

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
INC. VILLAGE OF EAST WILLISTON
AGENDA MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2017

Agenda Meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Incorporated Village of East Williston was held on Monday, March 27, 2017 at 7:30 p.m. at the Village Hall, 2 Prospect Street, East Williston, New York.

There were present: Mayor David E. Tanner, Trustees Christopher Siciliano, Bonnie L.S. Parente, James L. Iannone, Anthony J. Casella, Village Clerk Marie L. Hausner, Treasurer Michael Delury, Bonnie Kreisman, Secretary to the Board of Trustees, Village Attorney Jeffrey L. Blinkoff.

Also present: Anthony Core, John Quick, Robert L. Campagna, Caroline DeBenedittis.

Anthony Core and John Quick from Meadow Carting were present at the meeting, as Meadow was the low bidder for the recent sanitation contract which commences June 1, 2017.

Mr. Core gave a brief background of Meadow Carting. They have been collecting refuse in the Town of North Hempstead since 2000, and have been in business as Meadow Carting for 40 years. Meadow had been the carter for East Williston in the mid-2000's.

Mr. Core introduced John Quick who has 29 years' experience in the New York City Department of Sanitation. Mr. Quick supervises the day to day operations at Meadow and will be in charge of East Williston.

It was his hope to keep the same consistency in service as DeJana has been providing.

Mayor Tanner stated that option 5 of the contract calls for rear yard pick up, three times per week. The contract also requires that sanitation employees to not cut through or cross lawns.

Trustee Parente stated that DeJana employs a system where workers collect bags of refuse from many homes and placed them in the street in a large pile in front of one particular home. The truck then picks up the bags left at this location.

Mr. Core stated that some companies employ this type of pick up, but Meadow does not.

With regard to the question on how many employees will be assigned to each truck, Mr. Core stated that Mr. Quick will follow DeJana trucks on their routes and follow their route sequence.

Mr. Core stated that with regard to recycling, Meadow's fleet has both bifurcated trucks (trucks with separate compartments in the compactor) and bins on the front or back of the truck.

Trustee Parente stated that the current carter had employees who had seniority and received transfers to other locations. The new employees had a difficult transition in East Williston resulting in missed collections and other problems.

Mayor Tanner stated that they seemed to have less control over the crews that worked for them.

Mr. Core stated that Meadow's employees are members of the Trade Workers Union rather than the Teamsters.

The Board discussed having Meadow absorb any tipping fee increases during the length of the contract.

Mr. Core stated that Meadow will absorb the increases, but noted that the waste flow can be taken to their transfer facility in New Cassel. The rate increases instituted by the Town of North Hempstead since 2014 are as follows (each per ton): 2014: 82.25, 2015: 85.28, 2016: 87.25.

Mr. Core stated that he will speak with Mr. Blinkoff about a proposed change in East Williston's next sanitation contract relating to the tipping fee provision.

Mayor Tanner asked Mr. Core and Mr. Quick to attend the June 12, 2017 Board meeting so the Board can introduce them to residents advising of the change.

Building Inspector Robert Campagna was present at the meeting to review several issues with the Board.

On the topic of open building permit amnesty, Mr. Campagna had reviewed Mr. Blinkoff's recommendations. He noted that there is nothing in the East Williston pertaining to renewal fees to extend a building permit beyond one year. There are a few building permits that remain open after 25 years.

He offered an example of a home built in 1994, prior to his tenure at the Village. The building permit and plumbing permits were never finalized. The basement was finished. There is no updated survey on file and no certificate of occupancy was ever issued. A series of unfortunate events befell the family and the Board at that time opted to "let things go" for a while until things settled down. Unfortunately, nothing was ever done to finalize the permit on the property.

A brief review of permits revealed approximately 440 open permits. 220 of those are major renovations. Approximately 45 of them are well over 10 years old.

In 2002, Mr. Campagna sent letters out to residents open permits, but many disregarded the request for closeout.

Mr. Campagna stated that for fences and sheds, he can inspect the installation from the street, and the sign off on the open permit can be completed. He wanted to focus on the larger projects which require a certificate of completion and the filing of necessary documentation in which to issue said “C of C”.

Mayor Tanner stated that he wanted residents to appreciate that the amnesty program is a good will gesture to aid in closing out open building permits.

Trustee Parente was curious as to why residents do not close out permits.

Mr. Campagna stated that many residents do not want to close out permits because they feel they will be taxed on the improvement. However, since they have already applied for a building permit, the information automatically is sent to the Nassau County Assessor’s office (this is the formal protocol), so closing out a permit will not prevent reassessment by Nassau County.

Ms. Kreisman stated that residents also cite reasons that they thought their contractor took care of the permit close out, “life gets in the way”, (they were busy) to name a couple.

