

Village of Cossackie

Workshop Minutes

April 6, 2023

The Workshop Meeting was called to order by Mayor Mark Evans at 6:00 p.m. Present were Trustee Donald Daoust, Trustee Katlyn Irwin, Trustee Rodney Levine, and Trustee Rebecca Vermilyea.

The Board met with Brock Juusola, of Delaware Engineering, regarding available funding for sewer line replacement, which will help eliminate Infiltration and Inflow (I&I) in the sewer lines. Delaware Engineering has completed an Engineering Report on this that DEC will be approving. He gave an overview of the Cossackie Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO)/Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO) Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) project. He stated that BIL funding for Cossackie will result in a 50% grant, and a 50% Hardship (0 % interest) loan, based on total project cost. However, this is based on current Hardship criteria [2019 American Community Survey (ACS) and project score]. The problem areas are the manholes by Cossackie Creek, the easement between Lawrence Avenue and Whitbeck Street, Lafayette Avenue & Van Dyck Street, Lafayette Avenue at Prospect Street, Cossackie-Athens School's field, Molly White Drive, Freleigh Place, Church/Hollister/Ely Streets, Riverside Avenue, New Street, and South River Street. If the Village does not secure BIL funding, the BIL funding allocated to the Village will be withdrawn, and the Village will need to compete again to receive the funding. The Village project is just on the line relative to score for BIL, and the 'line' shifts from year to year based on the competitiveness of all projects, and the amount of funding allocated. The Village project is competitive, but not a top score, so there's a good chance as BIL ramps up, the competition will stiffen, and Cossackie will not receive a grant allocation in a future round. To secure the BIL funding, an application for financing must be submitted by June 16, 2023. To do so, the first step is to adopt a resolution for Lead Agency and circulate to involved agencies. Delaware Engineering will provide documentation and conduct circulation on the Village's behalf. Aside from the BIL, Delaware Engineering also strongly encourages submission of a Water Quality Improvement Project (WQIP) grant application in July of this year. Delaware Engineering will help to coordinate this. WQIP is construction grant funds, for up to 80% of non-grant funding project costs, and does not reduce BIL grant award, but will reduce borrowing. Delaware Engineering also strongly encourages submission of a Water Infrastructure Improvement Act (WIIA) grant application in September of this year. Delaware Engineering will help to coordinate this. A WIIA grant will be for 25% of the balance of project costs, after BIL and WQIP grant funds are deducted, further reducing borrowing.

Trustee Irwin asked what the timeframe of the project would be, as far as the actual work being completed.

Brock Juusola stated that it would be a year-long project.

Trustee Levine asked if the Village could decide to work on certain areas but not others.

Brock Juusola stated that the application opens the door to financing, and while there will be an expectation on behalf of DEC and EFC that the project in some form will be conducted, there is flexibility in phasing and/or reducing project scope after the fact. However, reducing project scope will impact the amount of the grant, and may also impact the Hardship designation, as the project score may be reduced, resulting in imposition of a subsidized interest rate as opposed to zero.

Mayor Evans asked what the timeframe is for receiving funding.

Brock Juusola stated that if the Village starts the process now, bidding would be in the Spring. If the Village does not apply for financing by June, the Village might fall below the funding line for next year's grant round.

Trustee Vermilyea stated that she is afraid that if the Village does not do the whole project, that the Village may not be above the funding level in the future.

Brock Juusola stated that Delaware Engineering strongly recommends that the Village take the actions needed to secure the BIL funding at this time.

Trustee Levine asked if he is correct in understanding that the Village would receive 0% interest financing.

Brock Juusola stated that they believe that would be the case based on previous hardship criteria met.

Mayor Evans asked if by completing this project, it would remove the Village from under the sewer moratorium.

Brock Juusola stated that by fixing the problem areas, it should release the Village from the moratorium.

Mayor Evans asked if the project would also take care of the CSO's.

Brock Juusola stated that by doing this project, it should take care of all of the CSO's since it involves removing old infrastructure.

Mayor Evans asked if replacing the new sanitary line on Church/Hollister/Ely Streets also includes paving the road etc.

Brock Juusola stated that the project includes the repaving of roads.

Wastewater Treatment Plant Trailer

Mayor Evans said that last month, the new, and never used, dump trailer was put out to bid. The trailer was originally purchased with the intent of the Wastewater Department using it to haul away plastics, but then they discovered another way to dispose of the waste, and it was no longer needed. After receiving the bids, the Board agreed that the bids received were far too low. The Clerk will be listing the trailer on the website Auctions International. It was agreed that the Board would like to have the auction end the night of Wednesday, 5/3, so that they have time to review before the meeting on Monday, 5/8. Although the Board cannot set a minimum, if for some reason the high bid comes in too low, the Board can vote to deny and/or rebid. In order for the auction to end on the night of 5/3, it will be posted to the website on 4/19. (They only list for 2 weeks).

