

VILLAGE OF ATHENS BOARD MEETING Minutes-February 22, 2012

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 and Village Attorney Tal Rapplelea were also present.

PUBLIC:

1. *John Pulice, resident of the village,* attended the meeting to ask the Village Board to consider designating the following streets in the Village 'one way' due to the fact that they are dangerous. The first street is South Washington St. Ext. headed south and the second is Union Street at the intersection of Farm to Market Road going West towards Schoharie Turnpike.

The Village Board agreed that both areas are dangerous and they will discuss it further.

He also inquired as to whether the Village Board has ever considered having discussions with Iroquois Gas about the possibility of extending the pipeline into the Village in order to provide village residents with natural gas? Considering the proximity of the pipeline to the Village and given the price of oil presently, this would be a positive venture.

The Village Board will also consider this.

2. *Herbie Blasewitz, attended the meeting on behalf of the Street Festival Committee.*

Trustee Lasher stated that she would like to say, before he begins, that as liaison to the Street Festival Committee she has been working, along with the Village Board, with the Street Festival Committee for several months to resolve the issue regarding the use of the Riverfront Park and that every idea or suggestion that the Village Board has come up with regarding possibilities to change the location of some of the vendors for the park has been dismissed by the Street Festival Committee negatively.

Trustee Lasher also stated that there have been mistruths and derogatory remarks made on facebook and circulated at the Dockside restaurant that are unfair to the Village Board. She stated that the Village Board is and has been trying to work out solutions to the issues regarding the Riverfront Park and all of the ideas are met by the Street Festival committee negatively with no resolve.

Mr. Blasewitz disagreed and stated that he is just looking for an answer regarding vehicles being allowed in the park. He has not received an answer as of yet from the Village Board. He also disagrees that the Street Festival Committee has not compromised. He also mentioned that he is not responsible and did not know about the remarks made on facebook.

Trustee Lasher asked Mr. Blasewitz if he has called the ride vendor, as was stated to be done at the last meeting, so that he may look over Water Street as a possible venue for the rides, as of yet?

Mr. Blasewitz stated that he has not called him to come down until he knows where the rides will be.

Trustee Patsky reiterated that he thought that it had been discussed fully at the last meeting and that there were not to be any vehicles in the park.

Trustee Reinhold mentioned that it was not decided. He also mentioned that the Village just lost a business in the Village and the way to attract business is in the park. The car show and the Hudson-Athens Lighthouse attract business through use of the park.

Trustee Patsky stated that the SFC should stop considering themselves a victim and try to work with the Village Board in coming up with solutions. There was a RESOLUTION put before the Village Board at the last meeting stating that there be no vehicles in the park unless there is permission from the Village Board. The RESOLUTION was 'tabled' due to the fact that Trustee Lasher was not present and she is the liaison to the Street Festival Committee.

Trustee June stated that the Riverfront Park is not fully developed as far the root system for the grass. The Village Board is trying to forgo a lot of traffic- vehicle and foot- for this year. Next year may be a different story.

Mayor Smallwood mentioned that the sod is the issue. Perhaps a walk through the park with the landscaper, Trustee Lasher and the Mayor is in order to finalize what should and should not be in the Park this year.

She also mentioned that there are many people in the Village that are not present at the meeting who feel strongly that the park should not be used for vehicles and heavy trailers at all. A compromise needs to be reached. We are not blaming the Street Festival Committee for all of the damage we just don't want to have to repeat what we did last year – by re-seeding- every year.

Trustee Patsky stated that it is unfair to Mr. Blasewitz and to the Village Board to have not made a decision on this matter yet.

Mr. Blasewitz submitted a petition to the Village Board that was composed by Trustee Reinhold in support of having vehicles in the park. There are 209 signatures.

Discussion ensued regarding the grass in the park and the re-seeding.

The Discussion ended with the Mayor stating that the best thing to do is to compromise between the Street Festival Committee and the Village Board which represents all of the residents of the Village and the first step is to meet with the landscaper as was stated.

A representative of HALPS presented the Village Board with a letter stating that they use the Riverfront Park to launch tours 4 times per year

Discussion and debate ensued regarding the Street Festival's financial reports and whether the Village Board should be privy to them.

Trustee Lasher stated that she feels that the Street Festival Committee does not have to provide financial information to the Village Board since the Village does not support them financially anymore. If other entities and organizations, such as the Athens Fire Department and APAC, that the village 'supports' do not provide the Village with financial reports than the Street Festival should not have to either.

Trustee Patsky stated that he thinks that the Street Festival and all organizations that do not have 501(c)(3) status are the responsibility of the Village.

The Mayor stated that the Village Attorney has offered to do the paperwork free of charge for all organizations or committees working under the Village's tax id number to become a 501(c)(3) non profit. He has offered to do this because he feels that it will protect these organizations and the Village against any liability issues.

As was stated previously, the Mayor, Trustee Lasher and the Landscaper will meet at the Riverfront Park to discuss the condition of the Park as it relates to placement of vendors, rides, foot traffic etc. for the Street Festival. After this a decision will be made.

(Note: the petition which was given to the Clerk for the record was without signatures. Also, the letter presented to the Village Board by HALPS was also never given to the Clerk as part of the record.)

CORRESPONDENCE:

1. Athens Recreation Association. Re: Raise in dip fee.

2. Peter Cardinale. Re: Application for use of gym.
3. John Baltrusitis. Re: Water charge on rental unit.
4. Office of the State Comptroller. Re: Village's share of funds collected- Court.
5. Wayne Biegel. Re: Water/Sewer increase.
6. MEGA. Re: Electrical Provider.
7. Peckham. Re: Luncheon invitation.
8. Town of Athens. Re: Athens Generating Mortgage Refinance 2012.

OTHER BUSINES:

A RESOLUTION regarding the wetland mitigation area in the Village of Athens was made by Trustee Reinhold, seconded by Trustee Patsky, all in favor, authorizing Mayor Smallwood to execute closing papers on behalf of the Village of Athens. (RESOLUTION attached).

A MOTION was made by Trustee Lasher, seconded by Trustee June, all in favor, approving payment of the following vouchers:
GENERAL FUND – Abstract #1692, vouchers numbered 9911358 through 9911376 in the amount of \$26,125.45.
SEWER FUND – Abstract #10210, vouchers numbered 9911384 through 9911386 in the amount of \$13,391.73.
WATER FUND – Abstract #10240, vouchers numbered 9911377 through 9911383 in the amount of \$13,288.49.

A RESOLUTION was made by Trustee Reinhold, seconded by Trustee June, all in favor, approving the Minutes from the meeting held on February 8, 2012.

A MOTION was made by Trustee Patsky, seconded by Trustee June, all in favor to adjourn tonight's meeting at 9:00PM.