

VILLAGE OF ALTAMONT
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
April 02, 2019

Mayor Kerry Dineen
Trustee Nicholas Fahrenkopf
Trustee Michelle Ganance
Trustee John Scally
Trustee Dean Whalen

Patty Blackwood, Clerk
Catherine Hasbrouck, Treasurer
Jeffrey Moller, Supt. of Public Works
Paul Miller, Altamont Fire Chief, Absent
Todd Pucci, Altamont Police Chief
Jason Shaw, Legal Counsel

General Public: 25

7:00 p.m.

Mayor Dineen called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Installation of Village Officials Sworn in by Justice Greene

Honorable Nicholas Fahrenkopf
Honorable Michelle Ganance

Trustee Scally made a motion seconded by Trustee Whalen to approve resolution to adopt the proposed appointments, designations, schedules, personnel and financial procedures contained within the Organizational Agenda.

Roll Call: All in favor

Copy of Organizational Agenda included with Official Minutes.

PART I

One Year Term

Dean Whalen, Deputy Mayor

Five Year Term

Deborah Hext, Member, Planning Board (2024)

Danny Ramirez, Member, Zoning Board of Appeals (2024)

PART II

Official Newspaper

Altamont Enterprise - Primary

Spotlight - Alternative

Official Banks

Key Bank – Altamont Branch, First National Bank of Scotia, First Niagara Bank, Citizens Bank, J.P. Morgan Chase Bank, Kinderhook Bank, Pioneer Commercial Bank, NBT Bank and M&T Bank as official depositories of the Village of Altamont.

Authorize Mayor and Treasurer to invest Certificates of Deposit in any of the designated official depositories with a third party holding the securities.

Authorize Mayor and Treasurer to sign checks on behalf of the Village.

Time & Place of Meetings

Village Board – 7:00 p.m. First Tuesday of each month and third Tuesday as needed

-July 02, 2019 meeting rescheduled to July 16, 2019

-August 06, 2019 meeting, if needed

-November 5, 2019 meeting rescheduled to November 6, 2019

Planning Board – 7:00 p.m. Fourth Monday of each month as needed

-May 27, 2019 meeting rescheduled to May 20, 2019

Zoning Board of Appeals – 7:00 p.m. Second Tuesday of each month as needed

Mileage

Mileage rate coincides with Federal IRS approved rate per mile for reimbursement to Village employees when authorized to use their private vehicles on village business.

Bonds

For Officials and Employees to continue as last year

(\$50,000 Clerk/Treasurer; \$10,000 Employees)

Personnel Policy

To continue as written

Holiday Schedule

Approve holiday schedule for Village employees for FY 2019-20 per Schedule A.

Copy of holiday schedule included with Official Minutes.

Procurement Policy

To continue without change

2020 Organizational Meeting

First Tuesday in April 2020

Village Engineers

Barton and Loguidice, Laberge Group, Lamont Engineering, Adirondack Mountain Engineering, Insight Northeast Engineering, and Delaware Engineering as official engineering firms of the Village of Altamont

Village Counsel

Designate Nolan & Heller, LLP to serve as Village Designated Attorneys for FY 2019-2020.

PART III

Training

Authorizing Mayor Dineen to approve meetings, conferences, and training seminars for employees that would benefit the Village and could include the following schools, conferences and seminars sponsored by New York State Conference of Mayors such as: Annual Training School; Fall Training School; Public Works Training School; Legislative Meeting; Winter Legislative Meeting; Office of the New York State Comptroller; Office of Court Administration; Public Works Training and Licensing, and the Albany County Division of Management and Budget technology classes.

Advance Payment of Claims

Authorize Village Treasurer to pay, in advance of audit, claims for public utility services, postage, hospitalization, freight and express charges, claims for petty cash, Senior Entertainment/Trips, JP Morgan Chase Bank (Water Principal/Interest bond payments), Manufactures & Traders Trust (Sewer Principal/Interest Bond payments), Wex Bank (Suntrak card), School & Property Taxes, NYS Municipal Workers Comp., Disability Insurance, Health Department Park Permits, MasterCard, and fees for officials and staff to attend meetings and schools approved by Mayor Dineen prior to the next scheduled regular board meeting.

