

VILLAGE BOARD WORK SESSION MEETING

AUGUST 19, 2024

A Village Board Work Session Meeting was held on Monday, August 19, 2024 at 7:00 P.M. at Village Hall, 9 Fairlawn Drive, Washingtonville, New York.

PRESENT:

Mayor Thomas DeVinko, Deputy Mayor Donna Jacaruso, Trustee Susan Walski, Trustee Steve Presser and Trustee Vernon Coleman.

ALSO PRESENT:

Village Clerk Christine Shenkman, Village Treasurer Leslie Tillotson and Village Police Chief Brian Zaccaro.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE TO THE FLAG:

Mayor Thomas DeVinko led the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

PUBLIC COMMENT – AGENDA ITEMS:

There were no public comments regarding Agenda items.

PRESENTATION - ALAN SORENSEN – RAIL TRAIL PROJECT:

Alan Sorensen, Orange County Commissioner of Planning and Development came before the Village Board and audience to provide a presentation regarding the Orange County Rail Trail.

"Schunnemunk Rail Trail is located on the former Erie Railroad and runs from Cornwall to Camp LaGuardia in the Town of Chester. Orange County's plan is to improve public transit and services by providing pedestrian and bicycle connections to existing transit facilities, and also to open opportunities to expand services within this area of Orange County."

"Presently, there are six (6) bridges that cross the Moodna Creek. Three (3) are located in the Village of Washingtonville." Mr. Sorensen indicated "the County is in the final stretch of acquiring property from the Open Space Institute, and the closing will be at the end of August. Design work on the Rail Trail will begin this Fall and go into the year 2025. The County is hoping to be in a position to receive Bids in late Fall of 2025 with full construction being completed in 2026. The necessary twenty-eight million dollars (\$28,000,000) has been secured for this project."

"The Trail will be paved from Luna Rail Trail to Camp LaGuardia. The funds will be an eighty percent (80%), ten percent (10%) and ten percent (10%) split with eighty percent (80%) of funds coming from F.T.A., and ten percent (10%) from each entity: New York State – Department of Transportation – (N.Y.S. – D.O.T.) and Orange County Legislature."

Mr. Sorensen presented a slide show and explained "Orange County has a total of ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) in funds to clean up Camp LaGuardia, and add a new County park."

PRESENTATION - ALAN SORENSEN – RAIL TRAIL PROJECT – (CONTINUED):

Mr. Sorensen continued his presentation and provided pictures of the old Erie Rail, existing conditions on the trail and bridges, and explained "it is Orange County's plan to fix the bridges and railings for safety reasons. These are beautiful structures and should be repurposed and protected."

"In the area of Nicoll Street there is an old whistle stop from when the railroad was active, and when a train was approaching the whistle would blow to alert everyone. We identified several whistle stops along the way."

"Orange County was able to secure funding for this project as a recreational trail that will invite residents and the community to utilize the trail. The Coach USA bus stop in the Village interconnects with the trail for travel purposes. Phase II of this project will be to explore options regarding connection of the trail into Salisbury Mills."

Mr. Sorensen reviewed images of bike lanes, pedestrian lanes and grass along the sides of the trail. "There is a segment of the trail at the southern part of Orange County from Unionville to Slate Hill and we were hoping to acquire a segment connecting into Middletown which could be five (5) – seven (7) years down the line. The vision would be that you could ride on the bicycle path from Washingtonville to New Jersey without sharing a road with a motor vehicle which could be approximately ten (10) – twenty (20) miles." More images were shown regarding the context of the Schunemunk Trail connecting with Heritage Trail. "It is a future possibility that the trail could be taken further North to Cornwall into the City of Newburgh, and these segments would require additional right away acquisition."

"The preliminary plans for Camp LaGuardia are to create multipurpose athletic fields, pavilions, a playground, campground and nature trails. This is a two-hundred seventeen (217) acre property with many potential uses. A Master Plan is being developed for Camp LaGuardia."

"Audience member Ruth Manion questioned when do you expect Camp LaGuardia to be complete?"

Mr. Sorensen explained "the removal could potentially take place by Fall of 2025 but the longer parts of the project are looking more to be two (2) – three (3) years down the line. Orange County is investing ten million dollars (\$10,000,000) in the current clean up."

Resident Paul Lang of 10 Patriot Lane asked "if there will be a limit to the size of E-Bikes allowed on the trail," and Mr. Sorensen responded "in terms of how this matter is managed is still an internal issue with Parks and Planning. There are two (2) trains of thought: Some communities have set speed limits, and others have created wider trails. The trail needs to be a safe place for people to walk. An additional issue is the problem of people listening to headphones and not hearing others coming."

