

Village of Canton, New York

VILLAGE BOARD MEETING

Meeting Minutes: August 17, 2020

Board Present:

Michael Dalton, Mayor
Beth Larrabee, Trustee
Klaus Proemm, Trustee

Carol Pynchon, Trustee
Anna Sorensen, Trustee

Others Present:

Gerald Ducharme, Village Attorney
Jim Putman, Recreation Director
Leigh Rodriguez, Economic Developer
Cindy Brand, Assessor

Sally Noble, Clerk/Treasurer
Cara Adams, Deputy Clerk
Jeff Murray, Code Officer
Linda Casserly, Historian

COLLEGE REOPENING: Mayor Dalton stated that he invited President Fox from St. Lawrence University and President Zvi Szafran from SUNY Canton to speak at the meeting. He stated that he would like them to give an update on reopening the individual schools. Mayor Dalton stated that they have been meeting on a regular basis throughout the summer as both schools prepare for the return of the students. He stated that the President's are here to answer any questions that anybody might have.

President Zvi Szafran from SUNY Canton thanked Mayor Dalton and everyone from the Village and Town of Canton for the help and support that they have giving SUNY Canton through these challenging times. He stated that they are looking forward to welcoming the students back to Canton. He stated that early returners are starting to come back today. He stated that some of the programs have always been purely online and they will continue that way. He stated that they are offering the traditional range of programs that are offered face to face and the program is going to be offered online for the larger courses and smaller courses would be done either online or face to face or hybrid. President Szafran stated that they will be looking at the students and they are the lifeblood of the Community. He stated that students who step foot on campus will be tested, if they are a resident on campus, living in the residence halls or a commuter, they will be tested. Testing will be done randomly every week over the course of the term. SUNY Canton will be using the test out of Upstate Medical, the test eliminates the possibility of false negatives. President Szafran stated that he gets asked a lot about athletics. He stated that the golf teams are competing and they will have athletics in sports that are safe. Golf is the first one and the Regional Competition will be up here. Each sport will be looked at individually. President Szafran stated that if you come on campus you will see things that have changed to make sure that everything is safe, classrooms will have fewer chairs to have students socially distance and wear masks. The filtering systems are being upgraded in the buildings. President Szafran mentioned that it is challenging times for our students. He stated that is proud of the welcoming atmosphere. He stated that the folks in the Village and Town Elected officials, Police Officers and Health Officials have been extremely wonderful partners with helping SUNY Canton to make sure they are doing things in the safest possible way. President Szafran thanked all of the partners in the Community for helping them come this far.

Mayor Dalton asked President Szafran if they anticipate more students staying on campus through the weekends?

President Szafran stated that all four colleges made changes once in and once out process. Students will start classes on August 31 and will be arriving the week of August 24 through the 31st. SUNY Canton will be discouraging them from leaving the North Country Area. There will be no Fall break this year. Once the College starts they will be going straight through Thanksgiving and then the students will return home. The Students will finish the rest of the semester online and finals online.

President William Fox from St. Lawrence University stated that they have had several conversations with local Law Enforcement about the return of students to the Community. He stated the conversations have been very constructive, positive and reassuring. He informed the Board that they have started testing students and staff. He stated that St. Lawrence University plan and model is to spread the calendar and spread the enrollment. The academic year is going to 11 months. Classes start on August 26th, students are coming in incrementally and the International Students have been on campus for more than a week to quarantine for two weeks. President Fox stated that there are fewer than 100 students who will need to quarantine before coming to campus. He stated since St. Lawrence University had the opportunity to do a three semester academic year, they will be down 600 students living on campus. He stated that they will have about 1,650 students on campus and 275 students doing fully remote. He stated that the fall semester is for first year students and seniors, since they are fully vested to be at St. Lawrence University. He stated that there will be about 40 students who will be commuting. He stated that the students living and working on campus will have to sign the Laurentian Pact, which is a social contract about behavior, expectations and values. President Fox stated that the students will be tested upon arrival and then will be tested monthly. Lab services will be provided by Broad Institute at MIT at Harvard, a driver will be going there daily and will receive results in 24 hours. He stated that the plan is integrated with the values of Canton. He stated that he wants to make sure that Josie's, Sergi's and Little Italy are making enough pizzas over the next couple of weeks and that will be an indicator of the vital local economy. He stated that the Brewer Bookstore is now open to the public and the gyms are now allowed to open and SLU plans for the facilities to be used by the Community members with guidelines in place. President Fox stated that people are interested to know how St. Lawrence University is doing in terms of finances since they are tuition driven. He stated that he spoke with the CFO and they are running on target with the Fall budget.

