



VILLAGE OF NORTH SYRACUSE

Regular Board Meeting

Tuesday, December 22nd, 2015 @ 4:30 PM

North Syracuse Community Center

700 South Bay Road, North Syracuse, NY 13212

The Village of North Syracuse Regular Board Meeting began at 4:30 PM with Mayor Gary Butterfield inviting everyone present to join him in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Mayor Gary Butterfield, Deputy Mayor Fred Ferguson, Trustee Diane Browning, Trustee Pat Gustafson, and Trustee Linnertz.

Personnel Present: Village Clerk-Treasurer Dianne Kufel, DPW Superintendent Gary Wilmer, Parks Director Teresa Roth, Codes Enforcement Officer Pam DiCarlo-Schermerhorn, Police Chief Michael Crowell, Village Attorney Scott Chatfield, Fire Chief Tim Ellis, Assistant Chief of Fire Bob Liberatore, and Village Engineer Amy Franco.

RESOLUTION # 208-15

APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Deputy Mayor Ferguson made a motion to approve the minutes from the December 10th, 2015 Board Meeting. The motion was seconded by Trustee Browning. The motion was approved with Deputy Mayor Ferguson, Trustee Browning, Trustee Linnertz, and Trustee Gustafson, all voting in favor of the same.

RESOLUTION # 209-15

GENERAL FUND ABSTRACT APPROVAL

Trustee Browning made a motion to approve the General Fund Abstract # 15 in the amount of \$147,988.47 covering Voucher # 802 to Voucher # 855. The motion was seconded by Deputy Mayor Ferguson. The motion was approved with Deputy Mayor Ferguson, Trustee Browning, Trustee Linnertz, and Trustee Gustafson, all voting in favor of the same.

RESOLUTION # 210-15

SEWER FUND ABSTRACT APPROVAL

Trustee Gustafson made a motion to approve the General Fund Abstract # 15 in the amount of \$71.00 covering Voucher # 15. The motion was seconded by Deputy Mayor Ferguson. The motion was approved with Deputy Mayor Ferguson, Trustee Browning, Trustee Linnertz, and Trustee Gustafson, all voting in favor of the same.



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RESOLUTION # 211-15

BUDGET TRANSFER

Deputy Mayor Ferguson made a motion to transfer \$2,960 from A1990.4 Contingency Account to A5110.29 DPW Lift Gate. The arose from an insurance claim on 2/2/15. The motion was seconded by Trustee Gustafson. The motion was approved with Deputy Mayor Ferguson, Trustee Browning, Trustee Linnertz, and Trustee Gustafson, all voting in favor of the same.

RESOLUTION # 212-15

BUDGET TRANSFER

We received the insurance money for the Toolcat Insurance Claim. Trustee Linnertz made a motion to transfer \$5,881.82 from A2680 Insurance Recoveries to A5110.475 DPW Equipment Maintenance to repair the item. The motion was seconded by Deputy Mayor Ferguson. The motion was approved with Deputy Mayor Ferguson, Trustee Browning, Trustee Linnertz, and Trustee Gustafson, all voting in favor of the same.

CITIZENS' VOICE: Rick Wahl of 121 Watson Road expressed concern that the property located on 122 ½ Watson Road is assessed at a lower value than it is worth and thus not yielding the proper tax amount to the Village. He continued that he believes that the aforementioned property has been remodeled and asked if Building Permits were pulled. Code Enforcement Officer DiCarlo-Schermerhorn asked Mr. Wahl to call her office tomorrow and she will be able to confirm if a Building Permit was issued. She noted that the requirement for a Building Permit depends on what the work is for; a Building Permit is required for structural work. However, if the project does not include electrical, plumbing, or structural work; such as painting or carpeting, then a permit is not required. Mr. Wahl said he believes they modified the roof. Code Enforcement Officer DiCarlo-Schermerhorn replied she believes there has been a Building Permit issued for the roof. Mr. Wahl asked why the final inspection information was not forwarded to the Town of Cicero so that they in turn mark that location as an occupied residence. Code Enforcement Officer DiCarlo-Schermerhorn said that taxes are collected regardless of occupancy status; the cost of taxes does not decrease if the property is not occupied. Mayor Butterfield deferred the continuation of this discussion to tomorrow during business hours. Village Attorney Chatfield concluded the discussion by stating that the Village does not assess the properties. He continued that the Town Assessor determines the assessment and it is updated once annually on March 31st. Thus, if the character of a property is changed after March, the assessed value will not change until the following March. Mr. Wahl continued that he believes it should have been reassessed before March of 2015. Village Attorney Chatfield redirected Mr. Wahl to contact the Assessor for the Town of Cicero as the Village has no control over the determination of the assessed value. Mr. Wahl said he is bringing it to our attention because he is concerned the Village of not getting the fair share of the taxes for the revenues. Mayor Butterfield closed the discussion.



