

Village of Canton, New York

VILLAGE BOARD MEETING

Meeting Minutes: January 19, 2022

Board Present:

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

Carol Pynchon, Trustee
Anna Sorensen, Trustee

Others Present:

Gerald Ducharme, Village Attorney
Tim Nolan, Code Enforcement
James Santimaw, Chief
Linda Casserly, Historian

Sally Noble, Clerk/Treasurer
Meghan Richardson, Rec Director
Cindy Brand, Assessor
Leigh Rodriguez, ED

Public Hearings:

6:20 – Adoption of a proposed Local Law that would add Chapter 129 to the Canton Village Code titled “Complete Streets” – The Mayor read the legal notice. Trustee Pynchon read a letter from Dan Dominie from CR 27 in the town of Canton and the Mayor read an email from Kathleen Stein of Judson Street. Both were in support of the proposed Local Law. There were no other comments. The Mayor closed the public hearing at 6:30.

The Mayor added two items to the agenda. 6 I. Appoint Nan Clingman to the Housing Authority Board. 6 J. Possible rehire of a part-time employee

The Mayor also read a statement about the availability of live captioning on the zoom meeting and how to access it.

ORDER OF BUSINESS:

- a. **Approve minutes of December 14 & 15, 2021-** Trustee Pynchon made a motion to approve the minutes of December 14 & 15, 2021 with a change to the Economic Development report. It says step into it should read Step II nomination. A second was made by Trustee Proemm. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

ACCEPTANCE OF DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS:

Economic Development – Leigh said there were a couple of debriefing meetings about unsuccessful applications that were helpful. One of them was for the Downtown Revitalization initiative and they have a plan for trying to address some of the things that can be enhanced in our next application. The other was local waterfront revitalization program grant. What that

came down to was that we did not apply for an implementation grant. We had a planning grant prepared.

We also learned that for the Grasse River we do not have a local waterfront revitalization plan approved by the state. To have it be a local waterfront revitalization plan there are some further steps we need to take. We are having a presentation by our DOS rep next week to learn what it would take to get to that point.

We did receive the Local government efficiency grant that the town was the applicant. That will allow us to do the study on Stiles Avenue.

She also mentioned they are still looking at the CDBG Cares grant application. A new notice of funding availability was released at the beginning of the year. This is on the agenda for the Joint meeting.

Recreation Director – Meghan reported the pavilion is in full swing. Girls' hockey is getting close to the end of the season. Meghan has been contacted by the State for High School athletics. They reached out to us to host the play in game in girls' varsity final four that's going to be hosted at SUNY Canton. That is going to be in early February.

The fundraising for the canoe kayak launch continues. Channel 7 did a news feature on it. We are close to getting the total amount that we need for the project.

The grooming of Partridge Run for skiing and snowshoeing is not going to happen this year. We were hoping to borrow equipment but we were unsuccessful. The opportunity is definitely going to remain on her list for the future.

There was a Rec Committee meeting on January 12 with the two new town reps. They are John Taillon and Mary Ann Ashley. Meghan is starting to look at recreational opportunities for summer. She has reached out to SUNY Canton because they have some majors that could help us do a summer program and they could receive college credit. She has also reached out to the Dept of Health to clarify guidelines.

Code Enforcement – Tim said he had nothing to add to his report.

Treasurer Report – Clerk Noble reported that she attended several meetings during the month. She shared the information regarding the number of death certificates and copies for the year. The .gov domain has been renewed at no charge this year. It is normally a \$400 cost. There are other items to be addressed on the agenda.

Police Chief Report- Chief Santimaw said that he had an update on the project that is happening in the front of the PD. They are trying to harden the front of the office and give a little more privacy to some of their victims that they have had an on-going problem with. He wanted to thank DPW but Dave and Kyle especially.

Assessor – Assessor Brand said she was contacted today by NYS Dept of Taxation and Finance to let her know anyone in the mobile home park who has a Star exemption will be getting an

application from the state. They will be getting a stock credit check instead of the exemption. This is good news for them because before the exemption was either taken off their lot rent or the owner of the mobile home park would send the owner of the home a check. The check will be mailed directly to the home owner.

The State was going to be doing a class on solar valuing. There was an error in the model that came out apparently. It has been corrected. We are talking about the big solar projects not the residential ones. The class will be in February. Trustee Sorensen asked Cindy about the mention in her report about anyone who is receiving a basic star exemption and turns 65 by December 2022 with income under \$92,000 should call Cindy's office. Cindy said it would be great to get the word out on that.

