

**Village of Walden  
Board of Trustees Regular Meeting  
February 15, 2022**

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	Lynn Thompson
	John Elliott
	Brian Sebring
	Cheryl Baker

Absent:

Patricia Maher

Also Present:

John Revella, Village Manager
Marisa Kraus, Village Clerk
Dave Donovan, Village Attorney

**Orange County Transit**

**Allison Fausner:** We've been working through the DOT permit process. As of January 19th, we submitted our revised site plan to the DOT. So we're just waiting on a response from them to accept those revisions, and thereafter we can submit for the permit 33 or the highway work permit. Above and beyond that, we are not losing any time or currently doing improvements on the property pursuant to the existing site plan, such as preparing the fence work. It's been a little cold lately, but we have been in contact with the Building Inspector to move those permits forward when we have the opportunity.

**Manager Revella:** Dave, was there a deadline that the board passed last time to give them an extension? Do they need to take any action on that any time soon?

**Attorney Donovan:** I thought it was next summer though.

**Manager Revella:** I just want to make sure that if we get to that point, that they address it at the time.

**Allison Fausner:** I understand that the expiration is in August of this year.

**Mayor Ramos:** Thank you very much.

**Manager's Report**

**Manager Revella:** Met with Police Chief to review the canvass responses and discuss interviews for candidates for the police officer position. We've gone through and we're at the 85s on the list now and trying to ferret through those. Hopefully, we can get somebody soon to start covering holes. Met with the contractor, engineer, DPW, Rec at the Olley Park Center reviewing progress, making sure things are going well. It is progressing well and if there is a chance to stop down, make sure you wear boots. Went over the department budgets with the Treasurer and Department Heads working on those. I have a couple smaller ones to go over still, but we have everything pretty updated. Went over the court proceedings and property violations with the Building Inspector. He's

getting a court date coming up beginning of March for property violations. Finalized all the evaluations for all employees along with inventories. All those are filed now. Had a conference with special counsel and the Clerk over worker's comp and litigation. Still, following up on those. We did have 1 member submit for police retirement, will try and push that quickly. Also had a meeting with the Music In the Grove Committee to discuss those concerts and schedule events and sponsorships for the coming year. Rec Department has been assisting the Building Department with clearing sidewalks, reviewing the community center progress, indoor basketball going on now. They have Harvest Fest meeting coming up and all the departments have been working on the budget for this. Building Department, the Inspector completed 4 permits, 3 certificates of compliances, 4 CO reports, 1 CO and 6 violations were sent out. They had also sent sprinkler system bills. Code Enforcement Officer also put out 15 permits and conducted 7 fire and safety inspections and 4 violations and 1 stop work order. The clerk has been updating Facebook and the website, updating 207c and Worker's Comp, meeting with me and talking to special counsel and the attorney about that and FOIL's. Working on bunch of different things, including met with Trustee Thompson about Climate Smart and went to the CAC meeting. Met with the candidates about the upcoming election. Finance Department's been reviewing bank Recs, working on the draft budget and the audit for 2021. DPW doing their maintenance and everything as usual. Water replaced 2 meters, 1 end point, 1 mark out, 1 inspection and 1 closing. Sewers continue to have problems with people putting down non-flushable items in the sewer system and causing backups. There was one on Route 52 not too long ago. Want to make sure that people aren't flushing things aren't supposed to be going down the toilets. They've also been working on making sure the different stages and sections of the sewer plant have been freezing. So, they've been working through there, especially when it's below zero. They have to make sure that ice is always broken so that it keeps functioning properly. They've been clearing the snow and did 1 snow removal from Main Street to try and keep everything flowing. Police have been working on accreditation as will go again tonight. Also, working on staffing issues. They have been doing special details and tickets and saturation patrols since last meeting. They issued 26 tickets. Had 4 MVAs, 7 arrests and there were 282 blotters. Courts on regular schedule, library regular schedule and our attorney has been helping out with FOILs and the Ambulance District.

**Trustee Sebring:** What's the schedule on the contractor working on the inside the senior center?

**Manager Revella:** He's waiting for NYSEG to run the power in, but they're working on interior now. They have mostly exterior done. Waiting for materials to come in. As they come in, they'll keep working on it.

**Trustee Sebring:** It's looking good from the outside.

**Mayor Ramos:** Can we possibly get the word out on snow removal? I know it's on Facebook, but obviously there were more complaints about cars being towed. Can we find out, we robo call or something?

**Manager Revella:** We've done that in the past. They have also gone and driven the streets on loudspeakers about it, and people complained. That's why they stopped doing it, because they didn't want to be woken up. The people that comply, don't want to hear a robo-call waking them up in the middle of the night. So, that's why we haven't been doing that. We've been doing the Instagram, Facebook, anything really, websites, whatever they want to sign up for.