Reports:

Mayor Dineen reported the Village offices has been very busy due to a few retirements that took place. The Village is interviewing for clerical staff, DPW workers, gardeners and summer help. Village is transitioning to a new website that will hopefully be up and running by the beginning of May. Annual Green and Clean is April 27th and Mayor Dineen invited the public to come out and help clean up the Village parks. Mayor Dineen reported Trustee Whalen is working with the Village engineers on the façade design. Village is hoping to be able to go out to bid on the façade in the Spring for Fall 2019. Committee of members from the Village Board, Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals have been meeting regarding updates to the Village Code. Some of the topics being addressed include signage laws, solar applications, property upkeep, and owning of chickens. The committee will meet again sometime in the Spring and then send their recommendations to the Village Board for them to review and address.

Todd Pucci, Chief Altamont Police Dept., reported because of prom season coming up the National Traffic Safety puts out more details for the months of April and May looking for cell phones, seatbelts, etc. Some of the funding for these details come from the State. The police department will also be doing a detail with the school buses. Winter parking regulations are still in effect until May 1st.

Paul Miller, Chief Altamont Fire Department, submitted Chief's report for March. Copy of the report included with Official Minutes.

Jeffrey Moller, Supt. of Public Works, reported the department has been pretty busy. Last month they replaced all the shop lights, exterior lights, all the lights in the admin building, and in the lab with LEDs. They painted the inside of the administration building and lab. They replaced all the lab cabinets, counter, sink and plumbing. That was all done in-house. The department serviced all the mowers. They did a lot of work on the backhoe that cost \$3,500. They replaced a bunch of hydraulic hoses, cooler, and radiator. Mr. Moller has been talking with DEC because they want to clean out some of the creeks in the village because the banks are shrinking. Hydrant flushing began today to continue through April and possibly May. Yard waste collection will begin on April 15th.

Trustee Scally made a motion seconded by Trustee Ganance to approve the Treasurer's report; #19, #20 and transfer of funds as submitted. **Roll Call: All in favor**

Public Comment:

Claire Ansbro-Ingalls and Dawn Gibson, Kenneth's Army, reported there will be a motorcycle ride to be held on June 1st at Berne Town Park in memory of Kenneth White.

Bea Smith, Jay Street, stated she has concern over a rumor she has heard that the Village water supply was being extended down Route 146 into Guilderland. Mayor Dineen stated this is not correct. The Village started preliminary work on an emergency transmission line that would eventually attach to Guilderland's line somewhere near Weaver Road. The preliminary work was done last summer because there were grants available. The Village didn't go through with the application process at that time because there was quite a financial responsibility for the Village even with funds from the government. It's something down the road the Village will revisit because the Village is out here on their own and only reliant upon themselves. The connection would be for emergencies only and not for the Village to expand.

Kate Provencher, Thatcher Drive, inquired if an applicant has to pay a fee when they put in an application for requesting a rezone. Mayor Dineen stated that at this time there is no fee. This was discovered in the Village Code and this is going to be addressed. Ms. Provencher asked what is the criteria the Board considers when reviewing a request for a rezone. Trustee Whalen stated there isn't anything specific the Board uses for reviewing a request to rezone but they do depend on the questions from the SEQRA review and the guidelines of the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Provencher inquired if the Board had a plan for reviewing the Comprehensive Plan. Mayor Dineen said the plan may need some tweaking but doesn't need to be completely redone. There was a lot of work that went into the plan. The Board will look for someone who wants to take the lead on this project and hopefully be able to review the plan in 2019.

Harvey Vlahos, Main Street, inquired why there will be a Board meeting on April 16th. Mayor Dineen stated the Board will be approving new hires for the different departments in the Village. Mr. Vlahos inquired how much weight the Board gives to the intent of the Comprehensive Plan when making decisions. Trustee Fahrenkopf stated every time the Board gets an application; they look at it holistically. They review SEQRA form, look at the Comprehensive Plan and look at what the application is. Trustee Whalen stated the Comprehensive Plan is a guideline and has been used exactly as it was intended to be used.

Ted Neuman, Lark Street, asked the Board if they heard back from Daniel McCoy, Albany County Executive, who came to the March Board meeting and stated he would be interested in expanding the rail trail to include Altamont. Trustee Whalen stated Mr. McCoy may have misspoke because the train tracks in the Village are an active line. Mayor Dineen stated when she meets with him regarding shared services they could see if there are any creative ways the Village could connect to the rail trail.

Thomas Capuano, Brandle Road, stated it is really important to establish a procedure for when the board decides to go against the Comprehensive Plan as a guide. A guide points the way. When the Village chooses a different direction, it would be good to have a set of rubrics. The Village doesn't have a process that would justify departing from the comprehensive plan.

