

Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Lake George, NY, held on Monday, June 7, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. This meeting was held during the COVID-19 virus outbreak and public attendance was prohibited. The public was allowed access via Zoom teleconferencing which was publicized on the Village's web site.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Robert M. Blais, Mayor
John Earl, Deputy Mayor
Ray Perry, Trustee
John Root, Trustee

MEMBERS ABSENT: Joseph Mastrodomenico, Trustee

Also Present: Clerk Debra McKinney, Superintendent Lanfear, Treasurer Danna Bock, and WWTP Operator Tim Shudt and others via Zoom.

At 9:04 a.m. Mayor Blais opened the Special Meeting and began with a report about the Lake Avenue Park. He noted that the original plan was to keep it open this year, but due to complaints and issues, a fence has been erected. He has been working on a use policy and wanted to review it with the Board. Mayor Blais commented that he has a meeting scheduled with Attorney Fuller and Park permit holders today. Some of the users have expressed interest in forming an association in which they would take a pledge to take responsibility for care of the Park. Mayor Blais suggested a fee of \$75. for Village permit holders and possibly \$100. for outside users with the permit being good July 1 through June 30 annually. Mayor Blais noted that 17 families had permits last year with about seven more requesting them for this year. He asked Superintendent Lanfear if he did some measurements to figure out what the maximum capacity would be. Keith replied that he did some measurements and based on the current guidelines for COVID and social distancing, etc, about 42 would be the capacity for the whole park, but just the sandy area would fit about 20 people. Trustee Perry noted that if people were just launching kayaks, they wouldn't be staying in the Park. Mayor Blais commented that he will follow up with Attorney Fuller as far as limiting permits to control the capacity at the Park. He suggested maybe the fee for an outside user should be double what a Village taxpayer would pay, plus the key deposit of \$25. In order to qualify as a Village user, the permit applicant must provide a drivers license and be a Village taxpayer. It was noted that there is limited parking available down there as well. Trustee Root suggested that a bike rack could be put down there. Mayor Blais just wanted to update the Board for now.

Mayor Blais reported that the Board will need to consider its stance on the new Cannabis Regulations. Each municipality has a right to opt out of the retail sales and decide by the end of this year. He suggested that the Board might want to hold a public informational meeting in September. Mayor Blais agreed that Attorney Fuller could make a presentation and clear up the details. He has had two people contact him about the sales, and three people sent emails in opposition. The Board agreed that they would like more information. There were questions about the sales of cannabis and where it could be smoked. Mayor Blais noted that he would like to contact other municipalities and see what they will be doing.

Two proposals have been received for the installation of cameras in Shepard Park. Trustee Perry commented that the costs were similar, but Integrated Controls is slightly cheaper. He noted that the purpose would be for the prevention and monitoring of any vandalism in the Park. Trustee Root commented that he is not against surveillance, but this is the first he has heard of this, and he's not so sure he wants to spend \$6,000. on this when there are other priorities such as some painting at the Visitor Center, and also he's been asking for new trash cans. Mayor Blais commented they might be good for prevention, but if the purpose is to identify any offenders, it might be difficult as there would be a lot of different people from out of the area

coming and going, and we wouldn't know who they were. He was thinking we might not need as many cameras as quoted. It was noted that the cameras may act as a good deterrent, too.

Trustee Perry, seconded by Mayor Blais, offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 76, 2021

WHEREAS, the Village of Lake George would like to protect Shepard Park and would like to install a camera system to deter vandalism and monitor activities;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Lake George, New York hereby approves the lowest priced proposal from Integrated Control Systems LLC in the amount of \$5,950. and authorizes a transfer in that amount from the Parks General Fund O&M account A7110.4 to A7110.22.