**Mayor Ramos:** We're trying. Watch the weather report.

## **Approval of February 1, 2022 Minutes**

Deputy Mayor Carley made a motion to approve the February 1, 2022 Minutes. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

## **Public Comment**

**Mary Ellen Matise:** 54 Gladstone. I used to love it when they came around with the loudspeaker because it really made you feel like the Village cared about you. It was nice. It was a small Town thing to do. I liked it. I'd like to make a comment. It's not the business of the board. People are parking all over their sidewalks. A thing that really gets me and the Chief is here. People who park backwards on 2 way streets. I don't get it. It's all over the Village. It's disconcerting, it's unsafe, and they do it constantly and too close to corners. That's my gripe for tonight.

**Manager Revella:** They're getting tickets. We're getting complaints about getting tickets from people parking on the sidewalk, complaining that we're giving them a ticket for parking on the sidewalk.

**Mary Ellen Matise:** Ambulance District. I hope everybody got the information I sent and I'll forward, Tara Stickles sent me the resolutions establishing the CAC and then every time there was a change, if they changed the membership or whatever, the board had to make another resolution. So I think it's just time for this committee that's been in existence to be formalized. Then maybe you wouldn't have had the problems that you had about a meeting not being called. Because I'm chair of the HPC, when you call a meeting, you notify all the members. It's posted by the Clerk. She posts it at the building, on the website. When you do your minutes, you give her a copy of your minutes and she keeps a file on every one of those committees in the Clerk's office and anybody can go to the meetings. The meetings are all open. Anybody can go and look at the minutes. It's all transparent and anytime there's a change, it's done. In terms of TOMSIP or CAC by resolution, but the HPC would have to be a local law because that was set up by local law. But I think you see from what I sent you that that's how it works on the Town level, and that's how this ambulance advisory committee should work and we should be in on it right now from the beginning. Whether we opt in at this point or not. But you still might have time to talk to the Town Assessor.

## **Action Items:**

### **Discussion – Ambulance District**

**Mayor Ramos:** For those residents that are concerned with the lack of movement, I have to say that we've exhausted many man hours between the committee that we've had here between Trustee Thompson, Trustee Baker, myself, Trustee Elliott and Trustee Sebring. We've contacted numerous agencies. We went to the Town of New Windsor. We went to the Town of Newburgh. We went to have a video chat with the Town of Warwick. Tomorrow, we'll be speaking to Orange County EMS. We will have a meeting with Plattekill Fire Department on Friday. They have a unique system where the fire department is coupled with the EMS. They operate on both spectrums. We're kind of curious on how their budgets are run and they do not have a tax district. So, we're going to be talking to them on Friday. Town of Montgomery meeting last week, they did adopt or finalize the consultant with Mr. Tim Eagan and Lighthouse. We're going to invite him for our next meeting on March 1st, just to get a perspective so we can see a face. I think he'll give us guidance on whether or not a committee should be developed and we will move forward for what he's going to say to the Town of Montgomery. If there are any more questions that come about. Obviously, our emails are out there, but I firmly believe that we are giving this our 110%. All of us. We're not taking this lightly. As the Town of Montgomery Supervisor Maher indicated that if we dial 911, we are going to get ambulance service regardless of what our status is at this point. Like I said before, we're not going to take this lightly and we're going to give our due diligence on this endeavor.

**Trustee Baker:** I do want to speak with the consultant to see his viewpoints on forming the committee, which we have asked for even before December. Having the audit done and the contracts done. So, it should be very interesting to speak with him.

**Trustee Sebring:** I've read the information that you put in our packets from Larchmont and Westchester County. That was very informative and I read the whole entire response from when they did an overview of their income tax. Which showed a lot of irregularities. There are a lot of questions that have to be answered. Which really helps the whole committee, because there is a lot of questions with the finance. Once you get Mr. Eagan on that, there is going to be a lot more information that is going to have to be known for the committee. It's going to take a long time. Which should be. This is not something that you just do in 30 some days that they wanted to do. This is quite an endeavor that's going to happen for the Town of Montgomery residents and it should be done right. With all the information that you, John and Lynn and Cheryl have done visiting other municipalities and asking a lot of questions and getting a lot of feedback from them. It gives us a big insight of really what's going on and what we should know that other people don't know. Which is very important. They are doing their due diligence more than I can say that the other Villages in the Town have not done. We will get to the bottom of it and it's going to be the benefit for everybody, not just us.

**Trustee Elliott:** When I was leaving here last week, I get on the elevator to leave, I ran into Kyle from the Ambulance Corps. I didn't really speak to him, but he was speaking to me. 1 of the things he told me was that the option for the contract is not on the table because he spoke to whoever he spoke to and they said they're not doing it. Well, if that's the case, we were never told that. And if that is the case, then there's only 2 other options left. And again, we don't have the answers to which 1 that's going to be or how much those are going to cost. I don't know why we're not being told all this, that I'm hearing this 3rd hand. We still have no answer, like I said on who the actual employer is going to be and depending on who that is, is going to change those numbers drastically. If it's the Town, we know that's going to be a bigger number. If it's the Ambulance Corps, might be less. We don't know. Until we have those answers. I know Supervisor Maher was up here saying as long as he was up here, he will see to it that everything he's telling us is going to get done. But now I see he's running for State Assembly, so we don't know if he's going to be here before this is done and we will have nothing in solid or nothing written that can be held accountable for. That's where I'm at right now.

