

**VILLAGE OF CASTLETON-ON-HUDSON
BOARD OF TRUSTEES REGULAR MEETING**

March 10, 2014

Attendance:	Mayor Keegan	Trustee Pratico
	Trustee Carner	Trustee Martin
	Trustee Ryan	Attorney Crist

At 7:02 Mayor Keegan opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Due to the Clerk's absence, the minutes were taken by Trustee Pratico.

Mayor Keegan opened up the public comment period at 7:03 pm regarding the resolution to change the code books with the amended the water billing policy from semi-annual to quarterly. There was a question from the public as to "why" the Village made the change to quarterly billing. The Mayor explained it is more efficient and less overwhelming to the public to get their bill four times a year instead on only two. Also, the public will be aware of a possible problem or leak in their system after a couple of months, not half a year. There were nor more questions. The Mayor motioned to close the hearing at 7:05 pm. Trustee Martin seconded the motion. Motion carried.

The Mayor stated that there was a need to amend the minutes in which the Village made a resolution to abolish Justice Court. Trustee Ryan made a motion to accept the amended minutes, Trustee Martin seconded, motion carried.

Trustee Pratico made a motion to accept the February minutes, Trustee Martin seconded, motion carried. Trustee Carner abstained, she was not present at that meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

David Chinery President of the Schodack Historic Society, spoke about the historic site sign at 99 South Main Street – Bruce Allens's house. Mr. Chinery spoke about why the wording needs to be a specific number of words. He performed a great deal of research on this house and its history. Only factual and documented facts were used. The supposed use of this house as an Underground Railroad site was unsubstantiated. The tunnel that leads to the Hudson River was not found. He gave us the exact wording of the sign.

Mayor Keegan asked about the wording, "leased Patroon land" – The land was a farm, owned by the Van Rensselaer family. It was not the town or village house.

There will be an unveiling ceremony at some point in the future.

The Mayor motioned to approve the wording and get the sign constructed. Trustee Ryan seconded it, motion carried. The Building Inspector will contact Mr. Shinery about the sign post, digging safely and installing the sign once it is finished and sent over by NYS Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. There is currently a brown stick on the property where the sign will eventually be placed.

Elderly constituents on 107 Green Ave (get their names) asked that they be exempt from clearing the 165 feet of new sidewalk because they are unable to shovel due to the sheer amount of snow and ice this winter. Plus, the Village plows keep pushing more on to the sidewalk which make clearing it that much harder. DPW said they can't clean it, doesn't have enough employees. Mayor Keegan decided in this instance, there will be no summons for not clearing the sidewalk. The residents do not have to shovel this season. The Mayor, the DPW and the board will look to remedy this situation for next winter.

Mr. and Mrs. Kulpa stood up to speak on behalf of the Village Clerk, Peg. They feel she is the face of the Village and should be kept on for another term. Plus, with her age, she is having a hard time looking for and getting a new job. Seven additional people spoke on the Clerk's behalf. The Mayor explained that he and the Board do not debate or discuss personnel issues with the public. The Mayor, if re-elected, will not be re-appointing other positions in the Village as well; the Clerk is not the only position.

There was also a question regarding the new water and sewer billing. Mayor Keegan explained how water/sewer usage is billed. He also explained how the Village researched the data on quarterly billing from other municipalities Castleton's size. The data was brought to the Board and it was decided that quarterly billing was the best for our constituency. The Mayor then motioned to close the public comment. Trustee Pratico seconded, motion carried.

DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

DPW-David is still out from his injury. Ready for plowing if needed for Wednesday's predicted storm. Crosswalk study is in progress, waiting for NYS DOT to send someone to review the traffic on Main Street. Trustee Carner motioned to accept the DPW report, Trustee Ryan seconded, motion carried. Report is in binders.

Water/Sewer- Trustee Carner motioned to accept the Water and Sewer report. Trustee Ryan seconded, motion carried. Report is in binders.

Castleton Kids- spoke briefly about the upcoming Golf Outing fundraiser, Trustee Martin made a motion to accept the new employee, Trustee Carner seconded. Motion carried. Trustee Ryan motioned to accept the Castleton Kids report, Trustee Pratico seconded, motion carried. Report is in binders.

Code Enforcement- Trustee Carner motioned to accept the Code Enforcement Report, Mayor Keegan seconded, motion carried. Report is in binders.

Building Inspector- Discussed the complaint on 16 Green Street; the Inspector is looking into it. Trustee Ryan motioned to accept the Building Inspector report, Mayor Keegan seconded, motion carried. Report is in binders.

LDC-Motion by Trustee Carner to accept the LDC report, seconded by trustee Ryan, motion carried. Report is in binders.

Fire Department- Chief relays that the Department is in need of new or refurbished AED's. (The new will cost \$1,300 and refurbished will be \$750) Asked if there is grant money to help pay for the cost. Trustee Pratico said she will look into the grant. Chief stated that the car that has been left all winter in the back of the Fire House will be towed. Chief is asking the Schodack Police to find its owner. Trustee Pratico asked about when CPR training is given- once every three years. Mayor Keegan made a motion for the Fire Department to buy a new AED, seconded by Trustee Martin, motion carried. Mayor Keegan motioned to accept the Fire Department Report, Trustee Carner seconded, motion carried.