Historian – She often helps people with ancestry. Kevin Acres got on the Town meeting because she had put a lot about trying to restore the courthouse with Ruth Doyle and the County. They are trying to apply for District National Register from the Courthouse down to the Sheriff's house. She is working with Ruth Doyle and a committee of legislators trying to get that designation. There is now a County Historian, Nancy LaFaver. Linda's report will be shared with the Board tomorrow.

A report was sent by the animal control officer and the Fire Chief.

Trustee Larrabee made a motion to accept the Department Head reports. The motion was seconded by Trustee Sorensen. All voted in favor. The motion carries.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Public Safety – Trustee Larrabee said the committee has met a couple of times with the newly formed Community engagement committee. They are working on an event during Winterfest. The event will be publicized when the details have been worked out. They are looking at February 5th as a date.

Recreation – Trustee Pynchon said meetings with the new town board members have been happening. Letting them know what the committees are about and what we are working on.

Communications and Technology – Trustee Pynchon reported that we did some website training through North Shore Solutions. It will be done again with Carol and Anna as the trainers. We will also be looking at navigation issues on the website. If anyone has any suggestions, please let us know. With a lot of good advocacy by Anna we are working to enhance accessibility for people when we are meeting virtually. We're able to use the closed captioning now.

Shared Services – Trustee Pynchon said has not yet met with the new committee members. We and the town have approved all but the recreation agreement. The committee will be meeting shortly to see if we can get that done.

Finance Committee – The committee has been formalized and constituted and we’ve been meeting monthly and making great progress. There are items on the agenda but we are making great progress.

Trustee Pynchon has also reached out to NYCOM for some affirmative action and equal opportunity employer statements we had talked about. Just to have a jumping off point.

Broadband – Trustee Sorensen said that John Taillon from the Town has joined their committee.

Infrastructure Committee – Trustee Sorensen added that at the recommendation of Legislator Fay the Mayor has submitted a letter to the County Administrator and the legislature asking for them to assist us in completing our secondary water source project. The County as we all know has ARPA funding same as we do. We need a secondary water source.

We are absent a Superintendent of Public Works at this point. The Mayor has been working everyday with Rick to keep the day to day stuff going as well as to keep us moving on these planning projects. As we are in this period of transition Klaus and Anna thought it might be useful for the Board to understand a little bit of their perspective. Their primary concerns were encapsulated around communication. The committee is recommending that the board look for that strength during the process. There is over 100 years of experience in that department. The committee wants to give them a shout out for what they do.

Community Choice Energy – Klaus wanted to inform the Board we will be starting the public education part. The next 60 days there will be items both online and in the local papers informing residents about the upcoming opportunity. At the end of the 60 days every Village resident will get a letter explaining the whole deal. It will let them know they have the option to opt out if they wish. There will then be another 30-day period of public sessions. In 90 days, we are looking at the start of switching over to total renewable power source. We have a new representative Alexia Lamb. There is a zoom meeting with her tomorrow at 10:00 am if anyone is interested.

COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION:

- a. **County Legislator Update-** Legislator Fay was in attendance. He had 3 things he felt were important for the Village. The first thing was the American Rescue Plan. He is on the County Committee which Kevin Acres chairs. In regards to the second water source he thinks we’ve got a couple things to our advantage. We have shovel ready projects. We have to emphasize to the county that we are talking about shovel ready projects, really, he thinks ours is the only one. He thinks the Mayor’s letter helps us. This should have been done years ago. The county received over \$21 million to distribute. There is a meeting on February 2. Hopefully \$3 million will be going to water and sewer.

The next thing he would like to talk about is the methadone clinic going out on 310. He thinks this is a big concern. He was shocked the other day when he was talking to the Mayor and the Mayor said the only information he had was from the Chief of Police. We have to have public input. He does not understand why the County has not given you

information and asked for input. Legislator Fay says he has talked to the County and they say clearly the Community Service Director, Jay Ulrich should be talking to the Village. He doesn't know how the County can approve a methadone clinic without community input. At the very least the Chief of Police should be getting a phone call and he is sure the Mayor will want to talk to him after that. He would like to help if he can.

The third thing he would like to talk about is solar and wind power. At the last County board meeting they had a presentation by a man that was invited by a county board member, Rita Curran. The presentation was on the generation of power. One thing that seemed to be important to us as we were talking about solar/wind power. We do not have enough solar power to service our state. He pointed out that they are overlooking a lot of things and letting some people with solar and wind power run the bandwagon. On Channel 7 News tonight there was talk about problems with just solar and wind power. They pointed out that the direction some people think we should be going is small nuclear generation plants. The large plants that were designed to last 50 years they are asking for a 50-year extension. This makes him nervous.

