

**Village of Woodstock  
Board of Trustees Meeting  
February 14, 2023  
6:30 pm  
Town Hall & Zoom  
Minutes**

**Draft minutes are subject to approval.**

**Present:** Chair Seton McIlroy, Jeffrey Kahn, Brenda Blakeman, Bill Corson, Gabe DeLeon, Eric Duffy, Nikki Nourse, Jill Davies, Mike Silverman, Wendy Marrinan, Tess Hunter, Police Chief Robbie Blish, Beth Finlayson, Jane Warren, David Brown

**A. Call to order**

1. Chair McIlroy called the Village Trustees meeting of February 14, 2023, to order at 6:38 pm.

**B. Citizen comments – none.**

**C. Additions to & deletions from posted agenda**

1. Additions
  - a. Short term rentals
  - b. Executive session

**D. Manager's report**

1. Mr. Duffy stated that he spent a lot of time meeting with and getting to know the Village employees He has met with State Rep Tesha Buss to talk about working together, assisting with grants, and building a constructive relationship. The Zoning Assistant position has been posted and we are starting interviews this week. We are still in negotiations with the Police Union. They are meeting weekly. The sewer bills are going out this week. They are working on a plan to get out into the community and create opportunity for the community to interact with me. He is putting together an ARPA survey that they are going to have posted on the website. This will give them a sense of what the community wants, and he will present into the Trustees. The primary responsibility of the Listers is to determine the fair marketplace of the property in the Village and Town. They have two very qualified Listers, Tim McCarthy and Kathy Avellino.

**E. Police Chief's report**

1. The Police Department is fully staffed. They welcomed their newest officer on board on February 6<sup>th</sup> and that was Kirsten Murphy. Officer Murphy is a Woodstock native. She has over seven years of law enforcement experience and a bachelor's degree in criminal justice. She is also on the Woodstock Ambulance, and she is a firefighter. She will do a great job. The Dispatch radio system has been upgraded. This allows officers to talk to each other if needed instead of only being able to talk through Dispatch. This would be beneficial during critical incidents like what happened last summer. They also have an emergency button on their portable radios. Corporal Holmes attended the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Association Supervisory Leadership Institute. It is a weeklong training. The revenue for meters this month was \$9,515.40.

**F. Permits**

**1. Use of the Green permit – Puppies & Pooches on Parade – Friends of the NWPL**

- a. Ms. Warren stated that she is the Secretary of the Library and is the Chairperson of Puppies & Pooches. This event will be held on the last Saturday of August this year. There are no major changes.

Motion: by Mr. Kahn to approve the Use of The Green permit for Puppies & Pooches on Parade as submitted by the Friends of the NWPL with the condition that they submit their Certificate of Insurance in one month prior to the event.

Seconded: by Ms. Blakeman.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

**2. Parade permit – Covered Bridges Half Marathon – CBHM Inc**

- a. Mr. Silverman stated that he has been co-directing this race for 15 years. Nothing has changed. They have already communicated with police departments and the Sheriff's Department on the course. They hope to bring business to the Woodstock community as they have in the past.
- b. Mr. Kahn stated that this is a wonderful event.
- c. Mr. Silverman stated that medical is taken care of by West Hartford. They usually have 16 people for that.

Motion: by Mr. Kahn to approve the parade permit for the Covered Bridges Half Marathon as submitted by CBHM Inc.

Seconded: by Mr. DeLeon.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

**G. Old business**

**1. Review of sidewalk study**

- a. Mr. Kahn stated that him and Ms. Blakeman did a lot of walking around the Village sidewalks to compare the list that was presented by the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission did not take into account how many people were using certain areas. They only looked at the physical condition of the sidewalks. He and Ms. Blakeman created a list of suggested prioritizations based on how bad things were but also how much they were being used. They have some recommendations that they have come up with. One of the suggestions is a very short stretch from Linden Hill of about 50 feet. That is very bad. It is on the Planning Commission's list as a very high priority as well. It is not highly trafficked, but it is extremely bad. The next one they are suggesting is definitely based on usage. It is from the elementary school to Vail Field on the Western side of Route 106. This is used by the elementary school kids extensively especially in the spring and fall. It is a really bad section. There is also a small section starting at Cross Street and going down Court Street on the right hand side.
- b. Ms. Finlayson stated that there are also a couple of bad spots in front of TD Bank.

**H. New business**

**1. Banner on the Green – March for Meals**

a. February 27<sup>th</sup> – March 3<sup>rd</sup>

Motion: by Chair McIlroy to approve the banner on the Green for March for Meals for February 27, 2023, to March 3, 2023.