Justice Court- Trustee Ryan motioned to accept the Justice Court report, Myor Keegan seconded, motion carried. Report is in the binders.

Treasurer's Report- First quarter billing for sewer/water is due March 31st. Mayor Keegan asked about overages, The Treasurer will get the information to the Mayor. Mayor commented that the bills would be smaller, perhaps easier to pay on time. General Fund budget can not be dealt with until the vote on the Justice Court is held on March 18th. A budget workshop was set-up for 6:30pm, March 31st at Village Hall or via conference call. (Trustee Pratico) Trustee Pratico made a motion to accept the Treasurer's report, Trustee Ryan, seconded, motion carried.

BUSINESS:

The Mayor attended a High Speed Rail public meeting in Albany. NYS Department of Transportation was giving four new options to decrease rail time from NYC to Niagara Falls. The rail time from NYS to Albany/ Rennselaer would be decreased by 15 minutes. The Mayor suggested that the Village, via our Attorney, send an email or letter to voice our concerns about the safety and speed along the flat, straight part of the railway which runs next to Castleton. The Board voted to have our attorney write this letter. Castleton will be in favor of the potential "high speed" rail as long as the trains do not go even faster through the Village of Castleton.

The Mayor also wants to review the Planning and Zoning Board's minutes. Mayor Keegan asked Trustee Carner if the Presidents of these Boards ever come before the Village Board during a meeting? She said no. The Mayor would like to see minutes from now on.

The crosswalk issue on Main Street is still ongoing. Waiting for NYS DOT to perform the traffic study.

The water interconnection with the Town of Schodack is signed and completed. Delaware Engineering is drafting revised plans and the total project will not cost more than \$45,000. The Mayor briefly explained the interconnection project for the public.

The Mayor gave a quick update on the new water tower. Surveyors are working on the plans.

The Mayor also stated that he spoke about the pedestrian crossover with NYS DOT again. He gave them a few new ideas regarding the crossover to gain access to our “park” on the other side of the railroad tracks. No new comments from NYS DOT were forthcoming.

The budget was briefly discussed. The Mayor stated that the Village’s bond rating upgraded which will help with the bonds for the water tower.

Trustee Pratico asked about the parkland to replace the Justice Lot land. Attorney Crist said he will send her an email with his notes on the project.

Village Code updates are currently online but the books are not completed or at Village Hall yet.

TRUSTEE REPORTS:

Trustee Pratico spoke about the Library’s ongoing renovation plans.

The Mayor asked to discuss the Capital Fund/ Building Repair accounts (which are earmarked for fixing Village Hall) and his plans to use this money on three projects:

- The Bell Tower
- Upgraded energy efficiency of Village Hall, lighting, paint, ceilings, windows, etc.
- Rehabilitating the old Fire House/Police station (is it worth fixing or not)

There is \$8,000 in the building repair fund. The Mayor asked the Board if we would approve a motion to spend some of the fund to get experts in to evaluate and design a plan for these projects. The Board asked questions and decided it was a good idea and Village Hall should be fixed a little bit every year. Mayor Keegan made a motion to use up to \$3,000 on a rehab plan. Trustee Ryan seconded, motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT (2):

Mrs. Kulpa asked about the houses that are abandoned or vacant on Seaman Avenue. Mayor Keegan told her about the new village law that will register all the abandoned properties and place graduated fees on the owner or bank depending on how long they go vacant. He explained how hard it is to go after these people and that the banks do not respond to the Village’s requests. The Village is not allowed to enter the house if the taxes are being paid. The first item that the new Building Inspector will undertake is getting a list of the vacant Village properties.

A question was asked about the Edgewood Terrace house. The Village was told that it will be demolished soon. This will also be a priority for the new Building Inspector.

A question was asked about how costly the Justice Court was to the Village? Mayor Keegan stated that the Village is losing between \$6,000-\$10,000 a year; keeping the court at Village Hall. The revenues are not making up for this. Also, moving the Court, if approved by the voters, will be part of the new consolidation of services that the State

will be requiring of municipalities over the next few years. Sharing the services of the new Building Inspector with the Town may also be one of these.

A vote was taken to enact the local law regarding the new wording in the code books. Motion by Mayor Keegan to approve this change, Trustee Carner seconded, motion carried.

At 8:32 pm Trustee Pratico motioned to go into Executive session to discuss personnel and attorney-client matters, seconded by Mayor Keegan, motion carried.

At 9:09 pm Trustees Carner motioned to come out of Executive Session, seconded by Trustee Ryan, motion carried.

APPROPRIATIONS:

Trustee Carner motioned to pay the bills (see abstracts), seconded by Trustee Ryan, motion carried.

At 9:14 pm Trustee made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Trustee Ryan, motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenifer Pratico
Village Trustee