Watson, Jr.

Motion Carries: All

Mayor Kohut: At this point, the Mayor invited the public to ask questions or make comments.

Mel Post: Mr. Post agrees with what the Board is doing, however, he feels there should be some mention in the law about giving priority to a town or village resident.

Ramon Soto: Mr. Soto requested the Mayor to explain the new law.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor explained that presently the Board can only choose someone from within the Town of Haverstraw for this position. The proposed change would allow the Village to choose an applicant who resides within the County of Rockland instead of just the Town of Haverstraw, opening the residency requirements for this position.

With no further comments from the public, Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to close the Public Hearing.

RESOLUTION #187-2013

Motion by: Emily Dominguez
Seconded by: Terence Watson, Jr.
Motion Carries: All

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to adopt the proposed amendment to the Residency Law as stated above.

RESOLUTION #188-2013

Motion by: Francisco Batista
Seconded by: Emily Dominguez
Motion Carries: All

Mayor Kohut:

REPORTS OF VILLAGE OFFICIALS

VILLAGE ATTORNEY, Jay Hood, Jr.: Counselor Hood had nothing further to report.

VILLAGE TREASURER, Judith Curcio: Ms. Curcio had nothing to report.

MAYOR'S REPORT, Mayor Kohut: The Mayor spoke about derelict properties in the Village, in particular, the one at 78 Sharp Street where the engineers have reported the building is unsafe. At this point, the Village needs to move forward with the demolition of the property for which the Board previously approved having an Asbestos Abatement Report prepared. The Board has received three bids for the demolition of the building from Scaffidi Paving and Drainage, Victor Zugibe Inc. and King Construction, with the low bid submitted by Scaffidi Paving and Drainage in the amount of \$16,500.00.

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to award the project to the low bidder Scaffidi Paving and Drainage as stated above.

RESOLUTION #189-2013

Motion by: Emily Dominguez
Seconded by: Francisco Batista
Motion Carries: All

In conjunction with that, the Mayor entertained a motion to make a budget adjustment to Line A8754 to increase appropriations in the amount of \$16,500.00 and decrease the Contingent Account A1990.4 in the same amount.

RESOLUTION #190-2013

Motion by: Emily Dominguez
Seconded by: Terence Watson, Jr.
Motion Carries: All

Mel Post: Mr. Post inquired who would eventually be responsible for payment of the demolition cost of the building.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor responded that the cost would be added to the property owner's village tax bill.

Arti Taub, 3304 Leeward Drive: Mr. Taub inquired if the budget will need to be adjusted when a new Deputy Clerk/Treasurer is hired.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor responded that it is a funded existing position and there would be no adjustment required.

The Mayor had nothing further to report.

Mayor Kohut:
REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES

FIRE & ORDINANCES – Trustee Rafael Bueno: Trustee Bueno submitted the following application for admittance to the Haverstraw Fire Department:

Kevin Leddy – resident - Relief Hose Co. #3 - Junior Firefighter

The application is complete and duly notarized.

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to accept Mr. Leddy as a Junior Firefighter with Relief Hose Co. #3.

RESOLUTION #191-2013

Motion by: Rafael Bueno
Seconded by: Emily Dominguez
Motion Carries: All

Trustee Bueno had nothing further to report.

PUBLIC WORKS, BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Trustee Terence Watson:
Trustee Watson had nothing to report.

YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES - Trustee Emily Dominguez: Trustee Dominguez gave the following report of activities at the Community Center for the period of September 26th through October 18th, 2013:

Reachout Counseling Services – The staff held counseling sessions for approximately 60 individuals and their family members for group and/or family canceling.

Homework Program – The Center continues with its Homework Program for approximately 60 children. Trustee Dominguez also mentioned that the Center is looking for volunteers to help with this program.

Late Night Fridays – The Center is continuing with this successful program.

Alternative Action Boys & Girls Groups – This program is also ongoing at the Center.

Trustee Dominguez had nothing further to report.

BUILDINGS & CODE ENFORCEMENT - Trustee Francisco Batista:
Trustee Batista read the following report submitted by the Building Inspector, Ruben Berrios, for the period of October 7th through October 18th, 2013:

Rental property inspections	-	1
Municipal searches	-	0
Miscellaneous inspections	-	99
Construction inspections	-	4
Complaints	-	6
Violations & tickets	-	11
Permits	-	4

Trustee Batista had nothing further to report.

Mayor Kohut:

OLD BUSINESS

None.