**Trustee Thompson:** I would also like to assure the community that the people on this Village board have been doing a lot of behind the scenes work to get a lot of information about, is joining the district the right thing for us to do? All of the things that we're investigating are things that we asked the Town to give us information on and we didn't get any of this information. We've been doing all of this on our own and it's been eye opening, honestly. I just recently came back from Albany from a NYCOM conference and I took the opportunity to speak to several different elected officials from all over the state. Everybody has a very different model for ambulance service. Not everybody has a district. Not everybody needs a district. Not everybody wanted a district. So, I think Walden is doing the right thing by investigating all options. And Trustee Baker asked repeatedly if there was consideration of any type of a hybrid model of service. I don't believe there was ever an answer to that question. I would just like to ask our Village residents to be patient. Please know that we are looking to find out what is the best thing for our community that is fiscally also the right thing to do for our community. As far as us going ahead and forming a committee, I feel like the Town of Montgomery is the lead agency here, so they should be telling us what they would like as far as forming a committee, what their vision is and then we would have input into that as to what we would like to see. But if they're leading the charge here, I feel like it's not really up to us to decide what type of a committee to form. That should be something we should be hearing from them and then we would have input on that to say whether we agree, we disagree.

Could we try this? Could we try that? But we'll continue with our meetings. We also would like to talk to mobile life. We're still looking at numbers. We're still looking at financial numbers, call numbers, all the different things that need to be addressed. So, just be patient. We're working on it.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** I've been involved with this with Trustee Baker from the inception of it and we did our due diligence to a certain degree. We looked at approximately 4-5 different Villages that had different models. Then we brought that back to the table and we shared that with the Village and we shared with the Town of Montgomery and we shared with the Ambulance Corps. Now that it's moving and is growing and we're looking at other different models, that's all well and good, which I think we should do. But we have to go back and remember that this is not our baby. Now I agree that we can have information. Information is always good. We share when we can share it and we move forward. But at some point in time, we're going to have to make a decision to either opt in or opt out. And then if we opt out, then we have to make sure that if we want a formalized ambulance service here and the reason I say it like that, because no disrespect to Supervisor Maher, he was only 1 vote and we found that out that the board speaks and when the board says yes or no. We want to make sure that everything is here for the Village of Walden. What I mean by that is that even though we say, hey, when an ambulance call goes to 911, there should not be a point where somebody would doubt, it should be automatic and it should be established and everybody should know that 100%. It's not just with the voice of the Town Supervisor. That has to be acknowledged to the board and the ambulance district. I alluded to that our last meeting when Supervisor Maher was here, I said, it's great to hear it from you, but we need to hear from your board. And so the board needs to kind of say that from the Town, that no, regardless of what happens, they will still get the support. Now, when we went to the meeting with the Town board 2 meetings ago, I didn't hear that. That's okay. They were trying to opt us in or work with the Village of Walden, but they had a lot of pushback and they voted no. Now we have to either make a decision to either opt in or not. I'm all about the information but I don't think that information should stop us from opting in if we're going to opt in. Because if we're going to opt in, we opt in. If we're not going to opt in, we opt out. Then we still can look at this information to find out what we want to do for the Village of Walden, period. I'm hoping I'm not confusing people. What I'm saying is that the information that you're looking at is great. But it's not going to change the opting in or opting out with the Town. Because we find information, why would that stop us from opting in?

**Trustee Baker:** The reason why is that these aren't minute details that aren't answered. You're looking at taxpayer money. We are answerable for where that taxpayer money is. And when you have multiple models that you don't even have a price tag associated with and we're going to say, well, we're not quite sure where your money's going to go. We're not quite sure if it's going to be more than this. We might have to come back to it. I think that is a gross disservice to taxpayers to do that. That's important or not having a contract, knowing whether you're going to have Town employees, if things turn to Town employees, you now have pensions and benefits that is going to be astronomically different than \$800,000. That's not a minute detail. Not having a contract set, knowing even what model you're going to go to. When I had asked what model, what the other models don't work, why don't they work? We never got a response to that. We never got a response why Fishkill's model of doing it or why Wappinger Fall's model doing it, or why the way Beacon does it doesn't work. That matters.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** I never said it didn't matter. I agree with you 100%. My question was the information that we're gathering, is it going to prevent us from opting in or staying opting out because we can gather information all day long. The Town of Montgomery, they hold the strings. After we collect all this information, great. I think it's good when we get to the committee side of it to pose questions and everything and we found that through Supervisor Maher and their board, the committee is going to be advisory and they can do whatever they want, even though they may get a consultant to have a view on it and his point of view recommendation. They still hold everything. I

mean it's good to bring information to the table, but I'm asking, how is this going to make a difference in opting in? Does it make us feel better? It's okay, you can say yes to that.

**Trustee Baker:** It's not a matter of feeling better. Why would you leap into something with somebody? It's not a leap of faith with taxpayer money. It's gambling. Those determinations of the price tags could very well determine whether you want to join something like that because it may not be fiscally prudent for the Village.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** And that goes back to my question. We have all the information. We found that there was discrepancies in their finances and all this stuff, which is fine. What does that leave us?

