

**Village of Walden
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting
May 4, 2021**

Mayor Ramos called the regular meeting of the Village of Walden Board of Trustees to order at 6:30pm.

On roll call the following were:
Present:

Mayor:	John Ramos
Deputy Mayor	Willie Carley
Trustees	Brian Sebring
	Cheryl Baker
	Lynn E. Thompson
	Patricia Maher
	John Elliott

Absent:

Also Present:

John Revella, Village Manager
Marisa Kraus, Village Clerk
Kelly A. Kelly, Village Treasurer
Dave Donovan, Village Attorney

Presentation

Mel Wesenberg: We have an issue that we need your help with and that is the asbestos issue in the area we need to work. It's not a hugely expensive issue. We are looking for about maybe \$20,000. We hope to not use half of that. We want to talk about what we are going to do. The issue is in the Community Room. I know it's used for Planning Board and Zoning Board meetings and it's going to make that look great. The area behind it, putting in a kitchen so that anybody can use that space for events. It will heighten the building a lot. We put money into the building and the windows and other things on the 1st floor. We want to make the library and the building the jewel that Col Bradley intended this building to be. With your help I think we can do that. It's not a huge amount of money. Anytime we use taxpayer money we know it's important. Having this Community Room and having your help with the asbestos abatement will move forward and do all the other things we want to do to. We're asking for you to set aside some money that might not spend all of, that will help us so that we can move forward with our plan. We're working on the best library architects in NYS to help us make sure we do this right. They're also the ones that we worked with before that did a great job on the 1st floor.

Trustee Thompson: I've spoken to Ginny before about the remodeling and it sounds like something that's long overdue. I hope we can find a way to help fund that, because the library is 1 of the jewels of our Village and it would be a shame if we can't keep upgrading. They've upgraded a lot of technology down there and they are correct, a lot of organizations do use that room. I know I've booked it for the Wallkill River Watershed Alliance for an entire year, which we didn't need because of Covid. There's other activities that take place in there. So, I understand. Isn't that where you do a lot of your children's programming in the summertime?

Ginny Neidermeir: Yes. Everything pretty much happens on the 2nd floor.

Mel Wesenberg: That looking good makes the whole Village look good. It's something we would really appreciate your help, because we're kind of at a road block with that.

Trustee Thompson: You guys do have a decent amount of grant funding, but you've exhausted that, right? There's nothing else you can apply for help with this?

Ginny Neidermeir: Yes, the grant we received is 50%. So, we have to come up with the other 50%. We have reached out to other funding avenues for that. We also reached out to the Senator's office. That was last year. They reached out to us for an update. So, they do know what we're asking for, they know what we need. They couldn't make a decision because of the Governor's budget. It looks like the Governor's budget did put some money back into line items. But again, I don't know if or when or how much.

Mel Wesenberg: This is the first time we're coming to you. We think this is going to be good for you and for us. We really want to do the best we can.

Mayor Ramos: Do you have a time line?

Ginny Neidermeir: We did until today's bid opening.

Mel Wesenberg: With the asbestos. I think you want to get that done pretty quickly. Our timeline and that are on parallel tracks.

Ginny Neidermeir: Because of Covid, it should have been done already. We would have been faced with the same issue maybe a year ago, but we do a progress report to the State and RCLS and they have extended a lot of these projects for a year. I don't want to wait that long because it makes me very nervous. We do have an update for the Little Free Library in Wooster Grove. We have a Little Free Library that's being donated. It's from Senator Skoufis's office. It's an extra one that they have for Walden and they're going to try to install it on May 26th 3pm and they like to invite everybody and anybody that would like to come.

Manager's Report

Manager Revella: We've gone through finalization of the budget. Year end changes. We did canvas for hiring a Sergeant. Reviewed Capital Projects with the engineer and DPW Super. Met with the Treasurer on a few audit documents, updates. Attended the Arbor Day celebration at Olley Park. Very well put together program. Nice tribute as well. Went over some civil service items with the Commissioner of Civil Service that we had questions about for the Village. Went over updates with the Building Inspector on code enforcement. The Rec and Parks Departments, tennis program starts this week. They still have registration open for summer camp and flag football. Building Department continues to work on CO's, municipal reports, building permits, fire and safety. Updating Planning Board and property maintenance violations. The Code Enforcement Officer still has more classes to go through, but making progress there. Clerk's been going through 207c updates and updating Civil Service at the county level as well. Working on dig permits, updating Facebook and website, responding to FOILs and has been working on if anybody else is interested, Leadership Day with the Committee. Right now we're actually going through summer camp employee files to make sure everybody's updated for summer camp. Treasurer is still going through audit. They're coming back to continue that process. It's a lot of bank reqs and documents to go through, year-end reviews, surveys and rehab loans that went through together. DPW went over all the maintenance projects that they work on continuously; finishing flushing; year end orders. Have a couple things they need to finish up before the next budget. Work on meters, as usual. Respond to a few different alarms at the stations and the wells. It's an ongoing issue at all different hours. Trying to keep up repairing catch basins, sweeping the streets, flushing and jetting the sewers. Sewer plant, been going through verifying items for repairs and replacements. As the Board knows, there's big projects coming up. The Police have been doing a few different special details. They had a Stop DWI detail and they've been commercial traffic details, which are very helpful, puts them

