

REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF BALLSTON SPA, NY held April 8, 2024

Present: Mayor Rossi, Trustee Price-Bush, Trustee Baskin, Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, Trustee Raymond, Village Clerk O'Connor, Village Administrator Moskowitz, Attorney Buettner

1) Call to Order

2) Pledge to the Flag

4) Motion made by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, seconded by Trustee Price-Bush to appoint the following Fire Dept. Officers:

**Fire Chief-Michael Bashore 1st Assistant Chief-Kevin P. Krogh 2nd Assistant-Wilfred Kenny
3rd Assistant-Paul Marozzi Secretary-Stanley DeLong**

Ayes All

3) Presentation

a) Wiswall Park Renovation Plan (Jeffrey Anthony, Studio A)

Mr. Anthony presented an overview of the proposed renovations noting that the user survey agreed that this is a passive park, and the biggest concern is for more vendor space.

4) Public Hearing – Fiscal Year 2025 Tentative Budget (5 Minutes per Speaker)

Mayor Rossi noted a few changes to the proposed budget.

Liz Kormos, 89 Hyde Blvd. read a statement regarding the budget. (attached)

Ray Otten of 16 Middlebrook Avenue and a member of the Task Force spoke about the Board wanting to control the Events Task Force and suggested asking the residents what they want. Mr. Otten is not in favor of raises for the Trustees.

Charlene DuBuque, 6 Kaleen Drive and a member of the Task Force spoke in favor of the events, and stated she is disturbed by Trustee Baskin's negative Facebook posts.

Keegan Pasalic of 25 East High Street spoke in favor of the events put on by the Task Force, noting they are vital to the community.

Keith Lewis, 38 East High Street is in favor of pay raises for the Trustees.

Mr. Lewis feels the Task Force should be a committee, rather than ad hoc.

Anna Stanko of 32 Kent Street and a member of the Task Force said the events are done for community, not political reasons, it's giving back to the community.

Lori O'Connor, 199 Milton Avenue, and a Task Force member spoke in favor of the events and being a part of them.

Ms. O'Connor suggested the Trustees ask themselves if they really deserve raises.

Jason Gurtler of 99 Rowland Street stated that the Events Task Force is vital for the community.

Referring to raises, Jared Iacolucci, 24 Chapman Street, stated he thinks politics are being played.

Mr. Iacolucci asked why sewer revenue is down.

Autumn Wright, of 307 Caribou Court stated the events draw the community together.

Kelley Taylor, 121 Fairground Avenue spoke in favor of events and against raises for the Trustees.

Donna Dardaris of 64 Middle Street also a Task Force member, wants to know what the objection to the Task Force is.

Ellie Dillon of 116 Malta Avenue said no one wants to defund anything and thinks the task Force should become a committee.

Paul Ferguson, 89 Grove Street noted he appreciates all of the awesome things the Village does for families but doesn't understand why spending habits aren't above board.

Bob Bush Jr. of 71 Church Avenue stated the Trustees knew the pay when they took the job.

Regarding events, Mr. Bush stated they bring the community together.

Mr. Bush said the sidewalk at Union Fire Co. should be a priority.

Karen Avenarius, 10 East High Street also spoke about the importance of events as a community builder.

Ms. Avenarius thanked the Board for all they do.

Nathan Ward of 1 Hyde Blvd. feels using the word "roll over" in a budget is not a good idea.

Regarding raises for the Trustees, Mr. Ward noted feels they should get a cost of living raise unless they are not doing it for the money.

Mayor Rossi suggested "reallocate" may be a better term than "roll over".

Gina Marozzi, 10 Old Glory Lane and a Task Force member pointed out that the entire "Celebrations" budget is not just for the Events Task Force; The Task Force portion is \$30,460.00.

Ms. Marozzi stated that once again the Task Force has become Trustee Baskin's target in a constant effort to hate all things Rossi.

Referring to Trustee Baskin's Facebook post that contained a false number regarding the Task Force budget, Ms. Marozzi stated that is a direct violation of the Ethics code.

Kris DuBuque of 6 Kaleen Drive spoke about the "nonsense" Facebook attacks on the Task Force.

Mr. DuBuque noted more volunteers for events, including Wiswall Park clean up would be appreciated.

Donna Martin, 20 Chesterwood Court also spoke in favor of the Task Force and noted the importance of the many teenagers that come and volunteer their time; that's our future.

Ms. Martin expressed her appreciation for the Menorah lighting celebrating our Jewish brothers and sisters.

Motion made by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, seconded by Trustee Price-Bush to close the Public Hearing at 8:46pm.

Ayes All

5) Public Comment on Agenda Items Only (3 Minutes per Speaker)

Liz Biddle, 113 Fairground Avenue, and a member of the BSBPA noted that the Secretariat will be the movie shown in June, Barbie will be shown in July, and in August the movie will be Honey I shrunk the kids.

Ms. Kormos asked where the Woods Hollow contract stands.

Marilyn Stephenson again went over the upcoming HDC presentation about researching your historic home.

Ms. Stephenson noted that the minutes of the meeting had an error, and also that they have not been voted on yet.

