

**ATHENS VILLAGE BOARD MEETING**  
**MINUTES – April 13, 2011**

*Pledge to the Flag.*

**PRESENT:** Mayor Andrea Smallwood, Trustee Herman Reinhold, Trustee Robert June, Trustee Gail Lasher and Trustee Anthony Patsky.

Fire Chief John Greco, Code Enforcement Officer Mike Ragaini, DPW Director Dennis Proper, Chief of Police Roger Masse and Village Attorney Tal Rappleyea were also present.

**PUBLIC HEARING.**

The Mayor opened the meeting at 6:30PM by stating that the purpose of tonight's public hearing is to hear public comment regarding the Tentative Budget for the Village of Athens.

After summarizing the Tentative Budget for the public the Mayor asked if anyone would like to comment or ask questions?

Carol Pfister, village resident, asked if the Village had budgeted money for signs to be put up for the Kayak Launch. She also inquired as to whether there will be a water hook-up for service installed as part of the Riverfront Park project. Ms. Pfister also thanked the Village Board for purchasing the Parking Lot.

The Mayor stated that there are plans to put in a water service at the Riverfront Park.

Ms. Pfister noted that the funding for the Cultural Center has been cut by \$1000.00. She wanted to inform the Village Board of some of the activities the Cultural Center is involved in and what the Cultural Center brings to the community. The Cultural Center has had some success attaining grant money which allows the center to offer different classes and shows that appeal to many different interests and age groups.

The Cultural Center appreciates that the Village Board has been helpful in supporting them by paying some of their utility expenses through their line item on the budget.

Ms. Pfister stated that she is aware that there are fiscal troubles this year but she would like to see funding go back up next year and hopes that the Village continues to support the Cultural Center.

The Mayor replied that the Village is trying to hold the line on taxes due to the fact that a 2% cap on tax increases may be passed by the State and we need to begin to pass a budget within those guidelines should this legislation pass.

Ms. Pfister also invited the Village Board to the Cultural Center's 'open house' on Saturday.

Chris Pfister, resident of the village, also spoke about the Tentative Budget.

Some of the items mentioned were:

He noted that the payroll service is becoming expensive. He would like to see the Village Board insist upon a bi-weekly payroll as they had tried to do years ago.

Mayor Smallwood noted that the Teamsters contract is what prevented this years ago as this was a mandatory issue in negotiations.

Attorneys fees are becoming very high – is there a reason?

Mayor Smallwood mentioned the Parking lot purchase and the closing as well as a number of contracts for review. The Mayor will ask all department heads from refraining from calling the attorney unless it is necessary, which drives up legal costs.

Mr. Pfister noted that election costs could be cut down if the Village Board would change two year terms into four year terms. Four years seems like a better idea anyway due to the fact that two years does not seem like an adequate time period to learn the job and be effective.

Mr. Pfister also mentioned that he was on Board when the Firehouse was being built and that it is probably time to check the insulation since the insulation was not the best at that time.

He also noted that the clothing allowance for the DPW was getting a bit high.

Mayor Smallwood again mentioned that this was discussed with the Teamsters and an allowance was made to include work boots which were necessary and drove up the cost.

Mr. Pfister also mentioned that since the Village owns the parking lot then the alley needs to be addressed since people are walking through there and it is in pretty rough shape.

Mr. Pfister also noted that he was glad that the VB is still transferring money to the Municipal Building Renovations Acct but wanted to remind them that years ago when the Village used grant money on this building the Village signed a covenant with SHPO stating that anytime changes are to be made to the building that they must be approved by SHPO.

MOTION made by Trustee June, seconded by Trustee Lasher, all in favor to close the Public Hearing at 7:20PM.

**CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING.**

## **OPEN REGULAR MEETING.**

### **DEPARTMENT HEADS.**

### **PUBLIC:**

1. *Herbie Blasewitz* attended the meeting on behalf of the Athens Street Festival. He also provided the Village Board with a status report on the Street Festival committee.

Mr. Blasewitz asked the Mayor if the Riverfront Park would be ready on July 9, 2011.

The Mayor informed everyone that she just recently received a construction schedule, provided by the Engineer, for the Riverfront park project. It is available for anyone to look at and is in the Village office and on the bulletin board for public review. The new schedule states that all work will be completed in June. There are no guarantees at this point however, especially with concrete work and any weather related delays. Contractually the Park is to be completed by July, 1, 2011.

Mr. Blasewitz stated that back in February it was told to them that the Park would be completed in April. The Festival has hired musicians already.

The Mayor stated that the contractors are on the job now, the winter has been a tough one and they can only do what is humanly possible. She was given the schedule for completion by the engineer and it states all landscaping will be completed by July. She is being conservative in stating that the Park will be done by July. They are concerned however that the Park will be seeded and then ruined by the Street Festival.

The possibility of moving the venue was discussed, but not optimistically, since Mr. Blasewitz would not like to see that happen as plans for location of rides and vendors have already been planned.

Trustee Reinhold mentioned that perhaps the contractors should hold off on seeding the park until after the Street Festival.

This was agreeable and seemed like a possibility to everyone.

The Village Board also discussed landscaping as Mr. Blasewitz asked if the square footage of the park will be the same.

The Mayor replied that the square footage is the same and that it will remain an open space park and the plantings will be minimal.