out there, a good visual for the community and trying to traffic enforcement at the same time. Still going through some staffing issues with people out on 207c. Court is in session. They have been having hearings on all different matters, except evictions are still in moratorium. They are doing Building Department matters and criminal and traffic matters. Library has their project going on, but they need some assistance with. They still have some restrictions due to Covid. Hopefully, those are lifted soon from RCLS. Different items updated from the attorney's office.

Approval of April 20, 2021 Minutes

Trustee Maher: Page 7, line 3, Trustee Baker was in PBA negotiations not myself.

Trustee Sebring made a motion to approve April 20, 2021 with changes. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Moore. All ayes. Motion carried.

Public Comment on Business of the Board

Mary Ellen Matise: This is just a comment that's been made many times before. Under zoning amendments. It just says updates from Comp Plan. So, when we look at this at home, we have no idea what update, where. Couldn't the agenda be a little more specific? We've asked this before.

Manager Revella: It would be a paragraph. It's a zoning amendment from the Comp Plan update.

Mary Ellen Matise: So it's more than just Locust Street?

Manager Revella: There are other ones that will come up too. We'll discuss that when we get there.

Brenda Adams: I was looking at the septic waiver for 2 properties in Walden. It sort of struck me funny, they were continuing to allow people to have septic systems in the Village, when we have been all over the Amthor Property that we just annexed to join the sewer system. These properties have been in the Village for a long time. I would have thought that at some point they would have been given a deadline to join the sewer system like everybody else. It is my thought that these are renewals of previous, but I don't understand why they continue to get a waiver when the new properties come in, there's no option. You have to join. That's just a thought.

Action Items

Resolution 23-20-21 – Budget Transfers

Trustee Baker made a motion to approve Resolution 23-20-21 - Budget Transfers. Seconded by Trustee Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

Zoning Amendments – Updates from Comp Plan

Manager Revella: There's an actual zone change that was recommended. Which is along North Montgomery St. It's a small section, that's R3 which really should be R5 based on what's there and what makes sense there from the Comp Committee. As was noted earlier, there are going to be other ones that are coming along with table of uses and things like that that they make go over to make sure we're on track for SEQRA. But this is the first part.

Attorney Donovan: The process, if the Board is interested in going forward is to authorize me to prepare a local law and if you're happy with the local law, it actually goes to the Planning Board and the OC Department of Planning for their review and comment and you're required to have a public hearing, at which time the public gets to comment before these zoning rules can be changed. These things were called out in the Comprehensive Plan as suggestions. It can only be implemented by amending the zoning ordinance and that's the process. If the Board is comfortable tonight, you could direct me to prepare a local law, if you're not comfortable tonight want more time to think about it, you get to do that. You're the legislative body and you could decide how you want to

proceed.

Trustee Thompson: I recall going over this with the comp plan.

Mayor Ramos: Is the Board's intention to ask the attorney to compile a local law for zoning amendments, correct?

Attorney Donovan: It's a local law proposal to amend the Village zoning map to rezone land on the east side of North Montgomery Street, running from George Street to West Main Street from R3 to R5. The local would amend the table of use regulations for business, mixed use industrial districts, to allow additional uses, including breweries, wineries, college campuses, dance and art studios to encourage economic development. Both these zoning amendments are intended to implement recommendations for the Villages most recently adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Trustee Thompson: Does everyone know what R3 and R5 is? I just know if some of our newer members understood what that means.

Manager Revella: It's a minimum lot size change from 12,000 square feet to 5,000 square feet, if you have public water and sewer, which they all do.

Mayor Ramos: Are we pursuing the attorney to complete a local law for the amendments for zoning?

All: Yes.

Surplus Items

Manager Revella: We do have a short list of items to surplus. *Read list into minutes* Those are items that were requested to be surplused with Auctions International, who we have an agreement with at this time. No minimum recommendation for some of them.