6) Minutes

a) Motion made by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, seconded by Trustee Price-Bush that the minutes of the 03.25.24 meeting be approved.

Trustee Baskin read a statement regarding the minutes. (attached)

Referring to the stop sign motion at the previous meeting Trustee Raymond said there were large chunks of pertinent information left out of the minutes.

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez noted that minutes are not verbatim, they are summarizations.

Attorney Buettner stated that Open Meetings Law 106 states that minutes are summarized and owned by the Clerk. The minutes are merely to be a summary of the people that were present, the motions that were made and the votes.

Attorney Buettner noted that this Boards Rules of Procedure require a little bit more and require adoption, which is not in the law.

Continuing, Attorney Buettner said the minutes are not to be verbatim or transcribed. Additionally, minutes cannot not be amended to include statements that were not made.

Noting she is putting together a memo for the Board, she encouraged the Trustees to look at the State laws in the minutes.

Trustee Baskin would like the minutes to not use expressions of how things were said using the word "frustrated" as an example.

Motion made by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, that the minutes be adopted with the following amendment: Replace the word "restore" with the word "research" in a public comment regarding the HDC.

Trustee Baskin-no	Trustee VanDeinse-Perez-yes	Trustee Price-Bush-yes
	Trustee Raymond-no	Mayor Rossi-yes

Motion Passed

Public Comment on agenda items only resumed:

Jason Gurtler of 99 Rowland Street said he was impressed with the Wiswall Park plans.

Christin Iacolucci, 24 Chapman Street agreed that holding public office should be about public service and not the salary but feels the minor cost of living raise being proposed for employees should be given to the Trustees.

Ms. Iacolucci feels the Task Force should be an official committee.

Mr. Lewis spoke about the Woods Hollow contract, saying it is not legitimate.

In response to concern about DPW costs, Dayanis Bowie of 24 Beach Street noted that the Summer Kick Off Festival requires microscopic DPW assistance.

7) Consent Agenda Items for Consideration

a) Motion made by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, seconded by Trustee Baskin to approve the items on the following Consent Agenda: with the exception of the motion regarding the Summer Kickoff Festival, which is removed for discussion.

Secretary-Stanley DeLong

i) Motion approving the Lions Club to hold a “Concert in the Park” commemorating its 75th Anniversary in Iron Spring Park on 8/3/24 (rain date - 8/4/24) from 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Setup to begin at 2:00pm. Proof of Insurance has been provided.

ii) Motion to approve water service at 347 Saratoga Avenue (outside user), and to authorize the Mayor to execute the individual water agreement (pending Consolidated Water District creation by the Town of Milton).

iii) Motion that the BSBPA be authorized to conduct “Movies in the Park” in Wiswall Park on the following dates (rain dates in parentheses): 6/7/24 (6/8), 7/5/24 (7/6), and 8/2/24 (8/3). Proof of Insurance has been provided.

Ayes All

iv) Motion made by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, seconded by Trustee Raymond to approve the “Summer Kickoff Festival” on Sunday, 6/23/24 (rain date – 6/30/24) from 8am (setup) until 4pm (cleanup) (event from 10am to 2pm) in Wiswall Park, and approving the blockade of a portion of Low Street near Front Street. Proof of insurance has been provided.

Trustee Raymond would like the inclusion of cost estimates for Village services provided with event applications.

Mayor Rossi reminded Trustee Raymond that Ms. Bowie just spoke about this during public comment and stated the information is already on the application.

Trustees Raymond and Baskin continued discussion as Mayor Rossi tried to call the vote.

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez noted the question was asked and answered.

After a lengthy and lively back and forth, Attorney Buettner stated she will send a Rules of Procedure memo to the Board; legally when a motion is called, discussion ends.

Trustee Baskin-yes

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez-yes

Trustee Price-Bush-yes

Trustee Raymond-yes

Mayor Rossi-yes

Motion Passed

8) Motions/Resolutions for Consideration/Vote

a) SEQRA Negative Declaration resolution related to Woods Hollow (pending).- To be moved to next meeting due to time.

9) Mayor’s Announcements-None due to time.

10) Treasurer’s Report (attached)

11) Liaison Reports

Trustee Raymond reported that the DPW is creating a sign inventory spread sheet, prepping for contractor for the DPW building and working on the new Police Dept. building.

Motion made by Trustee Raymond, seconded by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez to permit the purchase of 400 tons of Morton Salt, PO # 24-289 for a total of \$24,660.00, based off of Saratoga County’s bid price.

There was no public comment on the motion.

Ayes All

Trustee Price-Bush asked Ray Otten to give an update on the Events Task Force project.

Saying Mr. Otten is a member of the public and this is not a public comment period, Trustee Baskin stated he would prefer Trustee Price-Bush give the report.

Mr. Otten noted that the replacement project for the Birdhouse Festival will be concerning children's safety and security in our Village. Final planning stages are being done now, and by the next Board meeting, the new program will be presented in a professional manner.

Trustee Baskin wants more information now.

Mr. Otten reiterated the plans are not yet final.