Mr. Blinkoff stated that in some villages, if the permit time expires, the original permit fee becomes the renewal fee.

Mr. Campagna stated that by not closing out a permit, residents are actually doing themselves a disservice. In the event of fire or other catastrophic event, by not having the proper documentation filed to close out a permit, an insurance company will not pay on a claim. They do not realize the exposure they are subjecting themselves to in a situation such as this.

Mr. Blinkoff stated that residents need to maintain a legally valid building permit. By not maintaining an “in place permit”, the Village can take the residents to Village court by initiating proceedings against a resident who lets a permit lapse.

He also stated that the Village code does not have any provision for those who apply for permits, but do not perform any work. There is no fee or mention of a way to extend a permit.

Mayor Tanner listed a preliminary protocol for amnesty on open building permits.

1. Village to formulate a letter to residents who have an open permit or permits.
2. Notification shall include a checklist of all open items under the permit or permits.
3. Inform residents of the Village's amnesty program and date of expiration, December 31, 2017.
4. Resident must submit all required documents (which include, but not be limited to new survey, electrical certificate, final inspections by building inspector and if needed, the plumbing inspector. If the permit is still open after December 31, 2017, a \$1,000 fine/penalty will be imposed for each year the permit remains open.

Trustee Iannone felt that the Village should also advise resident that they are not saving money on taxes by not closing out a permit, and in fact may be harmful by not filing the necessary paperwork and arrange for final inspection.

Mayor Tanner stated that he anticipates holding the public hearing on this subject in June.

Mr. Campagna stated that building permits are valid for one year, but the Code does not address what happens after that. He felt a \$1,000 renewal fee for one should be imposed, and then \$1,000 per year, each year thereafter.

The Board discussed building permits as they apply to reassessment.

Mr. Campagna stated that all approved building permits are forwarded to the Village assessor/consultant. With this in mind, building permits such as fences, sheds, driveways, replacement of central air conditioning units and other small permits can trigger the reassessment of a house.

Based on minor permits for maintenance or decorative purposes, he is concerned that residents will perform this work without benefit of a permit so as to avoid a reassessment of the property

Ms. Kreisman added that a house on School Street obtained a permit for a fence in 2014. At that time, the property was assessed at \$566,000. Because of the fence permit, the property assessment was increased to \$725,000.

Trustee Parente felt that on the surface, this reassessment makes sense in that the property was under assessed at \$566,000 for the area.

Mr. Delury stated that any building permit will trigger a reassessment.

Trustee Iannone stated that this procedure seems not to accomplish what it is setting out to do.

Trustee Casella stated that perhaps all 850 homes need to be reassessed.

Trustee Parente asked what the difference was between former assessor Paul Wotzak and current assessor Mark Davella.

Ms. Kreisman stated that Mr. Davella review every permit that has been issued during the year, while Mr. Wotzak used more discretion on what he reviewed, such as larger improvements.

Trustee Parente asked if the Board can ask Mr. Davella to use more discretion on small permits, as listed by Mr. Campagna previously.

Mr. Blinkoff stated that it would difficult to tell the assessor exactly what to do.

Mayor Tanner stated that the trigger should encompass what the added value of putting up a shed or a fence will have in the total value of a property.

Mr. Blinkoff stated that the Board does not need to approve a resolution about this subject, but can speak with Mr. Davella about the triggering factors in reassessment.

The Board discussed the issue of the removal of sidewalks on Sumter Avenue.

Mr. Campagna stated that the policy of the building department has always required that a sidewalk be maintained, and replaced if it is removed or broken. If a house is demolished and re-built, and there was a sidewalk in front of the house, the sidewalk would need to be replaced before a certificate of occupancy would be issued.

In the example of 57 Robbins Drive where the house was demolished and is being rebuilt, no sidewalk existed in front of the premises, so no sidewalk will be required for a CO. There are no sidewalks in that area.

In the case of Sumter Avenue where the south side of the street has spotty sidewalk installation this is a different situation.

He noted that with regard to 8 Sumter Avenue (former Muzio residence), the sidewalk was removed before Mr. Campagna's tenure with the Village, and no record of the sidewalk removal was filed in the property file. As such, it appears that Mr. Muzio was never required to replace the sidewalk

Mayor Tanner stated he had no problem with the policy so far.

Mr. Campagna stated that the Village cannot allow anyone to remove a sidewalk. Sidewalks are village property. The Code only allows for a \$250 fine to be issued when a sidewalk is removed. From the experience of the removal of the sidewalks at 10 and 14 Sumter Avenue, a weekly fine of \$250 will be issued until the sidewalk is replaced.

Trustee Siciliano stated that in the case of 10 and 14 Sumter Avenue, the sidewalks were only in front of these two locations and no further, until the easterly end of the block. The sidewalks lead to nowhere.