Trustee Maher made a motion to allow surplus items with no minimum. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

140 North Montgomery – Septic Waiver

Manager Revella: Because the property is more than a certain amount of feet from the sewer main, they're not required to hook up to the sewer main. They're preexisting septic system, which was inspected by our engineer and approved. Just for the public's benefit. When somebody comes in new, we have control over how they come in. When someone's preexisting, we don't have much control. The code does give that person the opportunity to continue using the septic. Of course, we encourage them to get connected to the system, but when they're more than 100, 150 feet, it's not very easy for them. It's very costly. So, they continue their septic system. I believe that was the intention when the code was enacted.

Attorney Donovan: I'm looking at the code section 234-10, it's 100 feet of property. The Village Board has a right to grant a waiver. If it's not within 100 feet, does not require a connect, but there needs to be certification by the Village Engineer that the private septic system safe and working properly.

Mayor Ramos: How often are we going to ask for the certification? Once a year?

Manager Revella: It's either 1 or 2 years.

Trustee Thompson: What happens if it fails?

Manager Revella: They will have to weigh those options of whether they can afford to connect to us or replace the system. But they have that option to work with us.

Trustee Thompson: How old are these systems on these properties?

Manager Revella: Not sure on this one.

Deputy Mayor Carley: When the septic is pumped, is it inspected then?

Manager Revella: We do the inspection as well. We certify that and when it's last been cleaned out.

Trustee Thompson: Have there been issues over the years with those properties?

Manager Revella: Not that we're aware of.

Mayor Ramos: I think I have 234-4 paragraph C and D, all waivers shall expire in the next proceeding 31st day in May.

Attorney Donovan: That is correct. To answer Trustee Thompson's question section 234-8 subdivision B, if the private system fails for any reason, the owner shall notify the Village immediately. Notification shall be filed within 15 days by a detailed written statement describing the plausibility and measures taken to prevent future failures. I should also say it's a building code violation, also county health department violation.

Trustee Thompson: So, if their system fails, we can't insist they join up to the municipal sewer? That's still up to the property owner?

Attorney Donovan: They have to meet the criteria of the code. If they're beyond 100 feet, they would not be required to, but they would be required to comply with NY and county sanitary code. Which would require a proper septic system.

Deputy Mayor Carley made a motion to approve 140 North Montgomery St - Septic Waiver. Seconded by Trustee Thompson. All ayes.

200 Orange Ave – Septic Waiver

Manager Revella: Same situation. It's been inspected and appears to be in working order with the engineer.

Trustee Elliott made a motion to approve 200 Orange Ave - Septic Waiver. Seconded by Trustee Sebring. All ayes. Motion carried.

75 East Main – Outdoor Café Permit, Empanada Nirvana

Manager Revella: The applicant provided documentation to be approved for an outdoor permit for 2021.

Trustee Thompson: Where do they want to locate that?

Manager Revella: It's on the side. They have some in front and they have picnic tables on the side.

Mayor Ramos: Do they have curb stops at each of those parking spots prior to the picnic tables?

Manager Revella: They don't have anything there, yet. They don't have tables there yet either.

Mayor Ramos: But there's the parking spots facing Elm Street there. I don't see anything in the permit to require to have those curbs stops prior to the picnic tables as a safety factor.

Manager Revella: There's a retainage area there so I'm not sure exactly sure what's in between those two things.

Trustee Thompson made a motion to approve 75 East Main St - Outdoor Cafe Permit, Empanada Nirvana. Seconded by Trustee Sebring. All ayes. Motion carried.

Public Comment

Treasurer Kelly: I am going to read a letter from some of the employees. We would like his letter to be read in tonight's meeting as we have concerns about the raise that was awarded to 1 employee and not to all the other non-union employees. The Village, along with the rest of the world, suffered through the pandemic last year. While most of the world shut down, the majority of our Departments remained open and functioning to service the needs of the taxpayers and the residents of this Village. The only Department that was required to shut down was Parks and Rec due to the Covid restrictions. Our Building Department saw a huge upswing in building permits last spring, as people were performing home improvements at the time and spring of 2021 has shown similar trends. The Building Department was 1 of the many Departments that was busier and short staffed because they had an unfulfilled Code Enforcement position. During the fall and summer, the Building Department transitioned to Edmunds software program. This was a big undertaking for the Building Department, the Treasurer and the Finance staff. Fortunately, we all worked as a team and got the program up and running to streamline the building permit process, which benefited our residents and our taxpayers. In addition, the Building Department Secretary took on the daunting task of manually moving things from the old software to the new software to assist in lowering the cost of the conversion. This conversion was vital as it had been an ongoing issue on many audit reports. The question is asked why the Building Department staff was not allowed more of an increase than they were this year? Along with our Building Department, our Clerk and Finance Department also continued to work during the pandemic. The Village still needed to pay all the employees, especially the Police Department and DPW, as they were actively working to keep Village services going during the pandemic, while facing staffing issues due to illness and quarantining issues. In addition, the Finance Department was required to reduce staff due to the Governor's mandate. Then the part time employee had to resign due to child care issues. This left the Clerk and Finance office normally run by 3.5 people, to now be run by 2 people. The Village also experienced a huge increase in garbage complaints because a lot of the people were home. The increase in phone complaints did not help with the overwhelming workload. The Building Department offered to assist with our complaints to ease on some of the pressure. Again working like a team. Water/Sewer billing, Commercial Garbage billing needed to be done to keep both Departments financially fluid. The Clerk and the Finance office were lucky that the Secretary of the DPW Department found time in her busy schedule to come and try and help us open mail a few hours each week. Again, some nice teamwork. DPW needed to install a drop box outside so we could get payments for those who wanted to make payments and couldn't get into our building. We still had to pay bills, we still needed to do relevies, we still needed to do a budget for the taxpayers. The pandemic also meant no in-person meetings, leading the Clerk with the daunting task of finding ways to livestream the meeting with various challenges in the beginning, I'm sure you all remember. While we are in a better place with Covid restrictions, our Departments have continued to work as a team and we feel we try to find ways to cut costs and help the residents the best we can. We believe everyone in the Village is deserving of a larger increase than was awarded. We just need to know