**Trustee Thompson:** Maybe there's a different solution than opting in?

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** There's not a different solution for the Town of Montgomery. Are you saying there's a different solution for us? We already opted out.

**Trustee Baker:** We didn't opt out. We didn't vote.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** Okay, we didn't vote on it because we're saying we're going to take a neutral position. We don't know if we want to do it or not. So, the information that we're gathering, is it going to prevent us if we get all the information, how is it going to change the outcome of opting in or opting out?

**Trustee Baker:** We may decide that that's not the best option, that's the point of doing it.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** If you find all the information and you find out there's other models that are better than whatever they're coming up with which they haven't come up with as of yet, they're still in the exploratory phase. How is that going to change anything when it's time for us to make a decision to make it official opting in or opting out?

**Trustee Baker:** Because you may decide that opting into the district with that information isn't the best option for Walden. May decide that another model like going a different direction would be better. That could very well sway whether you want to be part of the district or not.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** So, if we look at all the different models and say there's 5 different models out there, as we've stated, we want to use this one and the Town says no.

**Trustee Baker:** But they can't.

**Manager Revella:** They can't force us.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** We opt out of there and then we have to have our own. That's what I'm saying. If we opt out, the information that is going to have is we're going to still be in the same position we are now.

**Trustee Elliott:** I have a hypothetical, say we opt in and the county decides we're going to do a countywide ambulance district, what happens now that we've opted in and our taxpayers are paying into the Town of Montgomery district and now the county has taking it over?

**Trustee Sebring:** I would think you'd have to dissolve your district here in the Town.

**Attorney Donovan:** The idea of the county taking over is not something that I'd take a look at. So I don't know really what would happen. But sometimes districts become defunct. And sometimes the districts dissolve. That's happened with different private water and sewer districts over the years.

**Trustee Elliott:** Does that mean the residents stop getting taxed on that district?

**Attorney Donovan:** No.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** I guess the information is for us to either opt in or opt out. That's the information that when we look at it and we find all the different models, then we're going to say, let's pick this model and opt in, opt out officially.

**Trustee Thompson:** I believe that's what we're trying to do. To decide if opting into this district is what we think is the best decision for the Village of Walden. And there's going to be a lot of things involved in that. Big 1 is going to be cost, type of service. I think it's unfortunate that we are in this place that we're in because we feel that the lead agency, which is the Town, has not given us the information that we feel we need to make the right decision. Am I wrong?

**Trustee Sebring:** You're not wrong. I feel as though the Town should be having a discussion with all of the Villages, all at 1 time. What information we have, they should already know for them to make an educated decision on what's going on and how you proceed to do this.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** I guess my thing is this and maybe we should look at it, or maybe I need to look at it from a different perspective to make sure I'm on board with everyone else. Let's look at something that would benefit us instead of looking at something trying to disqualify what they're doing.

**Trustee Thompson:** Correct. That's what we're trying to do.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** I didn't hear it like that.

**Trustee Thompson:** In the end, maybe that joining the district is the right thing to do.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** No, we need to find a model that we think we're going to have for us.

**Trustee Thompson:** Correct. That's why we're doing all of this legwork.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** I didn't hear like that. This is what I see. And that's why I'm saying, maybe I'm looking at it from a different perspective through a different lens. We're looking at what they're doing wrong and what they could do right, and we're going to find all the problems and we're going to make sure that we address all the problems. We're now looking at, okay Village 1, 2, and 3 have a model. This is what we'll like for the Village of Walden. I didn't hear that. Out of 7 people, I admit I'm a little slow at times, but I didn't hear that. I think we should come from that perspective and then we all can get on the same sheet of music. So, when we look at the different models from Mamaroneck and this place and that place. Let's compare those and see what fits here. Then we can make a decision on if we want to do that or not. Right now I don't see that happening. That's more concrete of where I'm at versus before I was talking from an abstract.

**Trustee Thompson:** I think it would be very beneficial to hear from the consultant, too, because this is an expert who knows a lot of these questions that we have. He will know the answers to a lot of these things, but we will also know the information when we speak to him because we've been investigating.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** I agree. I think we've got to figure out what works for us.

**Trustee Elliott:** I know the Town opted in, I'll say. But they don't even know if they qualified to get that certificate of need yet.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** I think once they start getting into the details of the Village of Walden streets that are in the Town, start parsing those out, they're going to find that their numbers are a little lower than they expected. If we opt out and we start adding our numbers in, we should count those streets and take those streets out to make sure our numbers meet a criteria for ALS versus BLS. BLS is kind of stable. The key thing is ALS. Do we meet the criteria, the numbers to support ALS service?

**Trustee Baker:** If you were to go through 2 ambulance companies Ambulanz with a z and then Mobile Life, they already have CONs with Orange County. If that's a route that Walden decided to go with taking a contract with them. You don't have to worry about the CON because they have a CON for Orange County. You don't have to get an additional one on top of that.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** No, I agree with that. I guess I just want to look at if we're going to collect information. Let's see what we want to meet our needs and then whatever they come up with, we can say now we can compare instead of 20, we have a smaller pool of 1 or 2 and we say no, both of these are better than what you're giving Town of Montgomery. So we're going to stick with what we have. I don't know how many we are at now. I see 4 or 5 that I'm thinking about. We need to bring it down at some point and say this will work in the Village of Walden. How do we come up with that? Get our own consultant maybe? I don't know. If we're going to look at Walden, what are the numbers that will benefit Walden? All this information is good, but Walden, you need the support the Town. It could go that way, too.