VOTING **Ayes: 3** **Blais, Earl, Perry**
Nays: 1 **Root**
Absent: 1 **Mastrodomenico**

RESOLUTION NO. 76, 2021 ADOPTED. **June 7, 2021**

Mayor Blais presented the latest sewer rate proposal from Municipal Solutions. He commented that we've been working on this new rate, as the old formula was convoluted and complicated; and the fees were inconsistent. The first users to go on the new rate would be a small group, then eventually the rest of the Village users would use the same rate. Mayor Blais explained that the new proposed rate is not based on assessed valuation; it is based on 100% of water usage, with a base rate included, debt cost for the new plant added, operations and maintenance cost added, then outside Village users would pay an additional 25%. Some of the current users will see an increase and some will see a decrease. The increase is related to the debt for the new sewer treatment plant as well as anticipated costs to operate it. The Board asked questions about the increases as they are not consistent across the list. Mayor Blais noted that the changes in the fees are not consistent as the old formula was not consistent. Other municipalities also charge sewer rates and this formula is similar with how other municipalities charge for their sewer use. The Board was in agreement on institution of a new fee structure and continued on to discuss the new rates and options.

Mayor Blais announced that the Fire Chief Matt Oswald has resigned. There is now a vacancy. The First Assistant is now the chief presiding officer in the department. Mayor Blais met with First Assistant Brandon Combs who is willing to take on the responsibility. The department needs to have a Chief, and he recommended that a special election be held to fill the unexpired term. If a current officer is elected, their position will not be filled. Mayor Blais would like to schedule the election for August 3, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.. This will give the department time to notify the members and prepare for the election. Mayor Blais acknowledged President Doni Smith who was signed on via Zoom. Doni asked how the Board felt about the Company waiving the bylaw requirements. Mayor Blais noted that it has been done in the past. If a candidate does not meet the requirements of the bylaws, it is up to the Company to decide if they will be allowed to run or not. Then after the election, the Company will make a recommendation to the Village Board for their consideration. It was recommended that the special election be held at the Department's July meeting, but ultimately it was decided to set the election for August 3, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. to give the Company and members time enough to prepare.

Mayor Blais, seconded by Trustee Earl, offered the following resolution:

RESOLUTION NO. 77, 2021

WHEREAS, Matt Oswald has submitted his letter of resignation as Fire Chief and from the Fire Department;

WHEREAS, the Chief's vacancy needs to be filled in a timely manner;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Lake George accepts Chief Matt Oswald's resignation; and

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Village Board hereby sets the date of August 3, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. for a special election to fill the Chief's position for the rest of the term;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that First Assistant Chief Brandon Combs will assume the responsibilities of the Chief until after the special election;

BE IT ALSO RESOLVED, if a current officer is elected Chief, that position will not be filled until the next regular election.

VOTING **Ayes: 4** **Blais, Earl, Root, Perry**
Nays: 0
Absent: 1 **Mastrodomenico**

RESOLUTION NO. 77, 2021 ADOPTED. **June 7, 2021**

Mayor Blais reported that the County has committed to support in the amount of \$25,000. towards the fireworks shows. Mayor Blais confirmed that the Chamber is working on getting other sponsors as well. He noted that Mr. Dow has contacted him and is planning a fireworks show on July 3. Mayor Blais noted that Village shows are already planned for July 1, July 4 and July 8. He suggested that the July 1 show be taken off the schedule. The Board agreed. He also reminded the Board that these shows are dependent upon approval and compliance with a safety plan.

Mayor Blais commented that Ottawa Street is like a race track, with vehicles racing and burning out on a regular basis. Superintendent Lanfear will see what we've got in stock for speed bumps.

Robb Hickey of Smith Street attended via Zoom. He noted that he is concerned about the increase in his sewer bill. Mayor Blais confirmed that his bill is listed with a \$97. per year increase. Mr. Hickey made the point that he is just over the Village line, and he doesn't feel he should pay the "outside Village" fees. He asked to meet with Mayor Blais. Mayor Blais confirmed that he is not a Village taxpayer and that is why there is an additional fee for outside the Village users. Mr. Hickey also made some comments about replacing the Fire Chief. And lastly, Mr. Hickey confirmed that he will wait to hear from Superintendent Lanfear and Trustee Perry in regards to the Smith Street project that they were working on.

There was a motion by Trustee Perry to adjourn at 10:40 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra J. McKinney
Village Clerk

06-7-21 special