Sunset Vista Residents

Mayor Evans stated that letters were previously sent to Sunset Vista residents who had past due water bills, but the Village did not receive a good response. The Board discussed sending another mailing indicating that this is a final notice before starting the water turn-off procedures. Mayor Evans stated that maybe the Board could offer some sort of amnesty. Normally, past due water accounts can be levied onto taxes. However, these accounts were created as part of a lawsuit settlement with the property owner, and cannot be levied to his property taxes.

Water Tap-In Fees

The Board deliberated on increasing the Water Tap-In fees. They said that they will discuss this further, but any changes they decide on will involve a Public Hearing and Local Law change, in order to change the section of the Village Code.

Building Department Fees

The Board deliberated on raising the Building Department fees. Mayor Evans stated that he will ask what Building Inspector, Mike Ragaini, recommends we increase the fees to. If the Board agrees, they can advise the Village Attorney to draw up a Local Law to change the Code.

Planning Board Vacancy

The Board deliberated on advertising for the Planning Board vacancy that was created when newly elected Trustee, Rodney Levine, had to resign as a Planning Board Member. They discussed that not only should the Planning Board Member position be filled, but they should also fill the position of Alternate Planning Board Member. The Board should look into filling the position of Alternate Zoning Board Member in the near future as well. It was decided to put on the agenda for approval at the upcoming Board Meeting on Monday, April 10th.

Short-Term Rental Law Moratorium

Mayor Evans stated that the Village Attorney has a draft of proposed revisions to the Short-Term Rental Law, based on conversations with the Board to date. The Board will review with the Village Attorney. However, the Board will need to extend the 3-month Short-Term Rental Moratorium again, to allow ample time to review. It was decided to put on the agenda for approval at the upcoming Board Meeting on Monday, April 10th.

American Valve

Mayor Evans stated that in order to move forward with the Eminent Domain procedure to obtain the old American Valve property, the Board needs to approve sending an offer letter to the property owner. It was decided to put on the agenda for approval at the upcoming Board Meeting on Monday, April 10th.

McQuade Park Pavilion

Mayor Evans stated that the Village will be receiving a \$102,000.00 grant for replacement of the McQuade Park Pavilion through Senator Hinchey's office, and The Dormitory Authority of the State of New York (DASNY). In order to move forward with the Grant Disbursement Agreement (GDA), the Village needs to first pass a Resolution authorizing the execution by the Mayor of the GDA with DASNY. After the Resolution is passed, the Village Attorney can submit an opinion letter along with the GDA. This grant is designed so that the Village would first have to expend the money, and wait to get reimbursed. Unfortunately, the last DASNY grant that the Village was a part of, took 18 months to get reimbursed. The Bond Counsel's recommendation is that the Village gets a Bond or Revenue Anticipation Note (RAN). Once the GDA is signed and approved, the Village can start the process of ordering the equipment. Unfortunately, the lead time for the equipment is about 20 weeks. To order, the Village will need to pay roughly 50% upfront, which is approximately \$40,000.00-\$45,000.00. The Board would like to take this money out of the Water Fund to use to at least place the deposit for the order. At the earliest, the pavilion would be installed in the fall. The pavilion will be roughly the same size as the old one, but similar to the new pavilion at Riverside Park. It was decided to put the

Resolution on the agenda for approval at the upcoming Board Meeting on Monday, April 10th.

Trustee Irwin left the meeting at 6:45 p.m.

Department Head Budget Request/Monthly Reports

The following Department heads came in at their respective scheduled times to give their monthly report and go over their budget requests: Department of Public Works Superintendent Scott Martell, Police Chief Samuel Mento, Water Superintendent Adelord Preville, Planning Board Chairman Robert Van Valkenburg, Jr., and Code Enforcement Officer Michael Ragaini.

The following Department heads were excused: Fire Chief Shawn Burdick, Chief Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator David Varade, Historic Preservation Commission Chairperson Patricia Maxwell, and Dog Control Officer Sherry Vieta.

All Department head monthly reports are on file with the Village Clerk.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee Daoust and seconded by Rodney Levine. Trustee Daoust voted yes. Trustee Levine voted yes. Trustee Vermilyea voted yes. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nikki Berezna", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Nikki Berezna
Clerk