**Trustee Thompson:** That could end up being the solution.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** Should we have a consultant tell us what we need as a Village?

**Manager Revella:** I think the consultant being hired, their job is that perspective.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** I thought the consultant was just for the Town.

**Mayor Ramos:** No, he's working for all of us.

**Manager Revella:** All 3 Villages. That's what we're told.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** They're going to say Village of Walden, if you can have yours all by yourself, they're going to give us that data and this is what is going to be best for you by yourself.

**Mayor Ramos:** He's going to give us options or he's going to give the Town options and provide them to the 3 Villages that are hence paying.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** That's what I would like to see. I would like to see what's the best for the Village of Walden. The criteria we need to meet for ALS so that we can say X amount of dollars if we have to go that route.

**Trustee Elliott:** There's also another option, I guess I'll say, which I'm trying to get a hold of the guy. But the Town of Greenburg in Westchester County. They use the Police Department as

medics. They have officers that are medics. Theoretically, you call 911, you need an ambulance. The cops are usually the first one that shows up. In their case, they already have the medic and BLS on scene. That particular department, I don't know if it'll work for us, they're staffing issues, there's other things. They actually have an ambulance that the Police Department drives around and they answer police calls and medical calls in the ambulance. Is a feasible for us? I don't know. Honestly, that solves the problem. I just don't know if it's fiscally feasible. But that solves the problem because you instantly have a medic. That solves the problem throughout every state. If every department could do that. But honestly, I don't know I don't know how the staffing works. I don't know if we have enough staffing to do such a thing.

**Trustee Baker:** Could just clarify your statement before with that conversation, you said you had in the elevator with Mr. Shorette said there wasn't going to be a contract. Did he mean no contract with the Ambulance Corps?

**Trustee Elliott:** I think outside contract.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** I don't think he's talking about they're not going to be able to do an RFP. I don't know how he's going to call that because he's not a part of that.

**Trustee Elliott:** According to him and I'll put this on the record, according to him, he spoke to them and he said there's no way that's happening. We'll leave it at that. Is that true or not? I don't know. But I know we're not being told something.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** Maybe we should start attending the Town of Montgomery Board meeting and when it come up the subject of Ambulance Corps and start addressing it there and bringing our information back here.

**Mayor Ramos:** We were there last meeting. That's how they voted for the district and then they voted for the consultant. I wouldn't have done it that way, but that's not my board.

**Trustee Sebring:** Things are at least are moving with the Town. They got the consultant. Now you can start moving forward.

**Mayor Ramos:** It's a huge step. Something that we've been asking for. And obviously, we've asked for an internal audit of their of their business records. We got their taxes. The preparer made an open statement that this is not with verification or audit. I know we're beating a dead horse. Trying to chip at the rock. Let's look at dollars and cents, period. The only thing that really strikes me and I won't belabor this anymore, is the payroll of the current ambulance. 2018, it went up 35%. 2019, went up to 45%. In 2020, it went up to 58%. I'm going to predict it will be probably be at 70% and it'll go up. Not to make a light out of this, but you can see a pronounced increase every year and it will get, unless it's controlled, it will get out of control.

**Trustee Baker:** And that's with a decrease of employees, not increase.

**Mayor Ramos:** They went from 30 to 22. We have a fiduciary responsibility as board members to the taxpayers of our Village. Granted we're at the 40 yard line and we're holding up the touchdown for the Town of Montgomery, but this is why we're exploring different agencies. Town of Plattekill on Friday. Tomorrow is going to be the Orange County EMS. This problem is statewide and I'm going to be honest with you, the state legislature, the senators, even our legislator here in Orange County are going to have to start getting more involved in this because eventually the right thing to do is have a county EMS system and having a county ambulance at each portion of each jurisdiction would benefit instead of laying the onus on the taxpayers. They have the right systems, they have

the right property to effectuate an ambulance service. Unfortunately, 2022 is laying on our shoulders here in the Town of Montgomery in all 3 Villages. We want to get this right because, as our attorney said, there's no backsies. If we go in, I could just imagine what needs to be done to come back out. Referendums, votes.

**Attorney Donovan:** Once the district is formed, it's formed. If it goes defunct, that's another thing.

**Mayor Ramos:** The line item on a tax document is forever. We're not going to take this lightly. We haven't taken this lightly ever since this came about. We've had our liaisons come up to every meeting and you got to admit that the Ambulance Corps was not forthcoming in their information. I'm still expecting at least, 30 or 40 responses that we've asked for in the past. As you can see, there's no involvement of the ambulance. Because the Town of Montgomery had passed and they're forging their way through their ambulance service. If I was the interested party, I'd be at every meeting like we are. We're expending a lot of man hours talking to different people on where are we going with this? I would like to see an ambulance service, but we're going to do it the right way. That's all.

