

The minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Village of Haverstraw Board of Trustees on Monday, July 20, 2020, beginning at 7:00 PM.

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL	Trustee Bueno	- Present
	Trustee Carlevaro	- Present
	Trustee Dominguez	- Present
	Trustee Santana	- Present
	Mayor Kohut	- Present

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor opened the meeting with the first Public Participation inviting anyone who had questions or comments to come to the front of the room, state their name and address for the record and proceed with their comments or questions.

William Foley, 8 Harding Ave: Mr. Foley spoke to the Board regarding the alleyway exit that has been cleared near his home and his desire to have the access remain open from Hoover through Coolidge. He expressed his thoughts regarding emergency vehicles not being able to get through, DPW snow removal trucks not being able to get through and people to have access to their driveways.

Mayor Kohut: The Mayor responded with the explanation of how it was opened up after being closed for 50+ years and would be for only emergency and DPW vehicles. The Mayor expressed his opinion that it would not be safe to keep the access open on the Hoover Ave side for safety reasons and that perhaps the rest of the Board would like to go and take a look at it to make their own determinations.

William Foley: Mr. Foley continued his disagreement with the Mayor that it was not a safety hazard at Hoover, that he thought it didn't make any sense and "that clearly you don't live here because anyone who accesses their driveway through there would agree with me."

Trustee Gil Carlevaro: Trustee Carlevaro mentioned to Mr. Foley that we had several people call in and give their opinion on the alleyway access.

Clerk/Treasurer Judith Curcio: Judy Curcio read the following information into the record as earlier callers were not comfortable going to an open meeting during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Ana Truly of 92 Gurnee: Ms. Truly called in and expressed that she "does not want the alley open to the public. It will be OK for emergency vehicles but I (she) has already had a problem because she is on the end." Her car was sideswiped because of the new traffic going through that exit.
- Mary Kulys of 94 Gurnee: Ms. Kulys called in and was adamant that she does not want the alleyway opened up. She has lived there since 1986.

William Foley: Mr. Foley asked if they access their driveways from the alleyway.

Ms. Curcio responded that she was not aware of how they access their driveways.

William Foley: Mr. Foley expressed his opinion that since they didn't come to the meeting in person their opinions weren't quite valid.

Mayor Kohut responded that anyone from the public had the right to express their thoughts to the Board by calling in and having their comments read into the record.

William Foley: Mr. Foley continued with his argument that this wasn't convenient for emergency vehicles suggesting that the Board doesn't think that emergency vehicle access is that important.

Mayor Kohut responded that he would prefer that Mr. Foley not put words into their mouths, that they, particularly him because he's a fireman, fully understand the needs of the emergency services that would need access. He explained to Mr. Foley that if, for whatever reason, they were not able to get into the alleyway there were other means of gaining access for the purposes of fighting fires or other emergencies. He explained that he was not dismissing Mr. Foley's comments and the next course of action would be for the rest of the Board to take a look at it and determine the final outcome.

Trustee Bueno & Deputy Mayor Dominguez expressed their commitment to taking a look at the alleyway.

William Foley: Questioned whether the alleyway would remain closed at this time.

Mayor Kohut: Yes.

Dinorah Rijo, 25 Broad St: Ms. Rijo explained that she had gotten in touch with the Mayor regarding a 4<sup>th</sup> of July issue and she wanted to let Mayor Kohut know that his intervention helped but didn't solve the problem completely. She was thankful for his help however she wondered if next year they couldn't get a police presence in their neighborhood for the night of fireworks.

Mayor Kohut thanked her for coming in, that he understands her concerns and assured her he would request the police presence next year.

Marc Baptiste, State St.: Residents of State Street were wondering when their street would be paved.

Mayor Kohut responded that the Board was planning to pass a resolution this night to authorize the milling and paving of State St. paving and then it would be done as soon as the contractor could get it scheduled. Mayor Kohut also addressed Mr. Baptiste about a call received from Sandra Sneid regarding a speed bump on State St.

Marc Baptiste: Explained that there are residents on the street that are literally flying up the street without any regard for anyone who might be out there, including children.

