

Village of The Branch – Board of Trustees Meeting
April 11, 2023
Track #67

The monthly meeting of the Village of The Branch was held at 40 Route 111, Smithtown, NY, seven thirty p.m. on April 11, 2023. Mayor Delaney, Trustees Botto, Ryan, Damm, Attorney Ring, Treasurer Mequia, Building Inspector Arico and Village Clerk Cozine were present.

Mayor Delaney called the meeting to order at 7:37 pm with the pledge of allegiance.

Trustee Botto made a **motion** to accept the March 2023 Board of Trustees minutes and Trustee Damm seconded the **motion**. All are in favor, approved unanimously Trustee Damm abstained since was not present at March meeting.

Trustee Botto made a **motion** to accept the April 2023 Board of Trustees work session minutes and Trustee Damm seconded the **motion**. All are in favor, approved unanimously, Trustee Ryan abstained since was not present at the April meeting.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Mequia reported that:

- Received \$12,334.79 Mortgage Tax check from Suffolk County for quarter end Dec 31, 2022
- Justice Court numbers are up to date on prelim budget.
- Transferred remaining \$9800 to parks fund that was the difference in what we received from the \$49,000 grant for Old Rte. 111
- Printed out updated proposed budget.
- Have 2 estimates for the tax program.

Trustee Botto made a **motion** to accept the treasurer's report as submitted and direct treasurer to pay all the bills on Abstract #2195 totaling \$11,945.06. Trustee Ryan seconded the **motion** which was approved unanimously.

Trustee Botto made a **motion** to reopen the public hearing for James Ewart III, 9 Branch Drive. Trustee Damm seconded the **motion**. All are in favor, approved unanimously.

Mr. Ewart – told the board he has interviewed many contractors and received a lot of estimates and receiving conflicting suggestions on what to do with the house. Contractors told Mr. Ewart that the house was in pretty good shape and preserved despite all the water that was put on the fire. Mr. Ewart has retained an expediter to make the process easier and quicker. He said he could have a letter from the contractor next week. Mr. Ewart still has not decided whether he is going to fix the house or sell the house. At this point Building Inspector Arico explained and told Mr. Ewart that you need signed contract from an architect and architectural drawings before you need a contractor. Told him he has **2 weeks** to get this done or the Board will move forward. Once you have the plans, bring them in and you can get the permit. Mr. Arico asked what exactly did the contractor tell him? Mr. Ewart responded he needs to gut the house down to the beams; the deck needs to come off. Trustee Botto reiterated that you had 6 years to take care of this and its frustrating to us and the neighbors that it hasn't been done yet.

Attorney Ring said he wants something in writing so that Mr. Ewart understands what he needs to do and will be waving his rights if he doesn't follow through in 2 weeks. Mr. Ring asked for his email address since he has been reluctant to give the Board his mailing address. He responded with 2 email addresses. Jimewart3@gmail.com and James.ewart@anheuser-busch.com Mr. Ewart asked the building inspector if the sanitary system get effected in the demo and he said no. Mr. Arico said he needs a rodent letter, an asbestos abatement letter and a water and electric disconnect letter from the utilities companies if he intends to demo the house. Mr. Ewart said he will proceed aggressively and wanted to know if he needs a permit for a POD. The Board answered that he needs a permit for one of them and it lasts for 60 days. The Board said they want a letter stating when he is starting his demo or rebuild and he has until April 27th end of day to respond otherwise, they will proceed with their demo of the house.

Mayor Delaney made a **motion** to adjourn the public hearing until May 9th 2023. Trustee Ryan seconded the **motion**. All are in favor, approved unanimously.

Attorney Ring's Report

Attorney Ring reported that:

- Gave Treasurer Mequia information on Hewlett Neck Audit about Clerk doing Treasurers duties.
- Received the retainer for investigative services.
- Landscape contract first renewal expires June 30th 2023.