Mayor Dalton congratulated President Fox on his upcoming retirement next year.

Trustee Sorensen thanked both President's for sharing the information. She asked how they are communicating to the students about the expectations in terms of behavior in the community with mask wearing and distancing?

President Fox stated that they are overloading the student's with communications. He stated that it is a once in once out, restricted on travel and with the freedom they have there is a lot of responsibility, students will be receiving masks and getting a kit when they arrive.

President Szafran added that they sent out a letter to the Community with the expectations of the students, when they enter into stores with a mask, socially distancing and doing what is right for the Community. He stated that they are counting on all the business owners in the area to make sure everyone is doing what is safe for their establishments and that everyone is working together.

Trustee Larrabee thanked both of the President's for working so hard with their teams. She stated that she has a daughter attending St. Lawrence University and a niece going to SUNY Canton. She stated that they both were eager to get back to campus and participate in the college experience. She stated that the messages have been received and there has been talk with their friends who are coming back about the new regulations and rules. The messages have been received and everyone wants it to be successful and will keep each other accountable to make this work.

Trustee Pynchon asked the President's who the point people are at the campuses if they see something concerning from the Students?

President Szafran stated that the contact person for general safety issues would be Derek Converse, Vice President of Student Life is Courtney Bish or Executive Director for University Relations is Lenore Vanderzee. President Szafran stated that she is welcome to call him, as well.

President Fox stated for St. Lawrence University that simplest way would be communicate with the Chief Safety and Security Officer, Pat Gagnon on the 24/7 line.

Mayor Dalton thanked President Fox and President Szafran for coming to the meeting to provide an update.

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

Mayor Dalton added the following under New Business:

f. Second Notice Fee

g. Approve Fire Department Member- James Burdick

- a. Approve minutes of July 20, 2020-** Trustee Proemm made a motion to approve the minutes of July 20, 2020 seconded by Trustee Larrabee. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

ACCEPTANCE OF DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

Economic Developer Report- Economic Developer Rodriguez updated the Board that the Regional Economic Development Councils are not going to be doing the Grant Cycle this year. She stated that they are surveying the businesses to provide feedback on the needs and formulating what the programming will be next year. She has sent that out to the mailing list through the newsletter. She stated that Dairy Queen is opening September 18, 2020, they are working on a grand opening. The elevator project at the Canton Housing is getting ready to go out to bid and the water project is going to start.

Trustee Sorensen asked if Economic Developer Rodriguez will have access to the survey data?

Economic Developer Rodriguez stated that the survey is coming from the Regional Council, she stated that she hopes once they have the results that they would make them sharable. She stated she will keep her posted.

Trustee Pynchon asked if the Water Project has started on Maple Hill?

Mayor Dalton stated that they have started to move equipment over to the Pavilion and should be starting any day.

Economic Developer Rodriguez added that they have anticipated completion in October.

Historian Report- Historian Casserly informed that Board that she met with Ruthie Merrill and Helen Kenyan. She is able to interview the seniors by sitting outside and talking.