Mayor Kohut described the difficulties with a speed hump on State Street because of its width and the possibilities of putting a speed hump closer to the bottom near Hillside.

Jeff unintelligible, Walkill Journal and Truth Radio: The reporter addressed the Mayor and Board thanking the Mayor for a previous conversation they had and explaining that he was doing a story on the Marcus Garvey black liberation movement and the Republic of Africa/Black Panther flag that is flying in your African American Memorial Park. Our first question is; it's a public park?

Mayor Kohut: Yes

Jeff ??/Reporter: Why is it locked and nobody has access?

Mayor Kohut: Explained that the park is open at limited times, usually in the morning and that the residents in that neighborhood keep an eye on the park.

Reporter: What our readers want to know is, for example, with all the problems going on today, if someone of southern heritage lived in the Village and wanted to fly the Battle flag of Northern Virginia, which is different from the Confederate flag, would that be allowed and would you have a park for a European American Memorial or a Native American Memorial? According to our research Haverstraw was peopled by Native Indians. Is this not a racial or racist thing going on because as I drove around I noticed that this flag was flying interspersed with the American flag? It's our understanding, and based on New York law, you can't fly a foreign flag or another flag at equal height of the American flag and isn't this sending the wrong message by the Village?

Mayor Kohut: Mayor Kohut explained that he and the Board do not think it's a problem and that they were recognizing people who had made a contribution in our community. If there were a large population of Native Americans living in the Village and they wanted to create a park in the Village that was of significance to them the Village the Board would be happy to accommodate them.

Jeff/Reporter: If someone wanted to fly a symbol of their southern heritage or Italian heritage or Irish, although there are no signs in the Village in Gaelic but he speaks English because it's the United States and that's the common language, and they got a permit to do so, would that be allowed? Could they petition the Board for a Caucasian American or European American symbol? Our story is because there seems to be a one-sidedness. That flag, the Republic of New Africa and the Black Panthers, were violent, radical gangs that killed police officers so wouldn't flying that flag represent or symbolize hatred and attacks against police officers.

Jeff/Reporter: Continued with comments about Marcus Garvey being a racist etc. and that the Black Lives Matter people are avowed Marxist trained so if people see the flag, the symbol of the flag represents those things and, again, there seems to be a one-sidedness to this. I've tried to get comments regarding this from Virginia Norfleet but she couldn't be reached. Wouldn't there be a better flag to fly to represent African heritage rather than one that is a symbol of a radical violent group?

Mayor Kohut stated that this was the only flag he has seen that represents the African American movement today.

Jeff/Reporter: My other comment is that I saw when coming into the Village a sign exclusively in Spanish about the Census. Do you have another Census sign that is exclusively in English or French or Chinese?

Mayor Kohut responded that No, the Village doesn't have the signs he spoke of. The Village is two-thirds Hispanic and, for a variety of reasons, they are a difficult population to get participation in the Census. That banner is from a non-profit group in the Village seeking to encourage Census participation by our Spanish community.

Jeff/Reporter: Questioned that the banner was not from the Village municipality. Also questioned that its meaning is that Hispanic people can't speak English.

Mayor Kohut responded that it was not created by the Village and that it being in Spanish does not in any way mean that Hispanic people can't speak English. There are people that have difficulty with English and they will understand the message better in their native language.

Jeff/Reporter: Are you a Sanctuary Town?

Mayor Kohut: No

Jeff/Reporter: Thanked the Mayor and Board and provided information on how to tune in to his programming.

With no further comments from the public Mayor Kohut continued with the evening's Agenda.

The first item of business on the Agenda, a Public Hearing for a proposed new law which would provide picture Identification Cards to Village residents. Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to open the Public Hearing regarding the ID Law which adds to Section 146 of the Village Code.

RESOLUTION # 130 - 2020

Motion by: Emily Dominguez

Seconded by: Rafael Bueno Sr.

