PROCEEDINGS OF A SPECIAL MEETING
OF THE VILLAGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Tuesday, June 1, 2021, at 6:30 PM

Present:

Mayor:	Alysa Plummer
	Lili Lanphear
	Dan Keating
	Justin Leitgeb
Village Attorney:	Jeff Turner
Recording Secretary:	Dorothea M. Ciccarelli
Deputy Clerk:	Marina Pacheco

CALL TO ORDER

Motion by Mayor Plummer, and seconded by Trustee Lanphear, to call the meeting to order.
Vote: Plummer – yes; Lanphear – yes; Keating – yes. *Motion Carries*.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST DISCLOSURE

The Board members indicated that they had no conflicts of interest to report.

The Village Clerk reviewed guidelines for public comment for all attendees.

BRIDGE CONSTRUCTION: WEAR & TEAR STUDY

Mayor Plummer explained that a study should be conducted at Schoen Place to understand the effects of the traffic being routed through there due to the bridge closure.

The DPW Superintendent agreed and stated that before the bridge closure the Board had discussed conducting an SRF speed study at Schoen Place. This study was meant to gain understand of the amount of traffic on a daily basis before and after the construction and provide justification to NYSDOT to fund repairs if necessary.

Trustee Lanphear asked if the Board would be putting the project up for bid or if Ferranti would be used because they have conducted studies for the Village in the past. Also asked what the cost of the project would be.

Mayor Plummer replied that she has contacted SRF and believes that using them will be cheaper. Also noted that they have previously conducted studies on Schoen Place and that information could be used as a reference point as well.

The DPW Superintendent stated that the previous study conducted by them was on South Street and was under $3,000.

Trustee Keating explained that the timing of the discussion was because the construction was nearing completion.

Several Board members state their support in conducting the study. Mayor Plummer to follow up with SRF, if the estimate for the work is low enough, other bids may not be needed.

David Ferris, 27 Monroe Ave. – Asked how the Main Street bridge construction will affect the study.

The DPW Superintendent responded that he does not have information on the Main Street bridge construction project, but it should begin next year. Further explained that the study should have no impacts on construction or traffic.

COMMUNITY PROJECT: EMERGENCY TREE RELOCATION & DONATION PROGRAM

Mayor Plummer explained that this is a follow up to last week's discussion regarding the 160-180 trees planted at the Arboretum and the recommendation to relocate them. Further explained that the invasives at the site are stressing the trees. The recommendation was that residents of the Village may have a tree for a small donation and re-home it in their yards. Donations will be re-invested into the Arboretum.

Sue Julian, 56 Monroe Ave. – Asked why the original arborist was not included on the tour or as a part of the report that was previously presented. Asked if the Master Gardeners who provided the report are arborists.

Mayor Plummer replied that an arborist did concur with the recommendations made in the report.

Trustee Lanphear stated that when the arborist initially delivered and planted the trees that he did not have a plan and that he was simply there to plant the trees. Stated that the plantings did not necessarily need a formal layout as that is not what happens naturally. Further stated that she would like to talk to Jim Engel and the original Master Gardeners to get more information.

Mayor Plummer agreed, returned focus of discussion to trees that are being harmed/outpaced by invasives.

Further discussion is had amongst Board Members regarding the actions thus far.

Robert Corby, 7 Washington Ave. – Provided background of actions taken at the Arboretum. Explained that incremental plantings would facilitate the transition into a native tree forest. Commended the tarping of the Japanese knotweed. Stated that the project is a SEQR type 2 action. Further explained that the original plan was to overseed the area with native nettle plants. Stated how the DPW is capable of maintaining the area.

Mayor Plummer asked if the previous Board had passed any resolutions regarding forestry and that property. Noted that if the project is considered to be forestry, the DPW is not qualified to maintain the area.

Margot Fass, 65 State St. – Stated that if natives were planted as per the original plan then the Japanese knotweed would not have been as severe. Stated that the gravel is not preventing the knotweed from growing. Supports saving the trees that need it. Asked who the Master Gardeners were and why a panel of Gardeners did not confer and make a recommendation on the site. Asked how the Board will determine which trees will be moved and which stay.

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David Ferris, 27 Monroe Ave. – Indicated that he would like to hear letters sent to the Board.