Public hearing at 7:40 p.m.

Justin Heller, Legal Counsel, opened public hearing with reading of the Legal Notice to consider 2019-2020 Village Budget before final adoption.

Mayor Dineen stated this is the Village's annual public hearing for the Village budget. This was a culmination of three workshops that were held in the front offices over the month of March. They started out with departments coming in and presenting their budgets to the Board and talking to them about their needs. Every single department, even the Altamont Free Library because the Village supports the library as well. Couple of things of note in this budget is there is no tax increase for 2019-20. They are keeping it flat for this year. The fiscal stress scores came out for Villages and the Village of Altamont is not on that. That was good news. There are some additions in this budget. They are able to support the library and increase the support to what they were asking for which is up \$1,000. The Village is hiring an extra DPW staff member as well as filling the retirement that is coming up soon. Some money is going to Schilling Park. Some residents talked to the Board about adding some toddler swings. The Village has been adding equipment there. Last year they added a new piece that everyone's really enjoying but they would also like some swings so funds will be put on that line so the Village can save up for them. Village may have enough money to do that this year or maybe have some fundraisers as well such as plant sales. Village had to adjust the amount of money put aside for the maintenance of this building. A little extra was put aside for the façade out front. Last year the Village budgeted a certain amount but needed to add \$10,000 to that. The Village has added to all of their reserve funds. They've kept steady for the Village's fire department, DPW, and police department. The Village departments have a great rotation schedule that Village adds money to every year. They try to be consistent as they can be. The departments buy trucks or equipment on a rotation. The Village actually knows, every so many years, when they need a fire truck that the money will be there. They are prepared for it. The Village has a capital fund. When the roof is having a problem, they have the money and are prepared for it. They have savings accounts just for those reasons. The Village is on schedule with every department. The extra was for the façade because the Village has to plan for it possibly being a little higher. They changed the design just a smidge and have added a couple of things. The canopies have failed since the whole process was started.

Trustee Fahrenkopf stated if you look at the top line the Village's spending looks like it's higher. It's because the Village is pulling from the reserve funds. That's why it's important to note that. The Village has a healthy reserve fund that they can support that plus the sales tax was great this year.

Mayor Dineen stated that's where the Village is at and asked if anyone would like to come up. Mayor Dineen stated if you've had a chance to review it and would like to comment at the microphone to come right up. It's open for anyone's comments.

Trustee Scally stated in keeping more in line of the aesthetics of the village is why they had to make some slight changes to the facade.

Mayor Dineen stated the Village had to make some slight changes staying in line with the aesthetics of the village. They had to make some adjustments to the facade that they are budgeting for.

Trustee Whalen stated he should probably step back because some people may not even know what the Board is talking about. The Board has discovered, less than a year ago, that the brick that was put on this building, particularly the front end was done somewhat short term and it is failing. It's not eminent collapse, but the Village needs to do something. That's the process they're going through. They're talking about how to basically remove all of that brick. The current plan is to basically replace it pretty much with a little more modernized design. Basically, to make the front of that facade safe again. The Village is taking the opportunity to try and add some insulation to that condition. Right now, there's concrete block and brick and that's it along most of the whole front of the building. What has been added as they've looked at the design, it was realized that in doing all of that effort which really turns the corner and comes back to the front entrance of the village hall, is they realized that the canopies themselves have failed even in the half year that they've been trying to deal with this. The canopies have been added to do some sort of dressing up. One canopy over the police entrance and one canopy over the village hall entry. The engineers are finalizing the plans based on some reviews that they all did. They are trying to come up a little bit better designs for the canopies.

Catherine Hasbrouck, Treasurer, stated the Board did have it in the budget for last year and the Board didn't use it. It will just roll into the fund balance and it'll be used this year.

Trustee Scally stated the treasurer is a hard worker.

Kate Provencher, Thatcher Drive, stated she would like to say that she was able to make it to two of the three budget workshops and wanted to show her appreciation to the board and to the staff who worked so hard to do all this. She doesn't know how anybody could look at the budget in the 20 minutes or half hour and understand it enough to comment on it but appreciates the work that was done. She thinks a couple of things that might not have been noticed, that she appreciated about this budget, is that there are COLA for the village employees. She thinks that's really important to keep up. Also, the Board made a decision to not have a line for the engineer.