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OLD BUSINESS:

DISCUSSION OF THE RULES AND REGULATIONS FOR THE NORTH SYRACUSE FIRE DEPARTMENT

The Board received the revised regulations that reflect several changes to the eligibility section. Trustee Browning asked to modify the sections to be non-gender specific as there are female members. Deputy Mayor Ferguson noted about 15 grammatical errors. Trustee Linnertz made a motion to table this matter until next meeting so that the grammatical and gender changes are made. The motion was seconded by Deputy Mayor Ferguson. The motion was approved with Deputy Mayor Ferguson, Trustee Browning, Trustee Gustafson, and Trustee Linnertz all voting in favor of the same.

**DISCUSSION OF THE "AGREED UPON PROCEDURES"
FOR THE NORTH SYRACUSE VOLUNTEER FIRE ASSOCIATION**

The Village's new auditors suggested an audit of the Fire Department which would include the North Syracuse Volunteer Fire Association. This is another layer of insurance to the towns that we provide fire protection to. This is just reassuring transparency of checks and balances of the monies passed through the Village over to the Fire Association. During the last Board Meeting, it was suggested to the Mayor to converse with Scott Gratien, President of North Syracuse Fire Association. Mayor Butterfield reported that Mr. Gratien informed him that his organization is indeed audited by an accountant. Mayor Butterfield requested to review their audit rather than expend for our auditors to review them. It has been agreed that in January, Clerk-Treasurer Kufel, Mayor Butterfield, Village Attorney Chatfield, and NSVFA Board Member Pat Brennan, will review the audit and copy the Village Board. Trustee Linnertz asked if we will be auditing the CanTeen going forward. The Village contributes \$5,000 to the Youth Bureau and the Parks Director Roth is on their Committee and the organization is audited regularly. Trustee Linnertz questioned further noting we do not audit National Grid or contractors we pay. Mayor Butterfield replied that there are protections in that regard such as lien releases. He continued that the Towns have inquired about the monies that pass through the Village and as a Mayor he should be able to explain the procedures and policies that are in place for the Firemen's Association. He affirmed that it is good business practice as well as protection for the Firemen's Association. Trustee Linnertz said we do not question the Masons about their finances. Trustee Browning said we do not fund the Masons. Trustee Linnertz continued that he does not understand the reason to know where the monies are disbursed past the Fire Council which is a subsection of the Village. He said that after the monies leave the Fire Council, the contract allows the Firemen's Association 15%. Mayor Butterfield noted that previously the Board did not know that the Firemen's Association had regular audits. Although, if there were no audits performed and if it was found (for example) that the Treasurer was absconding with some monies, then it falls back on the Village because we are the shepherds. Trustee Linnertz retorted that the Firemen's Association is essentially a private social club. Deputy Mayor Ferguson interjected that it is publicly funded. Trustee



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Linnertz concluded that this is a private social club that through a contract receives monies from a government, and it should not be our business how they use the contractual funds received from us. Trustee Browning affirmed that we are the ones that must answer to the taxpayers about where their taxes are distributed. Village Attorney Chatfield explained the consensus was that the Board does not wish to commit any additional taxpayer's revenues to duplicate the audit efforts that were already being performed by the Firemen's Association. Mayor Butterfield said he is glad that the Firemen's Association has audits and he doesn't see the harm in the Village Board reviewing them. The audits can be made available to us and the public because of their 501(c) (3) status.