Treasurer Report- Treasurer/Clerk Noble updated the board on the email she received on sales tax. There was a drop in sales tax but not as drastic, as we expected. The Sales Tax Collections dropped 8.2% in July. Mayor Dalton and Clerk Noble have been working on the Fleet Management Enterprise; they are ready to move ahead. Clerk Noble stated that Deputy Clerk Adams and her were using their new laptops for the meeting. Clerk Noble informed the Board that the Collection of taxes is up from last year.

Code Officer Report- Code Officer Murray stated that the Fountain Project has started and is starting to be rebuilt now.

Mayor Dalton asked Code Officer Murray about Tallman Drive?

Code Officer Murray stated that he spoke with the owner and they will be moving the dirt out of the way on Tallman Drive.

Police Chief Report- Chief Santimaw stated that the new patrol car will be delivered on Friday. Chief Santimaw also thanked both Colleges. He stated he is lucky to be working with the Village, Colleges and other resources on the Police Reform. He stated that they have had several zoom meetings over the last couple of months and have received good information. He stated that due to everybody being supportive it will be a long process but will be easier due to everyone being supportive.

Assessor Report- Assessor Brand did not have anything to add to her report.

Mayor Dalton said that he received notifications there is going to be two challenges to assessments.

Trustee Sorensen asked Assessor Brand if there is a significant proportion of homes in the Village that are under assessed?

Assessor Brand stated that based on the statistics when she ran the reports that the low values of the homes are under assessed. Homes in the Village have sold and the equalization rate keeps dropping. The home sales are coming in over and above what they are assessed at. She stated that they are doing the data collections. The important thing right now is to go through all of the records and make sure what they have is correct. She stated that they are finding a lot of things that are not in the files but are in the house, square footage, number of bedrooms and bathrooms. The equalization rate is at 90% right now and there is a good chance that it might stay at 90 for the year.

Recreation Report- Recreation Director added that he spoke with the Foreman who is working on the water and they will be breaking ground Monday morning.

Recreation Director Putman stated that the Committee and he came to a decision that Taylor Park will be closing at 7:00pm on September 7th which will give them some time to finish up projects that were started before opening. Attendance has been down significantly and kayak rentals are down. He stated that gyms and fitness facilities will be allowed to reopen. Department of Health would have to conduct an inspection. He stated that he made a call to the Department of Health regarding fitness classes. Details will have to be worked out. The Recreation Committee discussed when to reopen the Pavilion for winter and are currently working with the major stakeholder to fit around the requirements.

Recreation Director Putman informed the Board that he has submitted his Letter of Resignation effective September 4th.

The Board thanked Recreation Director Putman.

Trustee Sorensen made a motion to approve the Department Head Reports. Trustee Larrabee seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Trustee Pynchon stated Economic Developer Rodriguez has been distributing signs from the IDA supporting County Businesses. She stated that they have designed yard signs that say Canton Cares- We take Care of Each Other, Wear a Mask and Social Distance. Economic Developer Rodriguez and Part-Time Clerk Jeni will be distributing the flyers for people to put in their windows and five banners will be put at the entrances to Canton. These are to remind people that safe social distancing, wearing a mask and we say no to racism. She stated that these are good messages for people entering the community.

Communication and Technology Committee- Trustee Pynchon informed the Board that Deputy Clerk Adams is moderating the Zoom Meeting. The moderating has been moved from Town Councilperson Washo and Town Councilperson Blackburn to the Clerk's Office. Trustee Pynchon stated that the Clerk's Office has been cooperative and willing to take on new things. She said that is she proud of the Village Clerk's Office with how great they are to work with and function together.