#### **Discussion – Police Policies**

**Chief Herlihy:** I know 4 was a lot. 5, 6, and 7 were decent and I know 10 is going to be a lot too for the next batch. I know there was a lot of information in there. Some of it that you may have read might not be applicable to us, but for the accreditation process, we still have that in the policy and procedure just in the event. Like we do not have air support. But there is a policy in there, in the event we ever receive a helicopter.

**Trustee Thompson:** I did do my homework, but I felt a little rushed at the end of 7. I didn't see anything like a red flag, but I would like to just read through that a little more thoroughly. If I have any questions can I come in and see you? I really think it's fine, but I rushed through the end of it.

**Chief Herlihy:** Of course.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** I just want to say this looks good to me. In my opinion, it's a big difference from before to now. Good job.

**Mayor Ramos:** Do we have about another 200 pages to go?

**Chief Herlihy:** 8, 9 and 10 about 165-ish. However, though, if you want to address, which will send out tonight, we have finished up on the policy, the procedures portion of it, which also includes all of the Villages that we're adopting into our Lexipol. Then that way we don't have to recreate it. So everything that the Village policy is for all the workers around here, we've incorporated that into our procedure policy. What we were figuring is 8, 9 and 10 for our next meeting and then procedures and the review of the Village's policies that we included for the following meeting after.

**Mayor Ramos:** 8, 9 and 10 will carry us to what maybe 75% completion?

**Chief Herlihy:** That'll be the entire of the policies. Then we go into procedures and then just what we have for the Village policies that we incorporated.

**Mayor Ramos:** Well written. Very detailed. Thank you. We look forward to 8, 9 and 10 for the next homework assignment.

#### **Introductory to Local Law 1 of 2022 - Noise**

Trustee Thompson made a motion to schedule public hearing for Local Law 1 of 2022 – Noise for March 1, 2022 at 6:30pm or soon thereafter. Seconded by Trustee Sebring. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Arbor Day Proclamation**

Trustee Baker made a motion to adopt the Arbor Day Proclamation for April 28, 2022 at 9:30am. At Olley Park. Seconded by Trustee Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Albany Ave**

**Manager Revella:** There was some discussion about the dedication of the street in the name of Sam Wright, the street he lived on. There are 11 residences on the street. I'd like to solicit them for comment on the potential renaming Albany Avenue for Sam Wright. I'm not sure if anyone else has any questions or comments on it, but we had talked about and there was a petition about changing a street name as well. I felt this was a little more appropriate. That is not named after a family's name but merely a location, so it's not as meaningful to anybody. I'm not sure how everyone's feelings are on it, but also it's the street he lived on, so I'm not sure how the board feels about it.

**Trustee Thompson:** I thought the original request had to do with 2 streets from the Village that are named the same. To differentiate between those 2 streets, we were going to give one in honor of Sam Wright.

**Manager Revella:** That street was mentioned previously to be renamed and the residents opposed. The other issue is we technically do own that as 1 street, as a through road because we have water and sewer there. I don't know if that would make sense and it's named after the Woodruff family.

**Trustee Thompson:** I was not aware of that. Thank you.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** I didn't know either.

**Manager Revella:** That was the original request. I had suggested Albany Avenue to them and they said that would make sense too.

**Trustee Elliott:** We're going to reach out to the residents?

**Manager Revella:** I'd like to send a letter on the behalf of the Village for comment from the residents.

**Trustee Baker:** Is it just a majority or do all 11 of residents have to agree?

**Manager Revella:** None of them have to agree. It's up to the board. But we would like to have their concerns addressed.

**Trustee Baker:** I think it's a wonderful idea. Sam Wright was responsible for bringing the arts to Walden. I think it's beautiful to recognize such an influential family. And it makes sense that was the road that was the first concern that I brought with you that the street would have more meaning more visibility. With the other streets, is it possible do north or south to differentiate them?

**Manager Revella:** We can talk about that. It would be east/west.

**Trustee Sebring:** After hearing what John had said about Woodruff Street, I agree with him living on Albany Avenue and after residents are in favor of it to rename it in his honor since he lived on that street.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** I agree with this.

**Mayor Ramos:** I've known Mr. Wright. I've sat on his porch a number of times watching cars go by and I know he's looking down on us right now with this anticipation of naming a street in his honor and what more point to creating this is it's next to Bradley Park where hundreds of kids come to play. Hundreds of families. And to actually see the name Sam E. Wright on a street would create just a great euphoria on how the Village cares about an icon that brought the arts to the Village of Walden. Family should be proud. We should be proud of our discussion and our implementation of renaming a street. If everybody's good on the board, Village Manager send out the correspondence to the residents of Albany Avenue.

**Manager Revella:** I'll let them know that we're going to discuss at the next board meeting if they want to make comment. But if people don't have time to respond, you can always adjourn if you need to.

**Mayor Ramos:** We'll put it back on the agenda for March 1st meeting.

#### **Schedule Budget Sessions**

Deputy Mayor Carley made a motion to schedule budget sessions for April 4, 2022; April 5, 2022; April 6, 2022; April 11, 2022; April 12, 2022. Seconded by Trustee Thompson. All ayes. Motion carried.