Jean Galli of Blooming Grove indicated "the old rail trail is in my back yard. Will the homeowners border the trail when construction begins, and what is the plan regarding the beautiful wildlife that live in this location?"

Alan Sorensen stated "once the Council is ready for this part of the project another presentation will be held and everyone will be invited back to express their questions and concerns as property owners. We want the trail to be an amenity that everyone is happy with. With regard to the wildlife, the nice feature about the trail is that it will have natural stone and the County will take a minimalist approach in this area and gently grade the paths. We will be working within our guidelines."

Resident Vinny Lang of 9 Plymouth Rock Court commented "does usage numbers for the Heritage Trail exist"? Mr. Sorensen replied "I have not looked at this in over a year. Each year we take a count and it is always a large number. I anticipate with this trail there will be similar numbers."

PRESENTATION - ALAN SORENSEN – RAIL TRAIL PROJECT – (CONTINUED):

Kate Amadi of Blooming Grove “thanked Mr. Sorensen and Orange County for the energy that has been put into this project.”

Edie Johnson, Executive Editor of the Orange County Courier Journal stated “thank you Mr. Sorensen for attending this meeting and providing this presentation because the Rail Trail has been a dream of mine for many years.” Ms. Johnson further questioned “where will the entrance on Route 208 be located, and would there be a separate entrance for parking? In addition, has the zoning been addressed for the Blooming Grove portion of the property”?

Mr. Sorensen commented “I will have to review these questions and get back to you. Once the design phase begins we will go into more details.”

A resident explained they are not sure what is going on with the Casazza property but felt it would be a beautiful place to build a park.

Deputy Mayor Jacaruso commented “the Village of Washingtonville is currently working with a Comprehensive Planner and of the one-hundred fifty (150) acre Casazza parcel only half is buildable. Different ideas were discussed by the Village Board and Comprehensive Plan Committee, and ultimately there may be a mixed zone in this location.”

A member of the audience questioned “since you can see the bridge from Sewell Park on West Main Street would the Village be able to apply for Grant funds and include this park that looks out onto the Trail,” and Mayor DeVinko stated “there is an Orange County Open Space Grant the Village can apply for.”

Joanna Kiernan from Mountain Lodge Park and Town of Blooming Grove Council suggested “native and wildflower gardens should be planted by the Trail where local communities can maintain them, and the possibility of cross-country skiing in the cold weather should be considered. In addition, a Totem pole concerning the Native Indians should be installed, as well as information Kiosks.”

Mr. Sorensen confirmed “cross country skiing will be permitted, the idea of a totem pole can be explored and other items discussed this evening will be investigated” and expressed thanks to the Village Board and audience members for allowing him to speak tonight. The Power Point presentation will be sent to Mayor DeVinko tomorrow.

TREASURER – FINANCIAL UPDATE:

Village Treasurer Leslie Tillotson has submitted the below financial report to the Village Board and audience members:

Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Highlights



General Fund-Revenues

Account	Adopted Budget	Actual through 7/31	Variance
Property Taxes	\$4,692,956	\$4,432,160	\$260,796
Sales Tax	\$1,160,000	\$570,863	\$589,137
Utilities Gross Receipts	\$65,000	\$36,603	\$28,397
Franchise Fees	\$121,000	\$106,857	\$14,143
WCSD-SRO	\$268,876	\$114,971	\$153,905
Mortgage Tax	\$110,000	\$107,922	\$2,078



General Fund-Revenues

Account	Variance
Property Taxes	\$260,796 – The uncollected taxes are remitted to the County in November and the Village is made whole by the beginning of the next fiscal year.
Sales Tax	\$589,137- There are 2 more quarters left to be collected
Utilities Gross Receipts	\$28,397- There are 2 more quarters left to be collected
Franchise Fees	\$14,143
WCSD-SRO	\$153,905-There are 6 more months to be collected
Mortgage Tax	\$2,078



General Fund-Expenditures

Expenditure Function	Adopted Budget	Actual through 7/31/24	Variance
General Support	\$941,098	\$371,201	\$569,897
Public Safety	\$2,471,038	\$913,241	\$1,557,797
Transportation	\$995,975	\$327,186	\$668,789
Culture & Recreation	\$70,900	\$44,296	\$26,604
Home & Community	\$34,500	\$3,456	\$31,044
Employee Benefits	\$1,846,565	\$430,990	1,415,575



Fiscal Year Highlights

- Since October 2023 the Village has received \$597,824 from EFC for reimbursement from prior fiscal years expenditures on the WWTP. The Village is still owed approximately \$442,000 from EFC.
- The Village received a final draft of the fiscal year end 2/28/2021 independent audit report from the external auditors. The Village is currently reviewing the report with BST & Co (outside consultant). The report should be finalized over the next few weeks. In the meantime, external auditors are starting the audit for fiscal year end 2/28/2022.
- BST & Co. is currently working through the fiscal year end 2/28/2023 to prepare for the external audit.