why some were allowed and some were not allowed. We've been instructed since we were hired that we cannot burden the taxpayers and have been told that the nonunion employees are supposed to follow the pay scale on the CSEA contract. The CSEA contract directive has been followed by all public employees in the last 5 years, except for 1 employee, the Recreation Coordinator, who received bigger increases in 2017 and 2018. While the rest of the nonunion employees had only received the standard increases. We just want to ask what warrants the increases outside of what we've been instructed. While none of us would want to burden the taxpayers with anything of that magnitude, we also need to be respected for our work in the Village. Giving 1 person an increase with no explanation to the rest of the employees shows a lack of respect. While we are fearful of retaliation in expressing our thoughts, we still feel it was important to write this letter to speak up for ourselves. Our 1 last thought is that there is still an opportunity to do a budget transfer and move some of that money for other lines that may be better serving for our Village and our taxpayers. Thank you for listening, Kelly A. Kelly, Marisa Kraus, Gina Somma, Darlene Ciardullo, Michael Friedman and Maria Tapia.

Brenda Adams: The Veterans Park Committee is going to meet on Thursday night to see what we can do for Flag Day. We realize we're only a month away. So, whatever we do, we will bring to you before the next board meeting for approval for the use of the park. We hope that we can do something within the guidelines. It's a good time to be a little more Patriotic. The manager in his report reminded me of something. I begged a couple times for a street sweeper on the parts of the street where there's parking. It never gets swept. I feel that that's still a waste of labor, when they go down the middle of the road, a waste of the brushes, when they're in the middle of the road, fuel, when we could put up signs that says no parking Monday 8 to 12 or something like that. Other communities do it and I just don't know why we can't do it and make the most of our street sweeper to keep the whole streets clean. Now, in my neighborhood on Valley Avenue is one side parking. The storm sewer, it comes down off of Ulster, down William and works its way both ways on valley. All of that stuff piles up right there. And that's the part that can't be swept because that's where the cars are parked. That's just another request, I think I've been asking for 7 years, maybe. Maybe someday you'll hear me. 1 of the other things about the sewer waivers. Back a ways, not all of you, but a lot of you were Board Members when the law was passed to increase the sewer costs to people, if something went wrong on your property, you had to pay all the way out to the street instead of just to the curb like it used to be. At that time, there was conversation and I know I was in that conversation asking you about the cost to people who just didn't have the money to go all the way into the street, because digging up the street would cost them, their own black toppers, their own permits. Where when the Village does it, they don't have to have a permit and they can do their own blacktopping. At that time, no consideration was given to affordability. Mr. Revella, you just said tonight that it makes it very hard for these people who were over 100 feet to have to be able to afford to connect to the sewer. I don't know, I there's a contradiction there in that statement. But at some point you don't worry if they can afford it and then now you worry if they can afford it. That's something else to think about. And my last thought is also, that the raise that Kelly Kelly just spoke about, hitting the newspaper like it did, I think Mike does a good job. I enjoy working with him on many things. But that was a huge raise at 1 point. A 20% percent raise is huge and it could have been done in increments over a period of time to make it more palatable to the Village, to the other staff and to the budget. Thank you.

Becky Pearson: First of all, thank you for all who could make Arbor Day. I know it's hard, it's on a weekday. Sorry if you were working. I do appreciate you taking the time to come. It's a nice program. I hope you enjoyed. Jimmy does a great job with the elementary school kids too. Thank you for that. Just to go back to the budget. I know you passed it, but I don't remember, I know in the beginning when the Business Council of Greater Montgomery came to see you, you were going to have a discussion on whether you were going to join or not. I didn't think I heard any discussion on the that. Was there a discussion on whether you are going to be putting that in the budget or did you

put it in the budget?