Mayor Dineen stated they had a long discussion about that and talked to DPW about that as well. She thinks it will benefit the village to use an RFP process as much as we can to get better pricing. We will still be working with our current engineers. They are on our list as well as those that were adopted. It will save the Village money that can be used in other areas.

Kate Provencher, Thatcher Drive, stated one thing she thought of for next year is she noticed when the Board was talking tonight, they mentioned some Village residents and others asked about some more equipment in Schilling Park. She's not sure that she would know how to ask the board to add something to the budget. She knows the budget workshops are working meetings and they are not public hearings so the public are not able to come and make requests then. Ms. Provencher suggested maybe in the future there could be a time to come to the Board to make requests of what should be added into the budget.

Trustee Whalen stated that the public could also send a letter to the Board.

Mayor Dineen stated the Board received a letter asking the Board if they ever considered this. The letter stated they love the new equipment and they've been talking to some parents that have been using the park quite a bit.

Kate Provencher, Thatcher Drive, stated she thought it would be helpful to have this part of the meeting.

Mayor Dineen stated the Board is hoping with all the new changes with the website each of the Board members will have an Altamont village email address too. It will be easy to email people from the website.

Trustee Whalen stated he wanted to piggyback on the thinking. It was a pleasure to have more than the poor department heads stuck with the Board. It was nice to see people coming and getting a handle on what the Board does. It can't be done in 20 minutes. Trustee Whalen stated the scary part is, it's been fourteen years for him, and he can now kind of figure it out in 20 minutes.

Kate Provencher, Thatcher Drive, stated another item that came up at the meeting was the Board is keeping the taxes flat and also making the reserves. In her mind of just keeping taxes flat, which she hesitates to say because of Guilderland's recent reassessment, she has a concern that it not just be about keeping the taxes flat and she doesn't think that's what happened.

Trustee Whalen stated the Board very carefully, every year, look very closely at that. They don't start out to make sure they keep the taxes flat. The Board really looks to make sure they're covering what they need to and Catherine is always all over them to make sure the reserves are what they should be. The last couple of years compared to say, 2009 for example, they were able, because of the sales tax being greater from county as well as some other incomes and that sort of thing, to allow them a little easier time than in some years in making those decisions on them. The Board could keep the taxes flat and still be able to do a COLA which they really fight for every year.

Trustee Fahrenkopf thanked Mr. Provencher for reminding the Board that they were able to do the COLA because he thinks it is also important for everyone to recognize, not just during budget season, but all year round how long our staff put in on this and they're not getting rich off this so they try to do anything they can do to help them.

Connie Rue, Brandle Road, stated she has two questions. One about the change with having the engineer on as needed. We have a lawyer at our disposal and we have engineers at our disposal, is there such a thing as having professional planners at our disposal. As an opportunity when we're going through some of these questions. There's been a lot of activity in the past year.

Trustee Whalen stated yes both technically, if needed, anyone of the Boards based on an escrow account for a particular project. We have done that in the past. We have hired Nan Stolzenburg years ago to help us with the comprehensive plan and the zoning ordinance. We hired her at the time and we could do that again, even on a case by case basis. Village of Voorheesville is doing that right now.

Connie Rue, Brandle Road, stated not necessarily just for the comprehensive plan.

Mayor Dineen stated Nan Stolzenbug has helped her recently with some updates that didn't transfer over.

Trustee Whalen stated he didn't know if Ms. Rue was involved with it and what her role was, but the Village had Don Cropsey come in and give a seminar to the boards based on all his experience and background. They've done that as well so that option is obviously out there.

Connie Rue, Brandle Road, stated her other question is with all of the new assessments going around and with the taxes staying flat. She knows there all still in flux as far as the town, but is there a connection between the value of her house that the Village uses for her assessment rate and with what's happening with Guilderland. Ms. Rue asked if her tax bill is going to be the same or is the tax rate going to be the same.

Catherine Hasbrouck, Treasurer, stated the Village is a year behind and will be using the old assessment for this year and then next year the new assessment. What happens though is your rates may change, but then the tax rate would be different. If everybody goes from a 100,000 to 200,000 then your tax rate would go from \$2.07 to \$1.07. There would be a change that way. That's not what's going to happen, that's an example of how it works.

Connie Rue, Brandle Road, asked if because we're a year behind there'd be no impact with this coming year's bill.

Catherine Hasbrouck, Treasurer, stated Ms. Rue was correct.