#### **Public Comment**

**Mary Ellen Matise:** Budget sessions, will there be an allowance for maybe public participation or public comment during the work sessions for a change? It would be nice if we were allowed to at least have an opportunity to say something that you just maybe reserve 10 minutes at the end or something.

**Mayor Ramos:** Yes. Sounds like a plan.

**Mary Ellen Matise:** I don't see where you're going with the ambulance thing. And from what I heard tonight, I don't think you know where you're going with it. But apropos to the budget, I hope you're going to put some money in the budget for 2023 because we're not going to get ambulance service for free if we're not part of the district. We're going to be paying for it somehow. Whether you pay for it with a direct contract and I don't know who you're going to contract with because you've really dissed the Town of Montgomery Ambulance Corps left, right and center about their finances, about paying for staff and everything that you can imagine. You've had something negative to say about them and yet that's the service that's here in the Town of Montgomery and right down the street in the Village of Walden. If you don't contract with them, I don't know who you're going to contract with and if it winds up costing us more because we're a much smaller tax base in the Village, where 2100 taxable units as opposed to 8000. We're 16% of the assessed value in the Town of Montgomery. We have some big rate payers. We've got AMPAC. We've got the Hydro Plant. We've got Jacobowitz and Gubitz. We've got Hannaford. And Hannaford is suing the Town. They want an 80% reduction in their assessment. They're currently paying the Village of Walden \$107,000 Village taxes.

**Manager Revella:** Hannaford isn't suing, the owner of the property is.

**Mary Ellen Matise:** The owner of the property. And that parcel pays the Village of Walden \$107,000 dollars a year in property taxes. So, if we lose 80% of that, how much money are we losing? A lot. And they're the biggest ratepayer. Then AMPAC is like \$45,000. You have a couple at \$35,000

and then it goes down. So, where's the money going to come from and is it still going to only cost us \$.46 per thousand of assessed value for ambulance service? There goes your fiscal responsibility right out the window, Cheryl. And number 2, beyond fiscal responsibility, the health and welfare of the community is number 1. Your job number 1.

**Trustee Baker:** No one said that it wasn't

**Mary Ellen Matise:** I know you're looking at all these options. I think in the long run because I only looked at a few, but I think in the long run, you're going to find out you can't compare apples to oranges. That's what all these different ambulance services are all about, all over the county. It just boils down to your specific community and then how you design it. The service that we've been getting I don't recall anybody ever complaining that much about it. They still show up. I used it from my mother. I used it for Rod. My neighbor just called them the other day and they showed up in 10 minutes because obviously they were on another call.

**Trustee Baker:** No one's saying that they don't do a good job.

**Mary Ellen Matise:** You've been criticizing them at every meeting.

**Trustee Baker:** It's criticizing to ask questions?

**Mary Ellen Matise:** Criticism is not just asking questions.

**Trustee Baker:** I made a point at every meeting to acknowledge them, tell them that they're doing a good job and that we appreciate the information that they have. Perhaps you should review the minutes.

**Mary Ellen Matise:** Are you going to seek them out for a contract? If in fact, an ambulance service has been a precedent now in the Town of Montgomery, and it's included all the Villages since the 1990s when they first started supplementing the Ambulance Corps with money out of the A fund. There's been a precedent set in this Town for a long time. It's not a requirement that a municipality provides the service, but there is a precedent. At this stage of the game, I think people expect it. You don't expect to live in a community where you get sick and you have to walk to Newburgh to St. Luke's. I'm sorry.

### **Payment of Audited Bills**

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

### **Correspondence**

**Trustee Thompson:** I had an email from Ms Matise and also don't know if it generated from John Revella or if it generated from Patricia Henighan and Martha from the Wallkill River Watershed Alliance. I'm not quite sure who that generated from.

**Manager Revella:** Patricia first then Martha.

**Trustee Elliott:** I just had the 1 from Ms Matise.

**Trustee Baker:** The email from Ms Matise as well as Ms Rainaldi with all the appointment dates for the ambulance meetings at the Ambulance Corps and from Mr. Robbie Brown wanting to thank the board for putting on the agenda the renaming of the street in the appreciation of the family for doing that.

**Trustee Sebring:** The same e-mail from Ms. Matise.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** Same correspondence.

**Mayor Ramos:** I too, received correspondence from Ms Matise. I also received parking issue and snow removal email from a certain resident.