Mr. Campagna stated that in retrospect, the Sumter Avenue issue should have been handled differently. The residents thought that the fine was the penalty for removal of the sidewalks.

Trustee Casella stated that perhaps when the house at 8 Sumter was constructed, the residents could have been requested to put in a sidewalk.

Mayor Tanner mentioned the motion Trustee Casella proposed at the meeting on March 13th to grant relief to the residents of 10 and 14 Sumter Avenue for the Village not to proceed further with the requirements to replace the sidewalks removed.

Mr. Campagna stated that stated that nine homes on the south side of Sumter do not have sidewalks.

It was noted that the residents of 14 Sumter Avenue were told not to remove the sidewalks when they came to the Village office to apply for a driveway permit.

Trustee Iannone stated that the real fine/penalty would be for the sidewalks to be replaced at these two locations.

Mayor Tanner stated that this situation (removal of Sumter Avenue sidewalks) is a very bad precedent for the Village. He felt as a Board, they are there to protect Village property. He felt the removal of the sidewalks is like stealing. Not sufficiently penalizing the residents involved in this situation is akin to rewarding someone for stealing.

Mr. Campagna stated that no one disagrees with Mayor Tanner.

Trustee Iannone stated that the Village should increase fines for this offense and replace the sidewalk

Mayor Tanner stated that the Village should require the residents to replace the sidewalk.

Trustee Parente asked if we can require the resident at 8 Sumter Avenue where the new house was constructed to install a sidewalk in front of their home.

Mr. Campagna stated that the Board may want to consider a 10 year plan to construct sidewalks along both the south and north sides of Sumter Avenue.

Trustee Siciliano stated that he wanted to speak to some contractors about obtaining prices to reinstall the sidewalks in front of 10 and 14 Sumter Avenue.

Mr. Campagna was asked to contact the resident of 8 Sumter Avenue to see if they would be willing to install a sidewalk in front of their home.

Trustee Parente asked if Mrs. Arcieri had spoken to Mr. Campagna about an Eagle Scout project her son is interested in doing. He wanted to install information kiosks in the Village, like Williston Park.

Mr. Campagna stated that a project similar to this was suggested some years back, but that it is not feasible for many reasons in East Williston. He informed Mrs. Arcieri to see if her son had any other ideas for a project that may benefit the Village.

Trustee Casella stated that he spoke with Town Clerk Wayne Wink about the town issuing solicitation permits. The Town will now include the names of each of the incorporated Villages within North Hempstead in the solicitation permit application, informing those applying they cannot solicit in these areas.

Mayor Tanner added that he spoke with Supervisor Bosworth about this matter.

Trustee Iannone stated that the East Williston Little League wanted to install two covered dugouts at Devlin Field.

Mayor Tanner asked that the East Williston Little League submit plans to the Village so they can review what they would envision.

Trustee Siciliano stated that the lights in the Village Hall clock tower are out. He is looking to install LED lights in their place for a longer life.

Mayor Tanner stated that for the upcoming agenda meeting, he would like Water Rivera to be present about the installation of cameras at Devlin Field. He also may want to talk about the installation of LED light around the Village.

Caroline DeBenedittis stated that this will be the fourth year for the village-wide tag sale. There has been increased participation by residents over the years, and it is not the same residents who participated in past years.

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She has checked with Police Officer Todd Atkin of the Nassau County Police Department 3rd Precinct, and found that there is no evidence that the annual tag sale has contributed to any crime in the area.

Mrs. DeBenedittis said this is a social event for the Village and brings neighbors together. People are not throwing out items, and make money off the items sold. Even if something is not sold, she arranges with Big Brothers and Sisters to pick up remaining items for donation for those who can use them. It is four hours out of the year on one day. (Hours held have been 9am to 1pm or 10am to 2pm.).

The Village makes approximately \$1,700 in fees, which she said was earmarked for a park bench or something similar.

The suggested dates are May 20th, with a rain date of the 21st, or June 3rd with a rain date of June 4th.

RESOLUTION NO. 15-2017 A RESOLUTION SETTING A DATE FOR THE VILLAGE-WIDE TAG SALE FOR MAY 20, 2017 WITH A RAIN DATE OF MAY 21, 2017.

On the motion of Mayor Tanner, seconded by Trustee Parente and with Mayor Tanner and Trustees Parente, Siciliano, Iannone and Casella all voting “aye”, the Board unanimously approved the date for the Village-wide tag sale for May 20, 2017, with a rain date of May 21, 2017.

Mr. Campagna reminded the Board about placing no parking signs on Sagamore Avenue on the day of the sale, so as to allow for smooth traffic flow.

There being no further business, on the motion of Trustee Parente, seconded by Trustee Siciliano, the meeting was adjourned at 10:15 pm.