Mayor Ramos: I had discussions with Ms. Randi and at this point in time, I think it was feasible for us to join a group that we are already paying the Town of Montgomery for and to advertise what we do here in the Village.

Manager Revella: It's not in the budget.

Becky Pearson: Did I hear we lost some money for the Community Center? We some funding for the Community Center.

Manager Revella: We talked about that 2 years ago.

Becky Pearson: So, where are we making that money up? Where does that come out?

Manager Revella: We bonded for it.

Becky Pearson: Ditto to Brenda. I sat here and thought about the same thing about the whole street opening for the Village Residents, let them pay, let them pay. Why is it any different than somebody who has a little further distance to go? They all should be on it, if that's what it should be. Maybe you want to look at changing the code or the law. That's what sit to do here. You change your codes and laws to accommodate what is best for all of the Village of Walden, not just not just a few. So, you might like to take some time to review that law. Might be something beneficial to the Village. Zoning amendment, I listened and I get the R3 to R5, but there was another comment that the attorney talked about, something about wineries and business of uses, where was that?

Manager Revella: Table of uses.

Becky Pearson: Rec Department, I remember kind of last meeting that you talked about some of the programs are not being run this year. Can you tell me what ones are not being run or were cut back on? Can you go over that again? When I talked about different departments and asked if we were keeping the same programs that we had or are all the same programs running? And you said, yes, but I don't know if there's anything like adult entertainment, is that off the table?

Mayor Ramos: We have Music in the Grove. We only limited the summer program to 300 campers.

Manager Revella: No field trips.

Becky Pearson: The beach is not open, correct?

Manager Revella: The beach is not open to the public. It's open for the camp.

Becky Pearson: So, we will have lifeguards. With that, how much of a cut is it? Is it pretty much half the programs are being cut for the department?

Manager Revella: No.

Becky Pearson: Any more news on the Community Center? I know there was a drawing down. I knew there was stuff happening. Did you finalize the drawings? Are we moving forward?

Mayor Ramos: We are finalizing bids as we speak. Bids are due back at the end of the month.

Becky Pearson: The Waterfront Park, Millspaugh Park, he turns 95 next month. I didn't know what your plan for that is?

Manager Revella: We are waiting for the DEC and Army Corps of Engineers to give us the okay on the bids.

Jennifer Muehlen: I'm here representing the Muehlen family. We have residential properties at 42 Alfred Place and 36 Oak Street. Commercial properties with apartments at 11 Walnut Street, 10-12 Bergen Avenue and 23 Orchard Street. My family has resided in this Village since 1976. My father, John Paul Muehlen always instilled in me the importance of voting locally. I'll be honest, I never really understood the importance of this until this past year and seeing firsthand the poor voter turnout. I have 3 things that I want to discuss, and 1, the speeding on Alfred Place, Sunset Drive and Wait Street has not stopped. We had a speed strip a few months ago put out, but there were 6 bright orange, no parking signs right near it and it basically provided a warning for people to slow down. 2 weeks ago a Door Dash driver sped down the street. Accelerating as soon as he turned off Wait St onto Alfred. The Mail Lady jumped onto the curb and she said that he must have reached about 50 miles per hour. We know it was a Door Dasher because my neighbor walked down to ask a homeowner who it was. A few weeks ago a car hit a tree driving down Wait St from Beamer Rd. Our neighborhood has kids, elderly walkers, deaf residents and 1 day someone's going to get hit. Number 2, 2020 was a rough year. People have lost their jobs, their homes, their small businesses. You drive around, you see empty homes, for sale signs. I don't understand how an employee of Walden can request such a high pay increase and it be approved. It's astonishing. My question is how does the Board determine the annual percentage increase that employees receive? What was the exact number of participants in 2020 for children and adults participating in our recreational programs, especially with the Covid restrictions? What was the justification of such a raise? How did this employee excel higher than, say, the Superintendent of our Public Works Department and his crew, who answer calls for water main breaks and work tirelessly during snowstorms days on end? They did an amazing job this past winter and I think that they deserve recognition. I'd also like to thank Trustee Thompson, at the last meeting for questioning the raises on the budget. Lastly, this comment is for the residents of our Village and the commercial property owners. A line for Live streaming has finally been added to the budget. We as taxpayers need to be more aware and care about their tax dollars are going. Our days are long, we're commuting, some of us from out of state, we have to meet the daily needs of our kids and our families. Life is chaotic. I encourage you to try to listen even if it's when you're home cooking dinner, listen in the car on your commute home. The residents who come speak up at these meetings seems to always be the same. Thank you Becky for showing up and asking the hard questions all these years. Your love for this Village shows. The other residents of our Village, including myself, need to do the same. Let's just not post comments on Facebook and then leave it there. Let's take action. Listen during these meetings twice a month and show up to vote, our voices matter. Thank you.