**Miscellaneous Comments from the Board of Trustees**

**Trustee Thompson:** I don't remember if we acknowledge that a previous meeting, but if anyone's noticed all of the 2 history boards from Wooster's Grove finally made it into this building. There in the corridor, coming up the ramp past the police station. If you haven't taken a peek at them, you might want to. They're done very nicely. Mary Ellen did them. They've been down at the Wooster Train Station forever so it's nice that they're here where people can look at them. The email that I was referring to that I wasn't sure who generated it, the CAC for the Town of Montgomery had approached Walden about applying for a grant and it was something that we were not, not that we weren't interested, but it wasn't in our best interest to apply for that at the time. Well, she aligned with the Wallkill River Watershed Alliance, and they received the grant and it's for monitoring water on the Tin Brook. That's a very nice accomplishment and it will have some impact on the Village of Walden. We did send a letter in support to help get that passed through. I would just like to thank John and Marisa for working with me the last 2 weeks on the Climate Smart Initiative. Marisa was good enough to come to the CAC meeting to help all of us get through some of the computer issues and John spent some time last week going over it with me and we're also going to work on that again this week. Deputy Mayor Carly and I just went to Albany for the NYCOM conference and I would just like to quickly say some of the things that were hot topics. Housing was a big one. There's a lot of controversy about these accessory dwellings. The state of New York is proposing that they have a statewide mandate on that. Most municipalities really aren't in favor of that. They would like to address that issue on their own. That's kind of a contentious subject. There was a lot of discussion about the marijuana dispensaries in opting out. There was also a presentation about the use of the COVID relief funds. All in all, the feeling was that this is a pretty decent budget at the state level for the first time in a very long time. I'm sure Willie might have something to add to that. It was a good conference. I'm glad we went. I think we have brought some things back to share with the Village that would be helpful.

**Deputy Mayor Carley:** It was very good. It was my first time that I went to the NYCOM meetings and I thought it was very enlightening. Personally, I received a lot of information and just hear the dialog. As I was explaining to Trustee Sebring was when I look at Walden and the big picture, I see it differently now from their perspective. But at the same time, as I explained to the Mayor of Poughkeepsie, I said, wow, you have the same issues that we have on a larger scale and we have it on a smaller scale, but everyone has the same issues. To hear their methods of dealing with crime and dealing with everything I thought it was pretty good, how Walden is approaching stuff. So that helped me especially when it came down to violent crimes, how we complain about the speed bumps and humps, but they have major issues going on with some big stuff. It help me put some things in perspective in how we are doing in the Village of Walden, I thought was very good. It really helped me to understand that, how we connect to the state. I forgot the young man name, one of the lawyers, the guy was very energetic and very knowledgeable and he really put emphasis on local government and how local government plays a role in everything. So that even helped me even more to understand our roles and responsibility as Trustees to really be Becky Pearson said, open discussion and you make sure that dialog is there and show different points of view. My point of view with the Ambulance District and as I was talking about it and I said, okay let me just bring it down, are we trying to create our own or are we just getting information or what are we doing with it? I hope that we look and see how we want, what we want. And if those models can meet us

where we are. Because it is a national, it is a statewide problem. However, each Village or Town and whatever, they have solved their own problem. So we need to solve ours and do the best we can with what we have. Then we move on from there because we want to make sure we take care of the Village and make sure our constituents are happy. It was very enlightening and I'm glad I went and I look forward to going on to some other ones because I just had the opportunity to learn. And now I got bit by the bug. Thank you.

**Mayor Ramos:** Deputy Mayor Carley, I appreciate your representing me at the NYCOM. I was unfortunately not able to go and Trustee Thompson, I know she made her rounds. Was delighted to see that we have 2 well-rounded representatives of our Village plugging away at issues that are going on in the state. As always, still, New York has not substantiated their hold on marijuana, which I'm glad we opted out. We'll see what happens in the next year or 2 for them. I'm going to congratulate on behalf of the whole board, Patricia Henighan and Martha and her whole team on this endeavor with the Tin Brook. It's our number 1 water source that comes through the Village of Walden and we need to protect it. I know that big businesses are keeping an eye on it and I hope that they understand that the protection of our waterways are paramount. Tomorrow, I'm going to be meeting with our Gold Scout person. We will start moving items here and putting the mantle up. Looking forward to that being taken care of. Friday at 1:00 p.m. I know this was us spun up event, but the John Hayes home on 45 Maple Street, they have secured historical landmark sign for the residents and John Hayes. We will be there at 1pm to unveil it and showcase it. Nancy and her husband were elated, especially the Historical Society also had a tremendous amount of support and the dedication of taking care of our history in our Village. Wallkill Valley Times will be there and taking photographs. I want to thank Fred Perna and his crew for chiseling out some dirt so that we can insert the pole and come March or April when the ground thaws and we're able to set it in concrete and make it a more permanent fixture. But it's up there. If anybody wants to drive tomorrow in daylight, it's a beautiful sign and we're fortunate to have it.

\*read community events into minutes\*

#### **Executive Session – Discuss Personal History of a Particular Person**

Trustee Sebring made a motion to enter into executive session to discuss the personal history of a particular person. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

#### **Reconvene**

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

**Village of Walden Board of Trustees  
Regular Meeting  
February 15, 2022  
Motions & Resolutions**

**Approval of February 1, 2022 Minutes**

Deputy Mayor Carley made a motion to approve the February 1, 2022 Minutes. Seconded by Trustee Baker. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Introductory to Local Law 1 of 2022 - Noise**

Trustee Thompson made a motion to schedule public hearing for Local Law 1 of 2022 – Noise for March 1, 2022 at 6:30pm or soon thereafter. Seconded by Trustee Sebring. All ayes. Motion carried.

**Arbor Day Proclamation**

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**Schedule Budget Sessions**

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**Payment of Audited Bills**

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