Fiscal Year Highlights

- The Village is currently working with Bond Counsel and the Financial Advisors to prepare for the renewal of the deficit financing note which is due in October.
- The cumulative deficit through 2/28/2022 is approximately (\$1,244,000). As the audits are finalized the Village will have a more accurate understanding on the total deficit that will need to be certified by the NYS Comptrollers office.
- NYS Comptrollers office is wrapping up their fieldwork. Once the Village receives their findings/recommendations the Village will have the opportunity to respond.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – DISCUSSION:

E.F.C. DISBURSEMENTS – RECEIPT OF FUNDS:

Mayor DeVinko announced the Village has received from Environmental Facilities Corporation (E.F.C.) approximately \$202,000 and has confirmation regarding receipt of remaining funds in the amount of \$442,441.00 in the near future. The Village Bond Attorneys and Bond Council have been working with the Village Board to obtain said funds and due to the Village's diligence, reporting and submittal of documentation to E.F.C. has been able to recapture all funds due to the Village of Washingtonville.

DISBURSEMENT OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT UTV VEHICLE:

The Grant documentation has been completed regarding the disbursement of funds for the Village Police Department U.T.V. vehicle, and the Village is waiting to receive said funds. The Mayor expressed thanks to Village Police Chief Brian Zaccaro for all his dedicated efforts regarding this matter.

ANNOUNCEMENTS – DISCUSSION – (CONTINUED):

TREES FOR TRIBS PROGRAM:

The Trees for Tribs Program will be planting one-hundred seventeen (117) trees and shrubs on Saturday, September 28 at Sewell Park beginning at 9:45 A.M. All volunteers are welcome, and a signup sheet will be posted. The Village will pre-drill the holes and add new soil to each area.

VILLAGE VETERANS BANNERS:

The Mayor indicated the Village of Washingtonville has received fourteen (14) additional applications for Veterans Banners, and the response has been wonderful.

2024 ORANGE COUNTY ECONOMIC SUMMIT:

Mayor DeVinko announced members of the Village Board will be attending the 2024 Orange County Economic Summit on Friday, September 20 in Newburgh, New York.

A.R.B. SIGN APPLICATION – 16 EAST MAIN STREET – BALANCE, BODY WORK AND SPA:

Mayor DeVinko indicated the Village Board is now acting as the Architectural Review Board (A.R.B.), and the sign application for 16 East Main Street, Balance, Body Work and Spa is a new application. The Village Board tabled this matter until further review of said application.

VILLAGE-WIDE COMMUNITY YARD SALE:

Mayor DeVinko announced the Fourth annual Village of Washingtonville Community Yard Sale will be held on Saturday, September 28 and Sunday, September 29 from 9:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

UPDATE – VILLAGE PICKLEBALL COURTS:

Mayor DeVinko reported the Village is planning on extending the Pickleball area to include three (3) new Courts. The Pickleball Courts have been extremely busy and the Village Board has received positive feedback. The Village has offered Pickleball lessons by professionals for people who would like to learn how to play. If you are interested in registering please contact Village Clerk Christine Shenkman at Village Hall.

RESOLUTIONS:

RESOLUTION – 24 – 0118 – COLLIER PROPOSAL FOR SEWELL PARK ENGINEERING FLOOD PLAN MANAGEMENT:

Deputy Mayor Jacaruso made a motion, seconded by Trustee Coleman and adopted to accept the Collier proposal for Sewell Park Engineering Flood Plan Management

RESOLUTIONS – (CONTINUED):

RESOLUTION – 24 – 0118 – COLLIER PROPOSAL FOR SEWELL PARK ENGINEERING FLOOD PLAN MANAGEMENT – (CONTINUED):

not to exceed \$17,500.00; said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

RESOLUTION – 24 – 0119 – REVISED FACILITY USE REQUEST FORM – WASHINGTONVILLE SWIM TEAM - CAR WASH:

Trustee Coleman made a motion, seconded by Trustee Presser and adopted to authorize a revised Facility Use Request form for the Washingtonville Swim Team Car Wash date to be held on Sunday, September 8 from 8:30 A.M. - 1:30 P.M. at Veterans Memorial Park (original date was Sunday, August 25); said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

RESOLUTION – 24 – 0120 – EMPLOYMENT OF SCOTT COOPER - PART TIME BUILDING INSPECTOR:

Deputy Mayor Jacaruso made a motion, seconded by Trustee Walski and adopted to authorize the employment of Scott Cooper as a Part Time Building Inspector with a twenty (20) hour work week effective August 19, 2024 at an Hourly Wage of \$27.00; said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

RESOLUTION – 24 – 0121 – VILLAGE BOARD REGULAR MEETING – CHANGE IN DATE:

Deputy Mayor Jacaruso made a motion, seconded by Trustee Coleman and adopted to reschedule the Village Board Regular Meeting from Monday, September 2 to Wednesday, September 4 due to the Labor Day Holiday; said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

RESOLUTION – 24 – 0122 – PUBLIC ASSEMBLY PERMIT - BLOOMING GROVE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE - 2024 CHRISTMAS PARADE:

Deputy Mayor Jacaruso made a motion, seconded by Trustee Coleman and adopted to approve a Public Assembly Permit for the Blooming Grove Chamber of Commerce 2024 Christmas Parade from L. Vernon Allen Park to E.J. McLaughlin Square, and After Event at Veterans Memorial Park to be held on Saturday, December 7 from 5:00 P.M. until 10:00 P.M; said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

RESOLUTION – 24 – 0123 – PUBLIC ASSEMBLY PERMIT - WASHINGTONVILLE EVENTS COMMITTEE - WHOVILLE VENDOR MARKET:

Trustee Coleman made a motion, seconded by Trustee Presser and adopted to approve a Public Assembly Permit for the Washingtonville Events Committee Whoville Vendor Market at Veterans Memorial Park on Saturday, December 7 from 8:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M; said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

RESOLUTIONS – (CONTINUED):

**RESOLUTION - 24 – 0124 – PUBLIC ASSEMBLY PERMIT - WASHINGTONVILLE
EVENTS COMMITTEE - WHOVILLE BUSINESS CELEBRATION:**

Deputy Mayor Jacaruso made a motion, seconded by Trustee Presser and adopted to approve a Public Assembly Permit for the Washingtonville Events Committee Whoville Business Celebration at E.J. McLaughlin Square on Saturday, December 7 from 1:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M; said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

**RESOLUTION – 24 – 0125 – PUBLIC ASSEMBLY PERMIT - WASHINGTONVILLE
EVENTS COMMITTEE - WITCHINGTONVILLE BEFORE DARK EVENT:**

Trustee Coleman made a motion, seconded by Trustee Presser and adopted to approve a Public Assembly Permit for the Washingtonville Events Committee for Witchingtonville Before Dark event at L. Vernon Allen Park on Sunday, October 13 from 12:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. (Set Up at 8:00 A.M.); said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

**RESOLUTION - 24 – 0126 – PUBLIC ASSEMBLY PERMIT - WASHINGTONVILLE
EVENTS COMMITTEE - WITCHINGTONVILLE AFTER DARK EVENT:**

Trustee Coleman made a motion, seconded by Trustee Walski and adopted to approve a Public Assembly Permit for the Washingtonville Events Committee for Witchingtonville After Dark event at E.J. McLaughlin Square and Veterans Memorial Park on Saturday, October 12 from 5:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M; said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

**RESOLUTION – 24 – 0127 – PUBLIC ASSEMBLY PERMIT - WASHINGTONVILLE
EVENTS COMMITTEE - HARVEST FARMER AND ARTISAN MARKET:**

Trustee Presser made a motion, seconded by Deputy Mayor Jacaruso and adopted to approve a Public Assembly Permit for the Washingtonville Events Committee for Harvest Farmer and Artisan Market at Veterans Memorial Square on Sunday, September 29 from 7:00 A.M. to 2:30 P.M; said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

**RESOLUTION – 24 – 0128 – FACILITY USE REQUEST FORM - WASHINGTONVILLE
LITTLE LEAGUE FALL BALL PROGRAM:**

Trustee Presser made a motion, seconded by Trustee Coleman and adopted to approve a Facility Use Request form for the Washingtonville Little League Fall Ball Program to be held on September 7 through November 9, Monday – Friday from 4:00 P.M. – 8:00 P.M. (dusk), and Saturday from 8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M. at Woodfield Park; said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

