

**VILLAGE OF RED HOOK
WORKSHOP MEETING
March 10, 2022**

PRESENT: MAYOR SMYTHE, DEPUTY MAYOR KOVALCHIK, TRUSTEE LAING,
TRUSTEE KJARVEL & CLERK CAVANAUGH

Meeting opened at 7:05PM

A motion was made by Mayor Smythe to approve the minutes from the February 2, 2022 Village Board Special Meeting, the February 14, 2022 Village Board Workshop Meeting and Public Hearing, and the February 17, 2022 Village Board Workshop Meeting. The motion was seconded by Deputy Mayor Kovalchik. All in favor. Motion approved.

The Trustees discussed hiring a new Deputy Clerk. The position would be part-time (15 hours) and would provide coverage in the Clerk's office for such things as selling garbage tags and fielding residents' inquiries. The Mayor hoped that this person would also take a large role in Village communications including the website and newsletter. Mayor hopes to have the new employee for the start of the 2022-2023 budget (starts June 1, 2022). The wage for the position would be \$17/hr.

Deputy Mayor Kovalchik asked if the infrastructure (water, sewer) items were too much for the Clerk as a solo position. Clerk Cavanaugh stated that it wasn't too much as of yet but that she had not gone through a water billing quarter yet. The future sewer charges will go on the same bill so that shouldn't be a significant increase in workload.

Deputy Mayor Kovalchik stated that sewer charges are going to change overtime.

Deputy Mayor Kovalchik asked if the Deputy position would be civil service. Mayor Smythe stated that she didn't think so but would confirm. As a part-time position, there would be no benefits included.

A motion was made by Mayor Smythe to add a Deputy Clerk position for 15 hours/week at \$17/hour. The motion was seconded by Deputy Mayor Kovalchik. All in favor. Motion approved.

Trustee Kjarvel stated that she was planning to make a presentation at the next Village Board meeting on the demographics of the Village. She stated that it's important since data shows that about 50% of residents have moved since 2010 presumably into the Village from outside the Village.

Mayor Smythe stated that she will be working with the Village's labor lawyer on an employee handbook to handle items related to non-Union employees. She'll provide a draft of the handbook to the Trustees for review and approval when ready.

Deputy Mayor Kovalchik asked if the Deputy Clerk would also be a back-up for Lara Hart in Building & Zoning and Police. Mayor Smythe stated that over time this position could be trained to provide that back-up.

Mayor Smythe stated that Clerk Cavanaugh will be asked to be trained on key tasks performed by Lara Hart once comfortable with her position to provide backup.

The Trustees discussed water bills. Mayor Smythe stated that COVID rules have been lifted and penalties can be charged again. The Trustee's discussed the possibility to relevel unpaid water bills in May. A list of properties to be relevelled will be provided to Trustees at an April meeting. Deputy Mayor Kovalchik stated that he is ready to return to the practice of charging late penalties. The Trustees discussed the current amount due to the Village's water fund.

The Trustees discussed the Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) and if it was possible for residence to get assistance if the charges were relevelled. This point needed to be investigated. Clerk Cavanaugh would review the program and report back to the Mayor.

The Trustees discussed how to make sure the property owners listed on the water bills are current and how the Village might find out when a property changes hands. Clerk Cavanaugh will reach out to the County.

The Trustees discussed the Seniors discount. It was unclear if this had a low income requirement.

Mayor Smythe stated that the Red Hook Chamber of Commerce reached out to her on behalf of a local group that is looking to install small art boxes in the Village (4) (similar to 'tiny library' boxes). One proposed location is at Key Bank. Key Bank wants to be provided insurance certificates to cover the installation. Trustee Kjarvel asked if the installation was permanent or temporary as she didn't like the idea of the Village holding an insurance policy for something permanent on someone else's property. She also asked if the installation needed to obtain permits from the Village. Mayor Smythe stated that the insurance company won't cover the installation if the Village was not involved with the project. Trustees discussed that it may be more appropriate for the Town to insure the installation as it was a Town grant driven project. Mayor Smythe will check with Town.

The Trustees discussed the boundary of DOT right-of-way. Deputy Mayor Kovalchik stated that there is a map of this and it includes the catch basins that are owned by County and Village.

The Trustees discussed sidewalks including liability, repair, replacement, complaint forms, and past history.

Trustee Kjarvel stated that the new governor has a sidewalks and business development program called 'Move NY Forward'.

The Trustees discussed utility concerns.

The Trustees discussed the crosswalk and possible crosswalk lights near schools, specifically near Linden Avenue Middle School, where the crosswalk is very faded. It was discussed that the 'Safe Routes to Schools' federal grant program might be appropriate. Deputy Mayor Kovalchik thought that DOT might know more about the program.

The Trustees discussed curb-cuts.

The Trustees discussed the 2022-2023 budget, focusing on the General Fund. Mayor Smythe announced that the tax cap this year is 2%.

Deputy Mayor Kovalchik made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:33PM. Motion seconded by Trustee Laing. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Submitted by,

Jen Cavanaugh
Village Clerk