Motion Carries: All

Village Attorney Jay Hood presented the details of the municipal ID Law stating that this would enable the Village Clerk to issue a picture ID to any residents who successfully completed an application and provided the necessary proof of identity and residency within the Village of Haverstraw. The Board had heard from a group of residents several months ago about people having difficulty with things like picking their children up at school without proper ID cards and the Board felt it was a good idea to move forward with this. The issued ID cards would be valid for a period of 4 years and the cost would be \$10 per adult and \$5 per child under 18 years of age.

The Mayor stated that anyone who would like to make a comment could please step to the front of the room and give their name and address.

With no questions or comments from the floor, Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to close the Public Hearing.

RESOLUTION # 131 - 2020

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

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to approve the new local law titled Municipal Identification Program.

RESOLUTION # 132 - 2020

Motion by: Emily Dominguez  
Seconded by: Gil Carlevaro  
Motion Carries: All

Mayor Kohut:

**REPORTS OF VILLAGE OFFICIALS**

**VILLAGE ATTORNEY, Jay Hood, Jr.:** Counselor Hood reported that he was presenting a Resolution to the Board for approval authorizing Joule, as the Village's designated Program Administrator of the Community Choice Aggregation Program, to prepare and issue a Supply RFP for the purpose of choosing and electricity supplier for the program.

Mayor Kohut explained the Community Choice Aggregation Program and its benefit to the community. The electricity program is an "opt-out" program where all residents will automatically be participants with the newly chosen electricity supplier. The Village is also partnering with Joule for a Community Solar Program which would be set up as an "opt-in" program and would be basically buying in to a solar farm.

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to authorize Joule to prepare and issue a Supply RFP.

RESOLUTION # 133 - 2020

Motion by: Emily Dominguez  
Seconded by: Joel Santana  
Motion Carries: All

Mayor Kohut spoke further about opting in to the Community Solar Program and that part of the program is that Joule would be donating \$50 per customer to COVID-19 relief and the Village chose St. Peter's and St. Mary's Food Pantry to be the recipient of the donations. They've been providing food to our community well before the pandemic and especially so during the pandemic.

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to partner with Joule for the Community Solar Program.

RESOLUTION # 134 - 2020

Motion by: Emily Dominguez  
Seconded by: Joel Santana  
Motion Carries: All

Village Attorney Jay Hood: Counselor Hood reported further that a settlement had been reached on a Tax Certiorari with Harbors Club

Condominium for the years 2015 – 2018. The refund for the 4 years is \$14,599.18.

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to authorize the Village Attorney to sign the Tax certiorari with Harbors Club Condominium with a refund due of \$14,599.18.

**RESOLUTION # 135 - 2020**

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

Counselor Hood had nothing further to report.

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

**MAYOR'S REPORT, Mayor Kohut:** The Mayor reported that the Board had a request from Bricktown Gospel Fellowship to hold outdoor services in the pocket park on Rockland and Main during the weekends in August. The Board discussed it and they feel that Bricktown Gospel Fellowship can pick a Saturday and a Sunday to hold this service rather than every weekend.

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to that effect.

**RESOLUTION # 136 - 2020**

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

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to approve the contract with EFax for \$150 annually. This has become necessary because of the changes in Court procedures.

**RESOLUTION # 137 - 2020**

Motion by: Emily Dominguez  
Seconded by: Gil Carlevaro  
Motion Carries: All

Clerk/Treasurer Judith Curcio: Ms. Curcio stated that due to the additional work required by the change in Court procedures a part time clerical person was needed in Village Hall. She was proposing to use an existing employee for this purpose, Gisbeth Ramos, who is currently working part time in YFS. If approved Gisbeth Ramos would work part time in Youth & Family Services and part time in Village Hall, at a rate of \$14 per hour

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to approve the hiring of Gisbeth Ramos as PT Office Worker at a salary of \$14 per hour.

**RESOLUTION # 138 - 2020**

Motion by: Emily Dominguez  
Seconded by: Joel Santana  
Motion Carries: All

Mayor Kohut further explained the changes that are happening in the Justice Court; Virtual Court would take place when possible, the courtroom

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would operate at 25% capacity and people coming in to court would be minimized as much as possible. To accomplish that, a "Plea by Mail" method was being instituted so people won't have to come in to speak to the prosecutor, plead not-guilty etc. This will allow people to not deal with their issues by coming in but by mail and that, naturally, created more paperwork.