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION:

None

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. **Miner Street Update-** Mayor Dalton stated that the Miner Street project is progressing, they were getting ready to do the curbing. He stated that he needs to speak with the Foreman to see where they are at with the project and verify where they are with the plans.
- b. **Ethics- Where we are Headed-** Trustee Pynchon stated that the Ethics Law has been passed but there has been discussion changing things up and instead of having a Village and Town Ethics Board that they would use the County's Ethics Board but after recent situations with the County, the Town and Village have starting to rethink that decision. Trustee Pynchon stated that there was a lot of discussion at the Town of Canton Board

Meeting and they decided that they were going to plan to have a Village and Town Board of Ethics. The Village has already asked Katie Halloran-Murphy and Ryan Ames. The Town will need to decide on two members and then the Village and Town will come up with a shared member. Trustee Pynchon thought that the Village Attorney Ducharme and the Town Attorney Guftason would work with the Board to help with what the next steps would be. The Town and Village Board stated that they do not want to be seen as in anyway with guiding, suggesting, requiring or manipulating the process of setting up how the ethics process works with reporting and consequences. She stated that they discussed using Roamers Office which we will both share to be on the Council for the Ethics Board.

Attorney Ducharme stated that he spoke with Town Attorney Guftason about providing council. Town Attorney would provide council for the Village and the Village Attorney would provide council for the Town on ethics issues. This would have a degree of separation. Attorney Ducharme informed the Board that there will be a slight update with the law about the enforcement of the financial disclosure piece. He stated that the financial disclosure statement will be filled with the Village Clerk and be passed onto the Ethics Board. He stated that there is no piece in the law that talks about who would enforce it. He suggested passing it off to the Ethics Board or keeping it for Village Board duties. Attorney Ducharme stated to answer a question that came across his email is that the law is currently written that the Ethics Board is there to provide advisory opinions and the relevant board would take action on the advisory opinion.

Trustee Pynchon suggested proceeding with how the law is written.

- c. **Executive Order 203 Update-** Mayor Dalton stated that there has been no guidance from the Governor on the Executive Order 20, the Village has decided to forge ahead. Mayor Dalton stated that he, Trustee Larrabee, Trustee Sorensen, and Police Chief Santimaw have meet several times via zoom to put a program together, to meet the standards that exist right now.

Trustee Sorensen and Trustee Larrabee presented a PowerPoint presentation that can be viewed <https://cantonny.gov/village-board-presents-plan-to-respond-to-eo-203/>.

Chief Santimaw stated he is truly thankful for all of the hard work that Trustee Sorensen, Trustee Larrabee and Mayor Dalton have put into this. He stated that they have received a lot of good information and good things will come out of this.

Mayor Dalton stated that they are looking for balance on the Advisory Committee. He suggested that people fill out the forms and a solid Advisory Committee will be formed.

Attorney Ducharme asked if the meeting will be held on September 14 and be virtual?

Trustee Larrabee stated that was the plan.

Trustee Sorensen stated that they are hoping people will fill out the interest form and to be able to constitute the Board by September 1st.

- d. **Update on Changes to Village Code § 233-2 § 233-3-** Attorney Ducharme stated that there is quite a bit of case law on the proposed changes. He placed an inquiry to the

Conference of Mayors to see if they have any municipalities that have embarked upon a process of trying to restrict hateful language and have had their statutes overturned on appeal because of free speech.

Mayor Dalton asked if he should keep this item on the agenda going forward?

Attorney Ducharme stated that he would like to keep reporting on the topic. There might be changes to make to the code but we have to be careful with the First Amendment restrictions.

Trustee Sorensen thanked Attorney Ducharme.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. Authorize payment of vouchers & transfer of funds** – Trustee Proemm made a motion to authorize payment of vouchers & transfer of funds for abstract # **03 of 2020-2021**. Trustee Larrabee seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

| | | | |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|
| General Fund | \$75,660.44 | Golf Course | \$10,243.72 |
| Water Fund | \$1,254.29 | Joint Activity | \$3,250.94 |
| Sewer Fund | \$5,228.69 | | |