Diane Savage: I just want to reiterate what Jenn said. I'm on Alfred Place. Years ago, my boys are hard of hearing. I have 2 grandsons, 3 and 6. The little one, they're not sure yet. That car came racing down the block. I'm being honest with you, if my son would have caught him, we would have had the cops down there. Mayor, you live on Alfred, you know how it is. Jenn has a little one, I have 2, there's little ones further down. This has been going on for years. We've asked for some sort of help to try and catch them. We've had Police Officers sit outside in the dark, when the sun is coming up. I had "Deaf Persons" signs put up. They're at each end of Alfred. There's a speed limit to go along with them, but nobody wants to hear us. When 1 of our kids wind up getting hurt, it's not going to be nice. I'm just letting you know. My son has been cursed at. Jenn has been cursed at. My husband has been cursed at. We have asked to see if we can get the license plate. How are you going to get a license plate off of a car that's doing 45-50 down a side street that has that has deaf

person on both ends of the street? Something's got to be done.

Mary Ellen Matise: Can I ask you a question about this zoning change that you're going to make the local law on? It's the Locust Street side but you said from George Street to where?

Manager Revella: West Main Street.

Mary Ellen Matise: How long has it been since you hired this Code Enforcement Officer who is still on training? But as part of the hiring process, is this person making a commitment to stay with the Village for a certain period of time after this training is done?

Manager Revella: I'm really not supposed to answer questions unless the Board directs me.,

Mary Ellen Matise: Did we ask this person to make a yearlong commitment once they get their training?

Manager Revella: I can't comment on personnel.

Mary Ellen Matise: It's about the position and the parameters for hiring for that position. Brian, you were there April 22 for the Delaware presentation about the sewer situation in the Town of Montgomery, which isn't much better than the sewer situation in Walden. Except it's a little different because their problem is they can't get the product to the sewer plant. In general, we're not going to pay for it because it has to come out of different water and sewer districts. Which might become combined. But they effect development in the Town and so it effects the taxes that can be collected in the Town. I encourage everybody on this Board and also the Village Planning and Zoning Board members to go to the Town Facebook page and listen to that meeting and listen to their presentation. It was excellent. Delaware did a great job for us in the past and it seems that they're going to do a great job for the Town. She brought up 1 thing that's quite interesting, and it's always made me wonder if, in fact, some of our problem is being created by their problem. Some of it is this whole high phosphorus discharge that they're putting into the Wallkill. We're downstream from them. They're not being cited for it by the DEC. It also has to do with the algae that was in the Wallkill the past couple years. I don't know when they're going to fix the sewer plant because a big price tag. But in the meantime, maybe we're bearing the brunt of that. I think we should speak up if we are. Because it's not fair to us for a much smaller tax base, a small municipality, and I'm not going to pay for them.

Manager Revella: Just so the public's aware, I did bring up the issue that the algae was above the upper dam, which is well before our discharge point and had to come from upstream. They were supposed to check Montgomery Village and Montgomery Town discharge points.

Mary Ellen Matise: You have to listen to her presentation. I think they're also inspected for that and their permit is not being effected unless they put in a new plan. Then they're going to have to meet the lower phosphorus levels that the DEC is going to put into effect in the Wallkill. Right now it's being dumped on us. That was pretty clear from what she said. They have a new name, Vision's Hudson Valley, which is the old Citizens Foundation. And I've been participating in this committee, Pathway's Committee. And if anybody else is interested in this Committee, which might have some good ramifications for us, certain Board members should contact Nancy before she leaves, and ask to be notified to participate in the zoom for the Pathways Committee meeting. There's a lot of a lot of things going on that might be useful to us.

Larry Kraus: Business owner of Walden for 34 years, also a former Trustee. I got word about this budget, you gave a Department Head a nice increase, roughly about \$286 a week and I was just

wondering what justifies that? The other employees are going to wonder, too. If I was an employee, I would be a little hot if I didn't get that increase. Now, when you give someone an increase, there's usually a good reason to give someone that increase. They must have done something really well, their job well done. However, I also found out that this person needs a mentor. He's been in this department and the head of this department for almost 11 years and he needs a mentor? What does that mean? That he needs assistance to do his job? Then you give him an increase? Does that make sense? I don't understand it. You're the Board. You were supposed to make logical decisions for the Village and the people, the taxpayers. And that's not logical. Anybody have any kind of answer for that? How they justify this?

Mayor Ramos: It's just your comment.