Mayor Kohut: We've had a request from the residents of Clove Ave for a speed hump. 17 residents signed the request. Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to approve the speed hump.

RESOLUTION # 139 - 2020

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

Mayor Kohut announced that there would be a press conference on July 30<sup>th</sup> regarding the National Fitness Court Project. This will be a 37' by 37' fitness court that we will be putting near the community center on land we purchase from the school district. It's an all-season fitness center, the National Fitness Campaign provides the court and we've received commitments from Senator Skoufis and Assemblyman Zebrowski for \$100,000 to be used towards the fitness court. We've also received a commitment from the Office of Community Development for \$30,000. In addition, we will have to come up with about \$75,000 to finalize the project. We'll be kicking off the fundraising campaign at the press conference on the 30<sup>th</sup>.

Mayor Kohut continued with explaining that part of making this happen would require a resolution to reprogram prior years' CDBG money originally intended for a sign project and redirect it to the National Fitness Court Project. The amount to be redirected is just short of \$30,000.

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to redirect the CDBG sign project money.

RESOLUTION # 140 - 2020

Motion by: Emily Dominguez  
Seconded by: Joel Santana  
Motion Carries: All

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to schedule a Public Hearing for the Village Comprehensive Plan for August 17, 2020 at 7:05 pm.

RESOLUTION # 141 - 2020

Motion by: Emily Dominguez  
Seconded by: Joel Santana  
Motion Carries: All

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to appoint Jinet Rimegio permanently to the position of Receptionist Typist Spanish Speaking in the Youth & Family Services department.

RESOLUTION # 142 - 2020

Motion by: Gil Carlevaro  
Seconded by: Emily Dominguez  
Motion Carries: All

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to hire multiple youth for the summer program who come to us through the Youth Bureau and whose salaries will be reimbursed to the Village.

**RESOLUTION # 143 - 2020**

Motion by: Emily Dominguez  
Seconded by: Gil Carlevaro  
Motion Carries: All

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to hire Randy Taylor to the position of Maintenance Mechanic in our DPW, at a rate of \$31 per hour.

**RESOLUTION # 144 - 2020**

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

Mayor Kohut entertained a motion to authorize him to sign a contract with All County Asphalt for the milling and paving of State Street in the amount of \$27,000.

**RESOLUTION # 145 - 2020**

Motion by: Emily Dominguez  
Seconded by: Joel Santana  
Motion Carries: All

The Mayor had nothing further to report.

**Mayor Kohut:**

**REPORTS OF STANDING COMMITTEES**

**FIRE & ORDINANCES** – Trustee Rafael Bueno: Trustee Bueno made a motion to accept the application for a new member to Relief Hose #3, Gil Carlevaro. The application is in order and Trustee Bueno recommends accepting the member.

**RESOLUTION # 146 - 2020**

Motion by: Rafael Bueno Sr.  
Seconded by: Emily Dominguez  
Motion Carries: All  
Gil Carlevaro abstains

Trustee Bueno continued with the following report of fire activity for the month of June 2020 submitted by Fire Chief Bart Gordon:

Total Alarms	-	23
General Alarms	-	16
Special Calls	-	5
Mutual Aid Calls	-	2
Structure Fire	-	3
Electrical Fires	-	2
Vehicle Fire	-	1
Brush Fires	-	2
Gas Alarm	-	1
Trash Fire	-	1

Boat Calls	-	1
Co Alarm	-	1
False Alarms	-	8

Total Manpower Responding - 487 Members

Trustee Bueno had nothing further to report.

**PUBLIC WORKS, BUILDINGS & GROUNDS – Deputy Mayor Dominguez**

Deputy Mayor Dominguez read following report submitted by Robert Drexler, Jr., Superintendent of Public Works:

Landscaping:

- Cut Greenway Trail
- Took down three trees Located in The Coolidge St. Alley
- Trimmed Trees throughout The Village.