The Mayor thanked Legislator Fay for the update, especially on the methadone piece. He will be contacting the County. The Police Chief has plenty of concerns and we want to make sure that our community is protected and understand what is coming here. And also what kind of support we can expect from the County if things go sideways. The Board, EMS, Fire Chief and Police Chief have concerns.

Trustee Sorensen asked if he knew when the County is likely to make a decision about the ARPA funds distribution. Legislator Fay said he believe on February 2 things were going to be firmed up.

Trustee Sorensen also told Legislator Fay about the joint Broadband Committee. Their goal is to reach 100% broadband coverage for the residents in the town of Canton. They have been meeting with the County Broadband Committee and Heidi Ames. They have been very helpful. She would like to put a plug in for a holistic county wide strategy for broadband.

Legislator Fay added that this is an area of government that makes him a little discouraged. He has property in the Adirondack Park. He was approached a year ago about putting a pole on the property in return for free service. That was a year ago. Nothing has happened. This is the first time in a little bit that he feels confident that we may get federal government money. He thanked her for the input and he will definitely follow up.

Trustee Pynchon inquired about the presentation regarding solar/wind. She will call the County offices tomorrow to get the contact information.

Trustee Larrabee asked if the methadone clinic was a done deal. Leg. Fay said the clinic is a done deal but he is not sure about the location.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a. **Discuss SEQRA for the Complete Streets Code** – Everyone received all the documents. The first thing that has to be done is to do a SEQRA review. Attorney Ducharme said that it's not a Type 1 action it is really an unlisted action which would require the short form review. He and Monica feel this law is designed to enhance public safety and ease of movement for all parts of the population. It is a positive environmental impact and we would be hard pressed to find any significant negative environmental impacts.

The Board reviewed Part 2. Attorney Ducharme read each section. No negative impacts were found. Trustee Pynchon made a motion to declare a negative declaration. Trustee Sorensen seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion passes.

- b. **Discuss Complete Streets Code** – Trustee Pynchon wanted to again thank Monica and Attorney Ducharme for doing a great job on focusing it to be sure that it is appropriate to us and appropriate for 2022 and beyond.

Trustee Sorensen gave a thank you to Attorney Ducharme, Monica Ryan, Trustee Pynchon, Trustee Proemm and to Toby. She had many questions that were answered in the process. One of them being capacity. Trustee Proemm made a motion to pass Local Law 1 of 2022. The motion was seconded by Trustee Pynchon. All voted in favor. The motion carries.

- c. **Comptroller's report** – The Mayor said he has been interviewed several times and has expressed our thoughts on what has occurred, the report itself, our response and what we felt was very important was that, as a board we responded to that report with our corrective action plan. He did want to point out that it was important to us that the Comptroller found no significant exceptions or instances of fraud or abuse. That was a very important piece. The AUD's have been an issue for quite a while now. We have made tremendous strides with those being completed now. There is now an active Finance Committee which he and the Deputy Mayor are tasked with.

Trustee Pynchon felt the important thing for taxpayers and the public to know is we have been working on this and we learned a whole lot. The most important thing when people read the headlines or see the articles that they are that headlines. We have the resources to move forward. She feels some very good developments are going to come out of this. We are going to talk later about the office structure and how the roles are to be distributed. It's not that we have been sitting on the report we just had not gotten any notice that it had been released yet.

Trustee Larrabee added that we have a framework in place so people in the future who are taking our positions will be equipped with a structure that they need.

Trustee Proemm thanked Mayor Dalton, Trustee Pynchon and Clerk Noble for all the work put into this.

Trustee Sorensen said she asked some very direct questions to the auditors. This is about addressing processes and programs quite literally programs in order to get the professional help that we needed to get the deal done. Several of those corrective actions have already been completed and the others are under way.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a. **Authorize payment of vouchers & transfer of funds** – Trustee Larrabee made a motion to authorize payment of vouchers & transfer of funds for abstract # 8 of 2021-2022. Trustee Pynchon seconded the motion. All voted in favor. Motion carries.

General Fund	\$106,258.99	Golf Course	\$2,838.87
Water Fund	\$33,456.43	Joint Activity	\$5,935.90
Sewer Fund	\$ 8,989.88		

- b. **Discussion of Broadband needs study agreement with MC Fiber Services** – Everyone has received a copy of the contract that the Town was going to move forward with. We spoke about this briefly at our last meeting. We had agreed to help share in the cost of that. Trustee Sorensen said we had discussed it at last meeting but we needed to bring a formal proposal to the Board for approval. The Town Supervisor has signed and gone forth with the contract. She hopes that our Board will support sharing in the cost 50/50. This is a needs assessment of the Town and Village of Canton so every address within the Town is going to be identified, based on the 911 database. Then all the existing and potential internet providers for those addresses will be identified. This is all going to be put into a mapping program so we will able to see this.