Larry Kraus: Okay. I'd like to know what the justifications is. It doesn't make sense. I'm a business owner and you give someone a raise because they're doing a good job. Not because he's not doing the job right. That's what seems like. I don't understand it. The people don't understand it. They're coming to me complaining about it. But I have nothing to do with it. I'm not here anymore. I'm just making a comment, like you said. We have to get back down to business here. It doesn't make sense. I don't get it. A lot of people don't get it. You're going to scare people away from here. All your employees, how come they didn't get this kind of increase? They're probably wondering what's going to happen next year. DPW guys and the Police Department. Those contracts. Think about that. Taxes are going to go up. People are going to move out. We want the Village here to prosper. Not for something like this. This is just not right. By the way, is there nepotism here? Just wondering how this vote came in. That's all I got.

Becky Pearson: I kind of did say at the last meeting that you're setting a precedent and you really did. It's a great legacy you're going to have because sitting on his Board next year, I don't want your position. I can't imagine what's going to happen next year. I just hope that you can live with that. Not that I'm right all the time, but you really, really need to look at the bigger picture here. There was no discussion on why things were happening. You didn't even want to talk about salaries, not even just the pay salary, talking about salaries in general. It was always talked about at budget time. You know, X amount percent, this group was going to get this and that group was going to get that. That discussion didn't happen this year and I just wonder why. But I do feel that Kelly Kelly wrote a nice letter. I think that it is frustrating. I did state at the last meeting that you are setting a precedent and it's starting. I feel for you all because I can see what's going to happen. So, good luck with it all and I hope you can make it all work. Thank you to who that voted no, because I think that was the right decision. I think, Mike Bliss is a great guy. It's not about the person. It's about the percentage. At the same time, I do agree that it could have happened over time instead of all at once. That's something that you might want to think about in the future if you have to give large raises again. Just a thought.

Payment of Audited Bills

Trustee Thompson made a motion to approve Payment of Audited Bills. Seconded by Trustee Elliott. All ayes. Motion carried.

Correspondence

Trustee Maher: I just want to say thank you, John. I saw you and the Historian cleaning the markers and was able to explain to my children what you guys were doing.

Mayor Ramos: Just the correspondents that I've received from the Treasurer. I received correspondence from the Town Supervisor in regards to a couple things that we're working on.

Miscellaneous Comments from the Board of Trustees

Trustee Thompson: I would like to thank the Village was finally addressing our dog waste issue. I saw the employees out today putting the signs up in various locations throughout the Village. Hopefully that will help our pet owners, a gentle reminder to clean up after their pets. That is much appreciated. Thank you. I'm very happy to hear that we're getting the Little Library replaced at Woosters Grove. I know that a lot of children looked forward to going into that little box to take a book, leave a book. It was broken for a very long time. I believe a tree fell on top of this and damaged it. I'm glad Ginny stepped in and got that taken care of. I happen to agree with Brenda Adams about the street sweeper. I know that they get utilized when they suddenly have some free time in that department. So, it's not always predictable. I know at my house many times I've run out in my pajamas to move my car so they could get my side of the street. But I do agree that if we had an inkling that they're going to be coming within a couple of days, we really could put signs out so people don't park on that side of the street. I've seen that in other communities, 1 side of the street parking for such and such days and it does seem to be effective. I agree it's really a shame that we're spending the time and money to send a sweeper out and the job doesn't get done properly because there's too many vehicles parked on the streets. I don't know if we can divide the Village up into quadrants. I don't know what the solution is, but I think it's something that we should really think about and talk to the DPW about. 1 other thing I would like to request, I do not go on Facebook every single day. I look at our page frequently, but not every day. I have missed several events recently because I haven't gone to the Facebook page. We used to have a sheet in our packets that have a listing of every event in the Village. I found that to be very helpful. I had some people in the Village ask because if they don't have a computer, they don't watch the live feed, they don't have a Facebook page and the Mayor would read that. I would like to know if perhaps the Clerk can put that back into the packets.

Clerk Kraus: Yes, as long as I'm made aware of any events.

Trustee Thompson: Yes, understood and I know there haven't been a lot of events because of Covid. It looks like things are starting to pick up again. I would like to thank everyone who participated and put together the Arbor Day program. I've been several times. It's always very nice. It was very different this year, not having the children there. That seemed kind of weird. I think the video people did a nice job so it can get into the school for the kids. I think the Winum family was very, very, grateful that we dedicated the tree in memory of their son. That was really quite nice. Although they don't live in the Village of Walden. They participate in many, many activities in our Village and they consider this their home. It was a very, very nice ceremony. Thank you, Becky and crew and our Village employees who worked so hard to help with that.