Other:

- Took Down The Covid-19 Testing Site.
- Put Signs Up At The Parks- “Enter At Your Own Risk.”
- All Village Playgrounds Are Now Open.
- Put Up Flags and Banners for Juneteenth.
- Put Banner up for the Census.
- Set up for Juneteenth – In front of Village Hall.
- Replaced Guardrail on Broadway by Hornicks.
- Sewer Blockage at 2 Gurnee Court- Resolved.
- Set Up and Cleaned up for the Dancing under the Stars Event.
- Put up meters In front of Village Hall and painted parking spots.
- Put Stop Sign UP At Second St. & South St.
- Took Down Sterling Bank Sign at “The Gateway To The Village.”
- Sent truck to Boulder Stadium to pick up Food for The Community Center Food Pantry.
- Replaced Burnt Motor- At Lopez Field in The Blower Room.
- Cleared/ Cleaned Coolidge St. Alley and put millings down.
- Put up barricades up for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Fireworks throughout the Village.
- Cleaned Up after the 4<sup>th</sup> of July festivities.

Deputy Mayor Dominguez continued with a request that the Board authorizes the replacement of “dump” bodies on Trucks # 3 & 4. These are used as plow trucks in the winter and dump trucks in the warmer weather and they’re in need of work. Estimates have been received from Rockland Truck Equipment for stainless steel bodies on Truck # 3 at \$13,590 and Truck # 4 at \$13,990. To fully replace these trucks would cost us a minimum of \$50,000 each.

Mayor Kohut entertained the motion to approve the replacement of the “dump” bodies on Trucks # 3 & # 4 at a cost of \$27,580.00

**RESOLUTION # 147 - 2020**

Motion by: Emily Dominguez  
 Seconded by: Gil Carlevaro  
 Motion Carries: All

Deputy Mayor Dominguez notified the Board that the Manny Lopez ball field has opened with Phase 4 of the COVID-19 reopening. There will be several

teams playing on the field this season and all players will be required to sign a COVID waiver in order to use the field.

Deputy Mayor Dominguez had nothing further to report.

**YOUTH & FAMILY SERVICES - Trustee Gil Carlevaro:** Trustee Carlevaro spoke about the activities going on at the Youth and Family Services Center, particularly that they have been giving out food to people in our community for the past several months. During the months of May & June a total of over 1800 boxes of fresh food and produce were distributed to needy families. Also, after much discussion & debate it was decided that the Center would host a summer program for 50 youths which they felt was a good number of people to test out social distancing and other COVID prevention regulations and would consist of programs like Arts & Crafts, non-contact sports and other positive reinforcement programs for our youth. Youth between ages 8 and 15 are participating in the program.

Trustee Carlevaro had nothing further to report.

**BUILDINGS & CODE ENFORCEMENT – Trustee Joel Santana:** Trustee Santana read the following report submitted by the Building Inspector, Ruben Berrios, for the period June 29<sup>th</sup> through July 17, 2020:

Rental registrations	-	0
Miscellaneous inspections	-	67
Complaints	-	52
Municipal searches	-	0
Construction inspections	-	19
Violations/Tickets	-	26
Building Permits & C.O.'s	-	6

Fines collected at court - \$ 0

Trustee Santana had nothing further to report.

Mayor Kohut:

**OLD BUSINESS**

None.

Mayor Kohut:

**NEW BUSINESS**

None.

Mayor Kohut remarked about the recent Drive & Dine event that the Village hosted down at the ferry landing. It was very successful and we'll be scheduling another one later in August with Billy and the Showmen Band.

Mayor Kohut:

**2<sup>nd</sup> PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Ray Mosquea, 84 Picariello Dr: Mr. Mosques made remarks on the ease of registration for the Community Choice Aggregation Program.

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

RESOLUTION # 148 - 2020

Motion by: Emily Dominguez  
Seconded by: Gil Carlevaro  
Motion Carries: All

Respectfully submitted by,  
Judith Curcio, Clerk/Treasurer