

Board of Trustees Meeting  
January 8, 2024; 7pm

MINUTES

**Call to Order (Regular Meeting):** 7:00pm by Mayor J. Howe.

**Present:** Mayor J. Howe; Trustees K. Schassler, P. Minahan, R. O'Mara-Garcia; Deputy Clerk S. Davis, Jr.; Attorney for the Village K. Dow; Treasurer P. DeLong; Fire Chief P. Rideout; Resident S. Piazza; Code Enforcement/ Building Inspector E. Reis; Police Sgt J. Myers. **Not Present:** Clerk D. Kelleher; Trustee M. Spock; DPW Foremen P. Genovese; Police Chief Alessi.

**First Public Comment (limited to 15 minutes):** Resident S. Piazza addressed the Board about two topics. First, regarding a car accident which occurred on Austerlitz Street this morning, and the lack of a sidewalk on Austerlitz Street. Traffic appears to travel too fast on the street and he is concerned about safety for residents walking in the road. He reminded the Board that he has brought this up in the past and the Board responded that they were looking into the scope and expense. Second, regarding the Village Clock Tower. A recent article written by Ralph Gardener has brought more attention to the clock tower and created a lot of "buzz" about it. As a result he spoke with a fellow/sculptor from Art Omi who also expressed interest and offered to donate money to get clock restored. Piazza informed the Board that he accepted an invitation by Matt Meyers (Lion's Club) to speak about the clock at an event at Jackson's. "They" (Lion's Club) also want to donate money for the clock tower to be restored. Piazza suggested a way to get more of the community involved might be to bake/sell cookies shaped in a silhouette of the clock, maybe 4 for \$1.00, so more residents can feel involved in the cause.

Departments and Committees Reports:

- Building Department: Building Inspector, Erin Reis. Presented by E. Reis. Revenues have increased and fees are now more in line with other municipalities.
- Police Department: Acting Chief J. Alessi; Police Commissioner Pete Minahan. Presented by Sgt Myers.
- Fire Department: Chief P. Rideout; Fire Commissioner Melony Spock. Presented by Chief Rideout.
- DPW: Foreman P. Genovese; Wastewater/Water Commissioner Ralph O'Mara-Garcia; Streets & Snow Removal Commissioner Karyn Schassler. Mayor Howe indicated that Phil is not in attendance, advised that DPW has been busy with storm cleanup. A few sidewalks need attention. NYSEG is now aware that they are responsible to clean their area after storm.

**Approve Minutes of December 11, 2023.** *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by P. Minahan. All approved.*

**Approve the December 2023 Budget to Actuals.** *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by R. O'Mara-Garcia. All approved.*

### NEW BUSINESS:

**Resolution 1 of 2024**- To authorize the Clerk to solicit bids for **Waste/Recycling** removal for a 2-year contract period, **July 1, 2024** through **June 30, 2026**. *So moved by P. Minahan, seconded by R. O'Mara-Garcia. Approved by all.*

**Resolution 2 of 2024** – To establish a *specific* Capital Improvement Reserve Fund to be known as the “Village of Chatham Hudson & Houseman Avenues Water Main Reserve Fund”. (for phase 3 of the **Hudson Ave waterline** replacement project, from Church Street to Cemetery Hill, and for the replacement of the waterline **From 3<sup>rd</sup> Street to the Dead-End on Houseman Avenue**).  
...Subject to Permissive Referendum at the front end and notice needs to be published. *So moved by P. Minahan, seconded by K. Schassler. Approved by all.*

**Resolution 3 of 2024** – To introduce Proposed **Local Law 1 of 2024** “A Local Law Providing Real Property Tax Exemptions for Volunteer Firefighters and Ambulance Workers” Need to set public hearing for next month. (February 12, 2024 2024 beginning 6:45 pm at Tracy Memorial Hall). *So moved by R. O'Mara-Garcia, seconded by K. Schassler. Approved by all.*

**Resolution 4 of 2024** – To introduce Proposed **Local Law 2 of 2024** “A Local Law Amending the Income Levels of Tax Exemption for Persons with Disabilities and Limited Income”. Need to set public hearing for next month. (February 12, 2024 2024 beginning 6:55 pm at Tracy Memorial Hall). *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by P. Minahan. Per Mayor Howe, this is to bring us in line with the Towns of Ghent and Chatham as they do our assessments. Approved by all.*

**Resolution 5 of 2024** - To authorize the Village to submit a grant application to the **Volunteer Fire Infrastructure & Response Equipment (V-FIRE) Grant Program** for up to **\$1M to be used for potential construction and/or renovation of the Chatham Fire Station**. (Application deadline April 30, 2024). *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by R. O'Mara-Garcia. Per Mayor Howe, the Governor came out in December \$25M in funding, \$5M is for equipment, \$20M is for renovation and construction (across the state). Engineering group LaBella worked on a building study for the Village within the past few years and the 52-year old fire department building is in definite need of improvement. Not hugely optimistic that we will be awarded, but we need to at least make an attempt. The application is for up to \$1M. R. O'Mara-Garcia asked if the office staff will be completing the grant application, J. Howe affirmed that Trish (Treasurer) will be completing the online application and will be working with the 3 Fire Chiefs – Paul Rideout, Andy Silver, and Eric Barnes - to get the necessary information. Approved by all.*