Connie Rue, Brandle Road, stated she noticed as she was going through her tax bills, there are separate lines for everything. Mr. Rue asked if the Village tax bill is only one line. Ms. Rue stated she thought Trustee Fahrenkopf had mentioned in some conversation about the fire department being part of her village taxes.

Trustee Fahrenkopf stated one liner. If you lived just outside the village and our fire department responded, you'd have an Altamont fire district line on your town tax bill.

Trustee Fahrenkopf made a motion seconded by Trustee Scally to close the public hearing at 7:54 p.m. **Roll Call: All in favor**

Trustee Whalen made a motion seconded by Trustee Ganance to approve 2019-2020 Village Budget. **Roll Call: All in favor**

Trustee Ganance made a motion seconded by Trustee Whalen to approve of Standard Work Day Resolution of 6 hours per day for Village Clerk, Court Clerk, Administrative Assistant, Historian, and Parks Department for NYS Retirement System for reporting purposes. **Roll Call: All in favor**

Trustee Scally made a motion seconded by Trustee Whalen to approve of Standard Work Day Resolution of 8 hours per day for Department of Public Works and Police Department for NYS Retirement for reporting purposes. **Roll Call: All in favor**

Trustee Whalen made a motion seconded by Trustee Fahrenkopf to approve authorizing Jeffrey Moller, Supt. of Public Works, to move forward with termination of water service on April 09, 2019, if payment is not received from the following delinquent non-residents: Phillip Wolff, 6535 Dunnsville Road; and Brenda Goodknight, 6535 Lainhart Road. **Roll Call: All in favor**

Trustee Fahrenkopf made a motion seconded by Trustee Ganance to approve holding a public hearing on Tuesday, May 7th at 7:00 p.m. to consider rezoning 120 Park Street from Central Business District to a Light Industrial. The request to rezone is requested by JNT Development on behalf of the property owner.

Roll Call:

Trustee Whalen Opposed

Trustee Ganance Opposed

Trustee Fahrenkopf In favor

Trustee Scally Opposed

Mayor Dineen In favor

Motion Denied: 3 Opposed/2 In favor

Trustee Ganance made a motion seconded by Trustee Fahrenkopf to approve resolution authorizing Village of Altamont to expand the residency requirements to Albany County residents for village election inspectors per Village Law §3-300(2)(a). Election Inspectors may reside outside of the Village, so long as they reside within Albany County. **Roll Call: All in favor**

Trustee Fahrenkopf made a motion seconded by Trustee Whalen to approve hiring Ginger Hannah, Altamont, as part-time administrative assistant, at an annual salary of \$18,720. **Roll Call: All in favor**

Trustee Scally made a motion seconded by Trustee Whalen to approve holding Board meeting on Tuesday, April 16, 2019. **Roll Call: All in favor**

Trustee Whalen made a motion seconded by Trustee Ganance to approve Board Minutes for March 5, 2019. **All in favor**

Trustee Whalen made a motion seconded by Trustee Scally to approve Board Minutes for March 12, 2019.

Roll Call:

Trustee Whalen In favor

Trustee Ganance In favor

Trustee Fahrenkopf In favor

Trustee Scally Abstain

Mayor Dineen In favor

Motion Carried: 4 In favor/1 Abstain

Trustee Whalen made a motion seconded by Trustee Ganance to approve Board Minutes for March 20, 2019.

Roll Call:

Trustee Whalen	In favor
Trustee Ganance	In favor
Trustee Fahrenkopf	Abstain
Trustee Scally	In favor
Mayor Dineen	In favor

Motion Carried: 4 In favor/1 Abstain

Trustee Whalen made a motion seconded by Trustee Ganance to approve Board Minutes for March 26, 2019.

Roll Call:

Trustee Whalen	In favor
Trustee Ganance	In favor
Trustee Fahrenkopf	In favor
Trustee Scally	Abstain
Mayor Dineen	In favor

Motion Carried: 4 In favor/1 Abstain

Trustee Ganance made a motion seconded by Trustee Scally to approve entering into executive session at 8:09 p.m. to discuss contract negotiations. **All in favor**

Trustee Whalen made a motion seconded by Trustee Scally to approve coming out of executive session at 8:34 p.m. **All in favor**

No action taken.

Trustee Fahrenkopf made a motion seconded by Trustee Ganance to adjourn at 8:35 p.m. **All in favor**

Respectfully Submitted,

Patty Blackwood
Clerk