Trustee Raymond said a rough cost estimate would be helpful for the budget.

Mr. Otten said it will be within last year's Birdhouse Festival budget.

Trustee Baskin said the Board should know before approving use of those funds.

Reporting on the 1st quarter for the Fire Dept, Trustee VanDeinse-Perez said there was a total of 108 response calls, requiring over 300 volunteer man hours.

Trustee Baskin commended the Committee on the Arts for the great job they've done for National Poetry Month. There will be a poetry performance reading at Brookside on 4/27 at 7:00pm.

Trustee Baskin reminded all that the Park and Tree Board will be planting trees in Kelley Park on 4/27 at 10:00am in honor of Arbor Day.

12) Old Business-None due to time.

13) New Business-None due to time.

14) Public Comment on Any Issue (3 Minutes)

Mr. Gurtler thanked the Events Task Force for trying to do something to replace the Birdhouse Festival.

Ms. Dillon said that the new Visitor's Center sign is in at the National Bottle Museum.

Ms. Taylor asked if the taxpayers get a say in the Events Task Force project.

Mayor Rossi answered that comments are taken into consideration during public comment.

Ms. Kormos thinks the Wiswall Park plan is terrific but would like the walks to be brick colored.

Mr. Otten thanked those that are defending the Task Force.

Ms. Iacolucci said she agrees the Board needs more information on the new Task Force program before it is funded.

Lori Acee, 25 Eastern Avenue expressed her appreciation for the support of the Library renovations.

Mr. Lewis told Attorney Buettner he has a copy of the meeting rules if she needs them.

Mr. Lewis criticized the minutes of the last meeting, stating biased comments were written in.

Mr. Lewis suggested that stating that in the minutes that a Trustee's voice was raised, a jar be set up for the guilty party put in \$1.00 to discourage yelling.

Regarding suggestions that the Task Force was given special treatment for the Birdhouse Festival replacement program, Ms. Marozzi stated that the Task Force volunteered to replace the program for the Community.

Jared Iacolucci, 24 Chapman Street expressed appreciation to the Board, staff, committees, and volunteers.

Mr. Iacolucci read a statement asking the Board to adopt a resolution condemning the IDF.

Kris DuBuque, 6 Kaleen Drive is excited about the Wiswall Park renovations.

Mr. DuBuque suggested that comments on the war be kept private, saying that antisemitic comments are a shame.

Ryan Johnson of 154 Milton Avenue remarked that the 2 men yelling and frustrated at the last meeting did not go unnoticed by his child.

Ed Gawrys, 84 Division Street asked if are lighting and security improvements planned for Wiswall Park.

Mayo Rossi answered yes.

Mr. Bush liked the Wiswall Park plans and asked who would be performing maintenance.

Mr. Bush asked the Board to keep world politics to the Federal Govt.; it does not belong here.

Mr. Bush requested that Trustee Baskin act professionally.

Ms. DuBuque thanked the members of the Board who try to maintain order.

15) Other Business (Including, but Not Limited to Board Response to Public Comment)

Trustee Raymond stated that it is false narrative to say that anyone wants to get rid of events.

Trustee Raymond feels that raises should be consistent across the Board.

Trustee Raymond read a statement about stop signs. (attached)

Lively debate ensued regarding stop signs and RFB's.

Trustee Baskin would like a breakdown of the Task Force budget.

Trustee Baskin then read from and spoke about Rules of Procedure and said he thinks his speech rights have been violated.

Noting it is their responsibility to be fiscal managers, stating he is not against events.

Trustee Baskin stated that the Task Force is politicizing this, wants a list of members and more accountability.

Discussion on the Task Force budget continued.

In response to Trustee Baskin's curiosity about the new project, Mr. Otten said that children and their families will be educated to go to safe places if they are being attacked.

Mr. Otten raised his voice, seemingly frustrated at being asked for more details on a program that is still being planned.

Trustee Baskin asked Mr. Otten to change his tone of voice.

Trustee Price-Bush said she enjoys being on the Board but wishes it would stop being put in people's heads it's the Democrats against the Republicans.

Mayor Rossi addressed Trustee Baskin's endless questioning of the Task Force just because of who is involved.

Trustee Baskin said he feels attacked.

6) Executive Session (If Needed)-None needed

17) Adjournment/Voucher Audit:

Motion made by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, seconded by Trustee Raymond that the Vouchers be audited, and the meeting adjourned at 10:56pm.

General Fund	\$483,410.40
Sewer Relevy	2,157.41
Library Fund	5,973.31
Trust & Agency	<u>3,866.60</u>
Total	\$495,407.72

Ayes All

Respectfully Submitted,

Teri L. O'Connor
Village Clerk

5) Minutes

a) Motion made by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, seconded by Trustee Price-Bush that the minutes of the 03.25.24 meeting be approved.

Motion made by Trustee VanDeinse-Perez, with the following correction:

Replace the word "restore" with the word "research" in a public comment regarding the HDC.

Trustee Baskin-no

Trustee VanDeinse-Perez-yes

Trustee Price-Bush-yes

Trustee Raymond-no

Mayor Rossi-yes

Motion Passed