- b. Appoint Provisional Superintendent of Public Works-** Trustee Pynchon made a motion to appoint Marty Miller as Provisional subject to the Civil Service Exam as Superintendent of Public Works at a rate of \$76,500 yearly to start on September 14, 2020. Trustee Sorensen seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Motion carries.
- c. Discuss a Proposed Complete Streets Resolution-** After discussion the Board decided to wait on the Complete Streets Resolution until they can have a conversation with the new Superintendent.
- d. Discuss a Resolution to Provide Direct COVID-19 Related Federal Aid to All Municipalities-** Trustee Sorensen made a motion to approve the Resolution to Provide Direct Covid-19 Related Federal Aid to all Municipalities. Trustee Proemm seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

Provide Direct COVID-19 Related Federal Aid to All Municipalities

WHEREAS, the federal government recently enacted the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act to address the economic fallout from the coronavirus pandemic in the United States; and

WHEREAS, Section 601 of the CARES Act (P.L. 116-136) provides a \$150 billion fund for states, tribal governments, and units of local government with a population in excess of 500,000 people; and

WHEREAS, less than one-half of 1 percent of municipalities in the entire United States meet this population threshold and are thus eligible to receive direct funding from the federal government; and

WHEREAS, of the 534 villages in New York, none of them are eligible for direct federal funding under the CARES Act, including the Village of Canton; and

WHEREAS, villages provide essential services to the 2 million New York village residents, including, but not limited to, ambulance, police and fire protection services, building and code enforcement, and highway maintenance, and have continued to do so throughout the ongoing health crisis; and

WHEREAS, the coronavirus pandemic has created significant financial stress for local governments in New York as an estimated \$2 billion in sales tax revenue has been lost, as well as other sources of revenue such as permit fees, justice court fines, and mortgage recording tax; and

WHEREAS, the depletion of different revenue sources for local governments, combined with lack of funding, will result in reducing essential services or shifting the cost onto real property taxpayers, many of whom are experiencing their own financial stress;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Village Board of the Village of Canton calls upon United States Congressional Representative Elise Stefanik, Senator Charles Schumer, and Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, to support federal funding related to the coronavirus pandemic that is directly delivered to all municipalities, regardless of population size.

- e. **Complete Streets Nomination of a New Member-** Trustee Proemm made a motion to nominate Phil Lamarche to the Complete Streets Committee. Trustee Pynchon seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Motion carries.
- f. **2nd Notice Fee-** Trustee Larrabee made a motion to approve the No Fee for Second Notice on Taxes Resolution. Trustee Proemm seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, Section 987 of the Real Property Tax Law provides for the Tax Collector to mail a notice to each owner of real property upon which taxes remain unpaid on the current tax roll to which his/her warrant relates, and

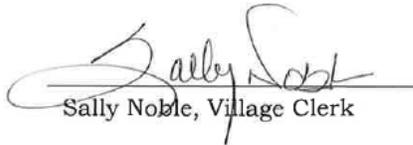
WHEREAS, the governing body of the Village of Canton must adopt a resolution setting the fee for the mailing of such notice. The additional penalty can be set at zero (\$0.00) dollars but not more than two (\$2.00) dollars to be charged against each parcel requiring this second notice.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Village of Canton does hereby approve the penalty of zero (\$0.00) dollars to be charged against each parcel requiring this second notice.

Motion made by Trustee Larrabee and seconded by Trustee Proemm to approve the above resolution. All voted in favor. The motion carries.

AYES 5

NAYS 0


Sally Noble, Village Clerk

8/17/20
Date

- g. New Fire Department Member-** Trustee Larrabee made a motion to approve new Fire Department Member James Burdick. Trustee Sorensen seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION- Trustee Proemm made a motion to enter into executive session at 8:09pm for a purpose as identified in Public Officers Law §105(1) (F). Trustee Larrabee seconded the motion. All in favor. The motion carries.

Trustee Pynchon made a motion to come out of executive session at 8:45PM. The motion was seconded by Trustee Larrabee. All voted in favor. The motion carries.

Trustee Larrabee made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:55PM. Trustee Sorensen seconded the motion All voted in favor. The motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,

Cara Adams
Deputy Clerk