Marty Martina, 30 Locust St. – Stated that he looked at the trees two days ago and none were stressed or dying. Asked that the urgency of this be explained and stated that he is against giving away Village assets and that doing so should not be the only option. Asked what the plan to replace the trees would be and the cost. Suggested moving the trees within the Arboretum and possibly creating a volunteer group to maintain them.

Mayor Plummer reminded everyone that the conversation is about only removing trees that are not healthy, at the recommendation of the Master Gardeners. Explained that the plan is to mark the remaining native trees and relocate ones that will not make it. Stated that findings from the Code Enforcement Officer/Storm Water Consultant support the plan. Identified the project as a SEQR type 1 action and stated that LWRP and storm water issues were outlined in a previous meeting. Clarified that the trees being relocated would not be gifted, a donation would be received and allocated into a reserve fund for the Arboretum.

Trustee Leitgeb asked to present information that he gathered regarding the status of the trees at the Arboretum. Mayor Plummer stated that she would prefer that the entire Board have the opportunity to review the information that he collected. Stated that this discussion grew beyond the scope of the Special Meeting.

Trustee Keating stated that the discussion should be focused on what to do with the dying trees.

Trustee Leitgeb presented the information that he gathered regarding the status of the trees at the Arboretum.

Mayor Plummer noted that while the trees may look and seem healthy and manageable now there are still issues of them being planted too close together and their long-term survival may still be in question.

Trustee Leitgeb stated that he is unsure why areas in the Arboretum were covered with gravel. The Building Inspector explained that the gravel was put down to secure plastic in place that would help to kill off the invasives.

Mayor Plummer explained that the gravel was used because it can be re-used in other areas.
Trustee Lanphear asked if there had been a vote associated with the Building Inspector's report.

Trustee Leitgeb stated that the recap of his visit showed that the trees in the area were healthy and further stated that he has heard concerns that opinions on this project should come from an arborist and not a master gardener. Commented that he followed up with original arborist Jim Engel and that he advised that if the trees were stressed then uprooting them could cause more stress. Stated that Patty Love concurred with this opinion.

Mayor Plummer responded that the Master Gardeners that she contacted did refer to the arborists who originally walked the property and suggested that all of the Trustees walk the property with experts so they can collectively understand the state of the trees.

Trustee Leitgeb agreed that walking the property with the original arborists would be a good course of action. Further stated that he reached out to the DEC and there are representatives from there who can attend the walk through as well and create a forest stewardship plan.

Mayor Plummer identified the action item of following up with the Master Gardeners and arborists to schedule a walk through.

Trustee Keating stated that he did not support the politicization of this issue.

Mayor Plummer stated that she wished to postpone the discussion on changing the name of the area from Arboretum to Wildlife preserve until after the site visit occurs.

Trustee Lanphear requested that evidence for why the name change is necessary to be included in the next meeting's packet.

Motion by Mayor Plummer, and seconded by Trustee Keating, to enter into Executive Session to discuss an employee matter.
Vote: Plummer – yes; Lanphear – yes; Keating – yes; Leitgeb – yes. *Motion Carries*.

Motion by Trustee Keating, and seconded by Trustee Leitgeb, to incentivize staff to get vaccinated by offering one vacation day.
Vote: Plummer – yes; Lanphear – yes; Keating – yes; Leitgeb – yes. *Motion Carries*.

Motion by Trustee Keating, and seconded by Trustee Lanphear, to approve a 1.5% raise for the Building Inspector Steve Lauth in addition to his planned raise effective June 1, 2021.
Vote: Plummer – yes; Lanphear – yes; Keating – yes; Leitgeb – yes. *Motion Carries*.

Motion by Trustee Keating, and seconded by Trustee Leitgeb, to approve an additional $2.50 per hour raise for the DPW Superintendent Zach Bleier in addition to his planned raise effective June 1, 2021, and an additional $2.50 per hour raise in 9 months should performance objectives be met.
Vote: Plummer – yes; Lanphear – yes; Keating – yes; Leitgeb – yes. *Motion Carries*.

Motion by Mayor Plummer, and seconded by Trustee Keating, to adjourn the meeting.
Vote: Plummer – yes; Lanphear – yes; Keating – yes; Leitgeb – yes. *Motion Carries*.

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Marina Pacheco, Recording Secretary