Mr. Blasewitz also mentioned that he noticed on the Budget that no money was allotted for the Street Festival. He understands that the Village and Town are large supporters and that without them there would be no Street Festival, but he hopes that they will support the Festival financially in the future.

The Mayor stated that there were many cutbacks in the Village and that the Police coverage that the Village provides along with other support such as the DPW is costly but they will consider it next year.

The Village Board thanked Mr. Blasewitz for attending the meeting and they will keep in touch.

2. *Silas Basham, Treasurer of the Cruisin' events*, attended the meeting to also discuss the timeline of the Park project. He will reschedule his event for the months of June and will wait to hear if he can use the park in July.

The Mayor thanked him for his cooperation.

3. *John Pieruzzi, representing APAC*, attended the meeting to discuss the status of the park as well. Their Friday night concerts are scheduled to begin June 17th. Mr. Pieruzzi stated that they are fine with the park not being ready as they are willing to hold a few of their concerts, if the Village Board does not have a problem with it, on the Street down by the park as had been done years previous with 'Block' parties. Outside of the Stewart House by the Ferry Slip looking up Second Street to be exact.

The Village Board agreed that that could be an option and thanked them for their cooperation.

The Mayor stated that they may not have to do that but she will be in touch as work progresses on the park.

A RESOLUTION was made by Trustee Reinhold, seconded by Trustee June to approve concerts in the park on Fridays until 10:00PM.

RESOLUTION rescinded by Trustee Reinhold to approve the APAC schedule until they bring it before the Village Board. At such time the Board will also approve the time limit.

The Village Board thanked them for coming and asked that they come back to another meeting with their schedule.

## **CORRESPONDENCE:**

1. Village of Catskill. Re: Wacky Raft Race. RESOLUTION made by Trustee Reinhold, seconded by Trustee Lasher, all in favor, approving use of the park as requested.
2. Athens Volunteer Fire Department. Re: Invitation.
3. Greene County IDA. Re: Invitation- tour of Global Foundry Computer Chip Manufacturing Plant.
4. Nils Johnson – Martial Arts. Re: Thank you and also request to use the gym. RESOLUTION made by Trustee June, seconded by Trustee Reinhold, all in favor, approving use of the gym as requested.
5. U.S. Department of Commerce. Re: Census Count Question Resolution.
6. Michael Passaretti. Re: Renewal of liquor license.
7. NYS Department of Labor. Re: Notice of Determination- Post for sewer job site.
8. Liberty Mutual. Re: CD Perry Bond questionnaire.
9. C.T. Male. Re: NYMS Grant Application. RESOLUTION made by Trustee Reinhold, seconded by Trustee Patsky, all in favor, to apply for grant funds (RESOLUTION attached).

#### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

MOTION made by Trustee Reinhold, seconded by Trustee June, all in favor, to enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel issues with DPW Director Dennis Proper.

MOTION made by Trustee Reinhold, seconded by Trustee Lasher, all in favor, to Exit Executive Session and resume regular work meeting.

A RESOLUTION was made by Trustee Reinhold, seconded by Trustee Lasher, all in favor, that given that the Village justice has been dissolved and that the office will be available for use, that the former village justice office can be used by the Town Court if they so wish, rent free for the remainder of the year. However, the Village Court records presently held in the Village records room will be stored in this office as well. The Cable service which provides internet access to this room will also be disconnected.

MOTION made by Trustee June, seconded by Trustee Lasher, all in favor, approving payment of the following vouchers:

GENERAL- vouchers numbered #9910647 through #991064 – Abstract # 1644 in the amount of \$14,610.33.

WATER- vouchers numbered #9910665 through #9910667 – Abstract #10218 in the amount of \$335.70.

SEWER- voucher #9910668 – Abstract #10192 in the amount of \$439.09.

A RESOLUTION was made by Trustee June regarding financing the purchase of the Municipal Parking Lot;  
that based upon the fact that the Village Board is requesting proposals from local Banks for financing the cost of the Parking Lot;

and given the fact that the Village has dormant accounts or accounts which the Village Board feels are not necessary any longer and has agreed to use these monies towards the purchase price of the Parking Lot;

and that the following accounts will be closed and proceeds in them will be used to defray the financing amount for purchase of parking lot:

Technical Assistance account	\$ 384.61
Hudson River Regional Festival	\$ 1,992.00
CDBG account	\$ 426.18
HR Grant – in Trust and Agency Acct.	\$ 4,532.89
Proceeds from Sale of Firehouse	\$13,160.63
Acquisition of property adjacent to Village bldg acct	\$ 3,226.91
TOTAL	\$23,719.65

And that the cost of purchasing the parking lot was \$52,361.51 (includes purchase price of \$50,000.00, recording fees and lawyers fees of \$1655.00 and title search of \$706.51) and will be defrayed by the above accounts equaling the amount needed to be financed which is \$28,641.86.

seconded by Trustee Lasher  
Trustee Reinhold votes aye.  
Trustee Patsky votes aye.  
RESOLUTION passes.

The Tentative Budget was discussed.

Financial Reports for the month of March were distributed to all Village Board Members.

MOTION made to adjourn meeting at 10:30PM by Trustee Reinhold, seconded by Trustee Lasher, all in favor.

Good Night!

MJW