Trustee Maher: I just wanted to add to what Lynn said about Arbor Day. Becky that was phenomenal. You and Jim have a well-oiled machine there and definitely it was very enjoyable. I'm sure the children as well. Thank you for everyone for everyone who spoke today. I heard you. Just want you to know that your passion and what you're speaking about, do not fall on deaf ears.

Trustee Sebring: I'd like to reiterate what Lynn said about Arbor Day. That was a very fine outing that was put on. Jim Presutti did a real good job. It was a good day. It would have been nice to see the kids there. Maybe next year. I want to say that Becky and the crew that set that up for Arbor Day and Jim Presutti for planting that tree in the Village and for the Winum family in memorium of their son. Thank you.

Deputy Mayor Carley: I think the street sweeper issue and it's a valid point. I'm not familiar with the routes and everything that he or she does. I think it's an issue that we need to look at. Just as an FYI, in regards to the budget. Everything is being worked on to make everything equal and fair. Thank you.

Mayor Ramos: Miss Pearson, again, thank you for Arbor Day. Very touching, solemn moment for the Winum family and I know Dominick is looking over us right now because he lived in the Town of Montgomery, he's looking over Walden and watching over us and much of his colleagues that have worked with him. I've spoken to Greg Heideman, Mr. Bugelman, the kids enjoy it and they know that the Village of Walden is alive and doing their best to try and keep the kids entertained. Arbor Day, a very important event for this community. Well done to everybody that took place. Well done to my colleagues for taking time to be there. Very touching. Beautiful weather. On May 13th, the President of the Rotary Club has requested our presence to the dedicated Peace Pole there on the Walden Elementary School property. The Peace Pole is initiated from the Rotary. It's Peace on Earth and it's written in 8 different languages. It's going to be erected in the corner portion of the school yard and fence line. It's going to be something really special for the kids. There will be 2 assemblies for them to actively participate in the Peace on Earth initiative. There'll be bell ringing, poems read. Should take about 20 minutes each assembly. We will be socially distanced. We will be on the Walden sidewalk while the kids will be on their playground. It was a great initiative and I think it's going to be a great thing for the Village of Walden and Walden Elementary School. I believe the first session is at 9 and the other session is at 10:30. On June 1st, Deputy Mayor and I will be entertaining a Mayor for the Day. 3rd - 5th grade students from Walden Elementary School will be selected as a result of an essay process that will be generated by the school. May 25th the Board will be reviewing these essays and picking 2 students to shadow the Village Mayor and Deputy Mayor to show some of the projects that we're going through in the Village and they will attend our Board meeting that evening, with the exception of Executive Session. I think it's a great thing now that the schools are opening up and get these young students some vision on what local government is going to be about. It'll be a good thing for us.

Executive Session - PBA Negotiations, Personal History of a Particular Employee

Trustee Thompson made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss PBA Negotiations, as well as the employment history of the person, attorney client for litigation. Seconded by Trustee Elliott. All ayes. Motion carried.

Reconvene

Trustee Baker made a motion to reconvene the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Carley. All ayes. Motion carried.

The Board held a brief discussion after exec on capital improvements for Village Hall. No action was taken.

**Village of Walden Board of Trustees
Regular Meeting
May 4, 2021
Motions & Resolutions**

Approval of April 20, 2021 Minutes

Trustee Sebring made a motion to approve April 20, 2021 with changes. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Moore. All ayes. Motion carried.

Resolution 23-20-21 – Budget Transfers

Trustee Baker made a motion to approve Resolution 23-20-21 - Budget Transfers. Seconded by Trustee Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

Surplus Items

Trustee Maher made a motion to allow surplus items with no minimum. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

140 North Montgomery – Septic Waiver

Deputy Mayor Carley made a motion to approve 140 North Montgomery St - Septic Waiver. Seconded by Trustee Thompson. All ayes.

200 Orange Ave – Septic Waiver

Trustee Elliott made a motion to approve 200 Orange Ave - Septic Waiver. Seconded by Trustee Sebring. All ayes. Motion carried.

75 East Main – Outdoor Café Permit, Empanada Heaven

Trustee Thompson made a motion to approve 75 East Main St - Outdoor Cafe Permit, Empanada Nirvana. Seconded by Trustee Sebring. All ayes. Motion carried.

Payment of Audited Bills

Trustee Thompson made a motion to approve Payment of Audited Bills. Seconded by Trustee Elliott. All ayes. Motion carried.

Executive Session - PBA Negotiations, Personal History of a Particular Employee

Trustee Thompson made a motion to enter into Executive Session to discuss PBA Negotiations, as well as the employment history of the person, attorney client for litigation. Seconded by Trustee Elliott. All ayes. Motion carried.

Reconvene

Trustee Baker made a motion to reconvene the regular meeting of the Board of Trustees. Seconded by Deputy Mayor Carley. All ayes. Motion carried.