Seconded: by Mr. Kahn.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

~~2. Article on the Village Meeting ballot to okay voters to authorize the replacement of elected Listers with professionally qualified Assessors to be hired by the Town and approved by the Trustees – deleted.~~

**3. Approval of the Village Warning**

- a. Remove Article 3 which is about the Listers. It only needs to be on the Town Warning. They will look to see if they can get rid of auditors. The deadline to post the Warning is this Friday. They would like to review the budget numbers first. They will have a 15 minute meeting on Thursday at 8:30 am.

**4. Village ARPA funds discussion**

- a. There is \$164,033 left to spend. They will send out a survey to the citizens to see what the public would like to do with those funds.

**5. Proposal to begin an Adopt-a-Park Program in the Village**

- a. Ms. Blakeman stated that she would like to try to get people that are interested in each of the parks and have one head person and other people with work that person. They can come together once a month and meet with Mr. Duffy and go over what their ideas might be for their particular park. They want to make sure they are following all the rules and regulations. She will find out all the particulars about the program. With spring approaching it is a great time to get this program going.
- b. Chair McIlroy stated that she thinks it is a great idea.
- c. Ms. Marrinan stated that she thinks it is a really neat idea. It would simplify things to have a representative that got a group that represented each park. She supports this idea.
- d. Mr. Corson stated that this is a great idea. Somebody has to get enthusiasm going to have the leaders of each park and have it coordinated.
- e. Ms. Blakeman stated that she will come up with a plan of what this will look like and talk more about it next meeting.

**6. Request regarding signs in the Village – Brown**

- a. Mr. Brown stated that a number of years ago, he found himself in front of what is now M&T Bank on Saturday. He had a lot of people getting off a bus and ask him questions. He developed an app that gives visitors information about the Village. The app is only useful if people know about it. There was a sign during the pandemic that told people to wear masks. He could repaint these old signs and put a QR code there for the app that shows people where to shop and where to eat.
- b. Chair McIlroy stated that traditionally all of visitor information has been coordinated through the Chamber. They could add the QR code to the sign the Chamber puts outside the bank for the bus people.

- c. Ms. Finlayson reminded everyone this is not a Chamber app.
- d. Chair McIlroy stated that she is concerned because the app is not something that managed by the Town, ED, or the Chamber of Commerce.
- e. Ms. Finlayson stated that they have an unbelievably beautiful website that is for the Chamber, EDC, and Town. They have not figured out how to merge and work together with Visit Woodstock.
- f. Mr. DeLeon stated that they have a lot of signs. They probably need to revisit this.
- g. Mr. Kahn agreed. They need to be very careful with how many signs, but one sign may be fine.
- h. Ms. Marrinan stated that she applauds the suggestion for a broader conversation in the context of what is public signage for and who is it owned by.
- i. Ms. Finlayson stated that maybe they could have a QR code that brings people to the Chamber, EDC website.

**I. Other business**

**1. Short term rentals**

- a. Mr. Kahn stated that a few years ago the Trustees created an ordinance involving short term rentals in the Village of Woodstock and rules surrounding them. One of the elements of it is a registration fee which is \$75. Registrations are due by the end of April every year. Every year they have to pay the registration. They must also be visited by Fire Chief David Green to make sure they are up to code for fire and safety. So far, they have only one registration completed. He suggested changing the fee to \$150 to register a short term rental for a year. He does not think that is a dramatic increase.
- b. Ms. Blakeman suggested it be \$200.
- c. Chair McIlroy stated that long term rentals have to get permits through Planning & Zoning. They also have to be up to code. The Planning Commission is taking a comprehensive look at the short term rentals in the Village and Town. She thinks they should wait until after this review is completed.
- d. Mr. Kahn stated that he thinks there is no harm in raising the fee tonight. They are looking at various ways to increase income for what they do without effecting the taxpayer. This would raise their income. Down the road there may be other changes to this short term rental ordinance that they want to do based on the Planning Commission's recommendations. This is a modest fee. There is a waiting period before this goes into effect anyway.

Motion: by Mr. Kahn to raise the annual registration fee for short term rentals to \$200.

Seconded: by Ms. Blakeman.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 4-1-0, passed. (Mr. Kahn for, Ms. Blakeman for, Mr. Corson for, Mr. DeLeon for, Chair McIlroy against)

**2. Executive session**

Motion: by Chair McIlroy to enter executive session to discuss the Police Union negotiations at 8:19 pm.

Seconded: by Mr. Kahn.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

The Village Trustees exited executive session at 8:31 pm and resumed the public meeting.

**J. Minutes**

**1. 1/3/23 minutes**

a. Mr. – Ms.

**2. 1/10/23 minutes**

Motion: by Mr. Kahn to approve the minutes for 1/3/23 and 1/10/23 minutes with the one change noted above.

Seconded: by Mr. DeLeon.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

**K. Adjournment**

Motion: by Mr. Kahn to adjourn the meeting at 8:33 pm.

Seconded: by Ms. Blakeman.

Discussion: none.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

*Respectfully submitted,  
Nikki Nourse*