**Resolution 6 of 2024** - To introduce Proposed **Local Law 4 of 2024**, "To amend the Village Code Chapter 110, Table of Use Regulations, with regard to **Accessory Structures** in the Village of Chatham". *So moved by R. O'Mara-Garcia, Seconded by P. Minahan. Ken Dow will draft the document. IT will need to be submitted to the Columbia County Planning Board CCPB, and the Village Planning Board. Public hearing set for the next Trustee meeting. Approved by all.*

**Resolution 7 of 2024** – To authorize the Village to hire **LaBella, a professional engineering group**, to conduct an engineering study, to develop a preliminary Engineering Report, and to submit documents for NYS Intended Use Plan (IUP) project listing, for a **Total Lump Sum Fee** in the amount **\$45K**, which will be invoiced by the engineering group monthly according to percentage completed. *So moved by P. Minahan, seconded by R. O'Mara-Garcia. LaBella is tasked by the Village to identify a redundant water supply. Paid via Water unallocated Fund balance and by the Water Reserves. Approved by all.*

**Resolution 8 of 2024** - To authorize the Clerk to solicit bids for **fittings, pipe, and materials** for Phase 3 of the **Hudson Avenue Water Main** project. (Bids open 2/12 @ 1pm). *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by R. O'Mara-Garcia. Approved by all.*

**Resolution 9 of 2024**- To introduce Proposed **Local Law 3 of 2024**, "A Local Law to Establish a **2-Hour Parking Limit on Railroad Avenue**". *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by P. Minahan. Set Public Hearing for February 12, 2024. Approved by all.*

**Resolution 10 of 2024** – To authorize the DPW to solicit bids for **Water Main Boring** for Phase 3 of the **Hudson Avenue Water Main** Project. (Bids open 2/12 @1pm). *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by P. Minahan. Approved by all.*

**Resolution 11 of 2024** – To authorize the DPW to solicit bids for a **DPW truck** to replace the 2017 Ram utilizing 2024 **CHIPS** funds up to \$100K. *So moved by R. O'Mara-Garcia, seconded by P. Minahan. Approved by all.*

**Resolution 12 of 2024** – To authorize the DPW to hold the annual "**Bulk Trash Drop-Off Days**" during the week **May 20-23, 2024**. *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by R. O'Mara-Garcia. Approved by all.*

**Resolution 13 of 2024** – To authorize the Mayor to sign a **letter of intent** to renew participation in a County-wide **Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP)** agreement. (Update every 5-years). *So moved by R. O'Mara-Garcia, seconded by P. Minahan. Approved by all.*

**Resolution 14 of 2024** - To authorize the CPD to hire Police Officer **Aaron Malin** at the union contract rate of **\$22.50**, effective start date pending successful completion of Phase I Law Enforcement Academy. *So moved by K. Schassler, seconded by P. Minahan. Graduation from Academy should be on or about beginning of April. J. Howe also noted that the hiring of a police officer does not affect the budget. It's a matter of hours they work. Right now the*

*personal service line is set at a certain number and it does not change. That personal services line in the budget is used to pay the officers when they work the hours. Approved by all.*

**Resolution 15 of 2024** – To approve the January 5, 2024 request by **Chatham Rural Cemetery Association, Inc. for \$3000** financial support.

*Mayor Howe would like to table this request until our new budget process is complete. This is something that we have done for the past 2 years. The Rural Cemetery Association submits their request in January, however we have not done our budget yet. The new budget starts in June and IF we agree to pay them this request we don't pay them until the new 2024-2025 budget year. We will hold this request until that time and consider it then.*

**Items for Discussion:**

*Runoff / drainage from properties onto the streets – K. Schassler: concerned about the about Village drainage and more specifically how new construction or newly remodeled homes potentially affect the drainage in the Village. Water runoff recently backed up and overwhelmed a saucer drainage ditch which then ran over into the road. There are many places throughout the Village where debris is disturbed and runs into Village Streets.*

**Second Public Comment Period (limited to 15 minutes):**

*-S. Piazza: would like to have it on the record, as an agenda item, specifically laying out what the Village is going to do about the frequently brought up public safety concern due to lack of sidewalk on Austerlitz Street.*

*-J. Howe stated that we are coming into the budget season and we will look at putting it in there. Comments of concern are well taken, and on the record.*

**Enter into Executive Session:** For discussion of potential, proposed, pending or current litigation. *So moved by K. Schassler, R. O'Mara-Garcia, Approved by all at 7:54pm.*

**Exit Executive Session:** *So moved by K. Schassler, R. O'Mara-Garcia, Approved by all at 8:29pm.*

**Adjournment:** *So moved by K. Schassler, R. O'Mara-Garcia, Approved by all at 8:30pm.*

**Next meeting:** February 12, 2024; 7:00pm

**Location:** TRACY MEMORIAL VILLAGE HALL, 77 MAIN STREET, CHATHAM, NY 12037

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*Desiree Kelleher*

*Village Clerk*

*1/24/24*