RESOLUTION – 24 – 0129 – ROOSEVELT AND CROSS - VILLAGE UNDERWRITERS:

Trustee Coleman made a motion, seconded by Trustee Presser and adopted to approve Roosevelt and Cross as the Village Underwriters MSRB Rule G-17 for the Village Deficit Bond Notes; said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

RESOLUTIONS – (CONTINUED):

RESOLUTION – 24 – 0130 – EMPLOYEE TIME OFF REQUEST FORM:

Deputy Mayor Jacaruso made a motion, seconded by Trustee Coleman and adopted to approve the Employee Time Off Request Form for Village Department Heads to utilize for Village employees; said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

RESOLUTION – 24 – 0131 – AUTHORIZE BUDGET TRANSFERS, AMENDMENTS AND TRANSFER OF FUNDS TO PAY VILLAGE WARRANTS:

Trustee Presser made a motion, seconded by Trustee Walski and adopted to authorize Budget Transfers and Amendments as necessary to affect necessary Transfer of Funds and to pay Village Warrants; General Fund Payments - \$229,329.88; Water Fund Payments - \$772.72 and Sewer Fund Payments - \$3,805.36; said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

RESOLUTION – 24 – 0132 – RESIGNATION - VILLAGE PART TIME POLICE OFFICER:

Trustee Presser made a motion, seconded by Trustee Coleman and adopted to accept the resignation of Village Part Time Police Officer Robert J. Kammarada effective Thursday, August 15, 2024; said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

RESOLUTION – 24 – 0133 – INTER-MUNICIPAL AGREEMENT – SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER PROGRAM:

Deputy Mayor Jacaruso made a motion, seconded by Trustee Presser and adopted to authorize the approval of an Inter-Municipal Agreement between the Village of Washingtonville and the Washingtonville Central School District regarding the School Resource Officer Program for Washingtonville High School, Middle School and Taft Elementary School for the 2024 – 2025 School year; said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Resident Sean Hegarty of 4 Belvoir Drive stated "the Pickleball Court expansion is great, however what is the update regarding the Woodfield Skateboard Park"?

Mayor DeVinko responded "the Village Board has been looking at this space trying to decide what can be done here. The equipment cost is approximately \$75,000, and there is less expensive equipment but we need to ensure that it is safe and long lasting."

Mr. Hegarty suggested "purchase the equipment in pieces."

Mayor DeVinko commented "the \$75,000 came from the Recreation Department fees and volunteers helped assemble the park. The possibility of installing basketball courts is being reviewed."

Sean Hegarty questioned "the Town of Blooming Grove is also opening six (6) Pickleball Courts. What is the total cost of Pickleball Courts in the Village," and Mayor DeVinko mentioned "approximately \$60,000 and there is \$130,000 in Recreation funds. The Village can install Pickleball Courts, and there is seed money to buy some equipment."

PUBLIC COMMENT – (CONTINUED):

Sean Hegarty questioned "what is it costing the Village per employee to read meters," and the Mayor said "a D.P.W. worker is \$58,000 annually, and H2O rates are \$87.00 per hour. It takes two (2) D.P.W. employees to perform that job and based on forty hours at fifty-two weeks it looks to be approximately \$133,000 in savings."

"Mr. Hegarty indicated the Village roads are in terrible shape and there are many sink holes."

Vinny Lang commented "is there an update regarding the Village Full Time Building Inspector, and hiring a Part Time Building Inspector will not reduce the costs of the I.M.A."

Mayor DeVinko indicated "the Village Board cannot discuss this matter now."

Vinny Lang stated "the Veterans Banners are a great idea and who hangs them" and Mayor DeVinko responded "the Department of Public Works." Mr. Lang further questioned "what happens if a Banner breaks, and the American Flags in the Village need to be replaced and the Village should buy Flags that are American made."

Mayor DeVinko explained "the Village will replace the Flags if they break, and new Flags have been bought to replace the older Flags."

An audience member stated "I saw on YouTube that there are people claiming to be Veterans when they are not. Does the Village have anything in place to protect those who are in the service?"

24 – 0134 – ADJOURNMENT:

Deputy Mayor Jacaruso made a motion, seconded by Trustee Coleman and adopted to adjourn the August 19, 2024 Village Board Work Session Meeting; said Resolution passed by a unanimous vote of the Village Board. 5 Ayes, 0 Nays, 0 Absent, 0 Abstentions.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,

CHRISTINE SHENKMAN

VILLAGE CLERK