Trustee Carro's Report

Trustee Carro not present to report:

Trustee Botto's Report

Trustee Botto reported that:

- Met with drainage guy for Dogwood, will customize size of drain holes.
- Will do 2 drains at Cambridge, waiting for pricing.
- Will get 160 yards mulch free from James at TOS
- Need to get post with bar done by TOS Parks dept, need to do to get mulch down there.
- Waiting on pricing for N Hemlock
- Dan F wants to be informed about Birchbrook gas lines.

Trustee Damm's Report

Trustee Damm reported that:

- Meeting with 2 fence companies Russ and Victorian fence.
- J Fuentes will be down by Uncle G's stream to do work tomorrow
- J Fuentes also doing Spring clean up

Trustee Ryan's Report

Trustee Ryan reported that:

- Justice Court – 5 second appearance no shows, 1 person showed up for 3 Weatherstone,
- Dogwood chickens have been removed so dismissed, 28 Branch showed up for chickens and roosters and they removed that morning. Public Safety needs to verify. There were also 3 first time no shows.

Trustee Botto made a **motion** to open the public hearing for 2023-24 Budget. Mayor Delaney seconded the **motion**. All are in favor, approved unanimously.

The Board worked on the numbers and made some tweaks. Asked for public comment and there was none.

Trustee Botto made a **motion** to open accept 2023-24 Budget. Mayor Delaney seconded the **motion**. All are in favor, approved unanimously.

Trustee Botto made a **motion** to close the public hearing for 2023-24 Budget. Mayor Delaney seconded the **motion**. All are in favor, approved unanimously.

Mayor Delaney's Report

Mayor Delaney reported that:

- Mayor Delaney Appointed the following people:

Joseph Arico	1yr	Building Inspector
Dan Falasco	1yr	Engineer
Chris Ring	1yr	Attorney
Joseph Magliato	1yr	Chairman of Board of Zoning Appeals
Dawn McCoy	1yr	Building Asst.
Maureen Fitzgerald	5yr	Planning Board
John Carro	1yr	Deputy Mayor
Joe Arico	1yr	Fire Inspector
John Carro	1yr	Planning Board Chairman

Mayor Delaney appointed Smithtown News as the official paper and Newsday as alternate of the Village as well as Class and First National Bank as the official banks of the Village. The Village has also purchased bonds for the treasurer, clerk, and justices. Mayor Delaney will keep the Work Session on the first Tuesday of the month and Trustee meeting the second Tuesday of the month. He also talked about the procurement policy.

Mayor Delaney made a **motion** to keep the travel reimbursement rate equivalent to the IRS standards. Trustee Botto seconded the **motion**, which was approved unanimously.

Mayor Delaney made a **motion** to allow the Treasurer to make advance payments when necessary to avoid late fees or fines. Trustee Botto seconded the **motion**, which was approved unanimously.

Mayor Delaney made a **motion** to allow the Treasurer and/or Mayor to be the sole signature on checks. Trustee Botto seconded the **motion**, which was approved unanimously.

Mayor Delaney made a **motion** to allow attendance at NYCOM/ SCOVA meetings. Trustee Botto seconded the **motion**, which was approved unanimously.

Clerk Cozine swore in Trustee Dennis Ryan for another 2-year term.

Special Use Permits –

1st Bday Party – SHS – Approved 5/20/23.

Building Inspector's Report

Building Inspector not present but left report with Clerk Cozine:

- Issued 3 permits, 3 C/O's, went on 12 inspections.
- Received \$10,384 income.
- Issued letters for outdoor eating tables (1 table 2 chairs).
- John Bucci putting in new flag and pole by American Roadside Burger
- Met with Tim Melhuse 55 Mt Pleasant, took down trees.
- Finished completed courses for schooling.
- Clerk Cozine informed the Board that 301 E Main Street changed name on deed to United Veterans Beacon House. Joe will send Karen from Public Safety to check it out.

Mayor Delaney made a **motion** to close the meeting at 8:52pm. Trustee Botto seconded the **motion** which was approved unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Christine Cozine
Village Clerk