Mayor Kohut:

NEW BUSINESS

The Mayor announced that the upcoming Sunday would be the final Farmers Market event for the 2013 season. The Mayor also announced that the “Holidays in the Village” will be held on Saturday, December 7th with activities going on throughout the Village.

Emily Dominguez: Trustee Dominguez reported that it was a good season for this year’s market.

Mayor Kohut:

2nd PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Noel Rappaport: Mr. Rappaport thanked the DPW for their prompt response in cleaning up the area around the sign at the entrance to the Village.

Ramon Soto: Mr. Soto inquired about the condition of Emeline Park.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor responded that the park has not been renovated since the storm because the Village is still waiting for the Engineers to finish the spec’s to put the project out to bid for a start-up to begin over the winter.

Ramon Soto: Mr. Soto informed the Board that there is a lot of garbage on the streets of the Village over the weekends. He suggested suspending street cleaning one day during the week and have DPW clean the streets one day over the weekend.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor explained that the Union Contract regulates that the DPW staff work Monday's through Friday's from 6:30 AM to 3:00 PM. He then informed Mr. Soto that if they work any days other than what is specified, the Village has to pay for overtime hours. He also mentioned that there is a sweeper that goes out over the weekend to keep the garbage to a minimum.

Ramon Soto: Mr. Soto also mentioned that the sidewalks are also not being kept clean at any time.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor responded that the property or business owners are responsible for maintaining the sidewalks in front of their buildings 7 days a week.

Ramon Soto: Mr. Soto inquired then why the Village is not doing anything to make the property or business owners aware that they are responsible for maintaining the walkways in front of their homes or establishments.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor informed Mr. Soto that the Building Department sends out Violation Notices to those homeowners or business owners who violate the Village Maintenance Code for keeping their sidewalks clear of any debris.

Ramon Soto: Mr. Soto then addressed the Board with regard to taxi companies outside the Village doing business within the Village, mentioning that if one of our taxi's does business in Spring Valley they will be ticketed.

Jay Hood, Esq.: Counselor Hood informed Mr. Soto that any taxi company picking up someone in the Village is required to have a Village Taxi Permit. He explained that under the present Village Code, if a taxi cab is simply dropping off a passenger coming from another village or township that a Village Permit is not required. He went on to explain that he is currently working on an amendment to that law, which will require any taxi company from outside the Village to obtain a Village Taxi Permit even if just dropping off passengers within the Village limits. They will be required to pay the fees and get registered with the Village.

Emily Dominguez: Trustee Dominguez then added that the Board is hopeful that the taxi issue will be one of the items addressed by the new County Executive in January, for a county law to be put into effect for the taxi business.

Jay Hood, Esq.: Counselor Hood also stated that the taxi issue is something he has been speaking about as a County Legislator for years. He believes that whoever the new County Executive will be that he will move forward with establishing a Taxi Commission for the County and is hopeful that this can be moved on within the coming year.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor explained that currently the Village Code states that if the Taxi is entering the Village to pick up a passenger, he/she is required to have a Village Taxi Permit. If the Taxi is simply dropping off a passenger a Village Permit is not required at this time. However, Counselor Hood will be proposing legislation to the new County Executive and Legislators to change that law making it a County requirement for all taxi's to have a permit for both picking up and dropping off passengers in every village or township within the County.

Frank Abreau, Garnerville: Mr. Abreau spoke about the Mirant Tax Grievance wanting to know how the Village Board would make cutbacks to keep the school tax bill down.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor informed the gentleman that the Village has no control over the tax bills issued for the school district. At the current time no-one knows what the loss from Mirant will be so there is no way to calculate those taxes. If any municipality cannot absorb the loss, then cuts would have to be made. He feels that only a business coming in with large ratable would help offset the tax situation.

Frank Abreau: He inquired if the Board is in favor or against the desalination plant.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor responded that the Board is in favor of the plant.

Frank Abreau: Mr. Abreau inquired why the Board is in favor of the desalination plant and if this plant would be harmful to the people.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor does not believe this plant would be harmful to anyone and also explained that it would be a good tax ratable coming into the town to help offset the taxes.

Mayor Kohut: With no further business to be conducted by the Board, the Mayor entertained a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to that effect.

RESOLUTION #192-2013

Motion by: Emily Dominguez
Seconded by: Terence Watson, Jr.
Motion Carries: All

Respectfully submitted by,

Beverly A. Swift
Senior Steno Clerk