Then what happens is that any unserved, the unserved being the national standard of 100 megs will be researched as well as all potential service providers that could serve those addresses. We are going to be presented with options, including some estimates for how we could connect each of those addresses. We are also going to get some high-level information for municipally owned fiber for which there are a lot of models. So really the point of this study is to get the needs assessment to tell us what we have and what we don't and provide us options to go forward. That allows us to as a board to make a strategic plan and go after funding.

We have been in conversations with the County. They put out bid proposals for a provider to propose connecting a section of Canton. The bid opening was today and they received zero proposals. Toby added that we have a variety of choices here and what we are trying to do is focus on those choices and not make any predetermined decision on how to increase service. We are trying to look with a very open mind at the possibilities and we have some excellent help with the folks from TMC fiber and we've also garnered some new contacts because of a webinar we went to as well as the local providers at the County and DANC. We are hoping to come up with a concrete plan that takes the Town of Canton as a model and puts this service at a different level for everyone.

Trustee Sorensen said that she, John and Toby recently met with Mike Hammond, Mayor of Rensselaer Falls who is also very interested in this conversation. We have agreed to work together and see where that goes.

Mayor Dalton said we are being asked to support the contract the Town signed with MC Fiber Services at the rate of \$2,000. That is ½ the cost of the contract. He expects that money is certainly eligible for ARPA Funds use. He feels that is the proper place to take it from. Trustee Sorensen made a motion to fund this at \$2,000. Trustee Proemm seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion passes.

- c. **Approve the hiring of Tracy Fuller in the Village Clerk's Office effective January 5, 2022** - Trustee Pynchon enthusiastically made a motion to hire Tracy Fuller as of January 5. Her rate will now be \$22/hr. Trustee Sorensen seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion carries.
- d. **Appoint Megan Mousaw as Deputy Clerk** – Clerk Noble gave a short explanation of why the change was being made. With the addition of Tracy in our office we have been having conversations about skill sets and strengths. Megan has a history with the Village, she is well acquainted with our constituents. We felt that Megan could make better use of her strengths as Deputy Clerk. Tracy's background is more financial so it was the logical move to realign the jobs with those strengths. This is part of a bigger transition in the Clerk's office. Trustee Pynchon made a motion to appoint Megan Mousaw as Deputy Clerk. Trustee Larrabee seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion carries.
- e. **Appoint Tracy Fuller as Deputy Treasurer** – Trustee Larrabee made a motion to appoint Tracy Fuller as Deputy Treasurer. Trustee Sorensen seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion carries.
- f. **Joint meeting with the Town 1-26-2022** – The Mayor wanted to remind everyone of the meeting. If you have agenda items, please get them to the Mayor. It will be at 6:00 PM. It will be a zoom meeting.
- g. **Discuss amendment to the contract with River Street for additional work** - The Mayor said everyone has had the contract. We asked River Street to help us the code update and complete streets. Trustee Pynchon believes we got so much value from River Street and wholeheartedly agrees to the contract amendment. The motion was seconded by Trustee Proemm. All voted in favor. The motion carries.
- h. **Discuss Methadone Clinic scheduled for SLC's 310 building** – This has already been discussed. The Mayor feels we need more information. His goal was to make it public today. He is going to set something up with the contact we were given. He will reach out to the County Administrator. He has been doing research on this.
- i. **Appointment to the Canton Housing Authority** – The Mayor reported that Nan Clingman is interested she does need to check with her employers first. She will be filling the position left open by the resignation of Tricia Pethic. Nan's appointment will be end on 3/31/2027.

The motion was made by Trustee Sorensen, seconded by Trustee Proemm. All voted in favor. The motion passes.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Chief Santimaw added a thank you to Sally and her Deputies. He has been Chief since 2016 and could not do his job as well as he has been able to and try to get things done without support of that office. Everything from budgeting to billing, all kind of things. She is my go-to person and just wanted to say thank you. They do a lot of hard work that we don't always realize so thank you.

EXECUTIVE SESSION- Trustee Pynchon made a motion to enter into executive session at 8:18 PM for the purposes of personnel. Trustee Larrabee seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion carries.

Trustee Larrabee made a motion to come out of executive session at 9:07 PM. Trustee Sorensen seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion carries.

Trustee Pynchon made a motion to hire Walter Rexford for up to 10 hours / week at the Golf Course at a rate of \$13.20/hr. Trustee Sorensen seconded the motion. All voted in favor. The motion Carries.

Trustee Pynchon made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:09 PM. Trustee Larrabee seconded the motion All voted in favor. The motion carries.

Respectfully submitted,

Sally Noble
Village Clerk