DISCUSS PERCENTAGE OF ALLOWABLE ASPHALT/STONE DRIVEWAY ON A RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY

The Village Board has been discussing this for some time. Mayor Butterfield said that the concern stems from some people parking commercial vehicles or multitude of vehicles in front of their property. It has been determined that our Code does not have adequate restrictions or repercussions regarding that. We then reviewed the Code of neighboring municipalities that have a better language in their Code to prohibit the front yard of residential properties from becoming a parking lot as well as disallowing commercial vehicles stored in the front of residential properties. Our Planning Commission and the Onondaga County Planning Board would need to review a proposal for a recommendation. Village Attorney Chatfield said that either he or the Planning Commission would need to draft a proposal for the Board to review and make a determination if the proposal is worthy of further pursuit. If so, then we get in the formal referral process which includes referring to the Planning Commission, Onondaga County Planning Agency, schedule a Public Hearing, receive the public input, and then finally the Board would make the final determination of how (if at all) to amend the Code. He continued that he has conferred with Code Enforcement Officer DiCarlo-Schermerhorn about the Village of Baldwinsville Code that allows seasonal recreational vehicles forward of the property during the season only, then it has to be moved to the back of the house. Village Attorney Chatfield concluded that the process can take 60 days from start to finish.

ATTORNEY REPORT: Village Attorney Chatfield reported that the previously mentioned notice of claim of a Law Firm in Buffalo stemming from an accident that took place on Sweet Road and Pratts Falls Road in the Town of Pompey has withdrawn their claim from the Village.

ENGINEER REPORT: Village Engineer Franco said they had the final walkthrough with EZ Paving and all items have been addressed that were on the punch list. The warranty period is now in effect until summer 2016. She noted a walk down Chestnut Street with Mayor Butterfield and DPW Superintendent Wilmer to discern the precise location where we wanted the sidewalk located from Heritage Park to the Village line along Chestnut Street; we are going to keep it on the Park side with one pole/wire to be relocated. She spoke to National Grid regarding the changes and it was accepted. DPW Superintendent Gary Wilmer said that three trees need to be removed along the sidewalk.



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DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

Police Department: No report

Fire Department: Fire Chief Ellis noted that recruitment efforts continue as they are in need of volunteers. There have been about 800 alarms this year. He thanked his volunteers and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Public Works Department: He thanked the Board for their consideration of the part-time hires. Trustee Gustafson inquired about the tree removal cost; if it will come from the grant or in-kind services. DPW Superintendent Wilmer said is up to the Board. Mayor Butterfield added that there are funds in the Tree Budget.

Parks & Recreation Department: Parks Director Roth said the Lonergan Project continues to move forward. The electronic sign will be up in the next few weeks. We are accepting registrations for Driver's Safety Course that will take place on January 12th and 13th.

Codes Department: Code Enforcement Officer DiCarlo-Schermerhorn reported that Store America has begun construction.

Clerk-Treasurer: Clerk-Treasurer Kufel wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

DEPUTY MAYOR/TRUSTEES REPORT:

Trustee Linnertz: Recalled that he enjoyed the Holiday Parade and wished everyone a Merry Christmas.

Trustee Gustafson: Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Trustee Browning: Wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Deputy Mayor Fergerson: Reminded everyone that the next Public Safety Committee meeting will take place on March 7th at 4:00 PM at the North Syracuse Community Center. He noted that we have responded to letters received regarding the Emergency Operations Plan. We are looking to formally pass the plan in January. He wished everyone a Merry Christmas.



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MAYOR'S REPORT:

Mayor Butterfield said the Village will hold a holiday party for employees sometime in January.

Mayor Butterfield made a motion to adjourn at 5:02 PM. The motion was seconded by Trustee Browning. The motion was approved with Deputy Mayor Ferguson, Trustee Browning, Trustee Linnertz, and Trustee Gustafson, all voting in favor of the same.

Respectfully submitted,

Dianne M. Kufel
Village Clerk/Treasurer