

**VILLAGE OF ARDSLEY  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
REGULAR MEETING  
MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2015**

Present:	Mayor	Peter Porcino
	Deputy Mayor/Trustee	Nancy Kaboolian
	Trustee	Gary Malone
	Trustee	Mollie Monti
	Trustee	Andy DiJusto
	Village Manager	Meredith Robson
	Village Clerk	Barbara Berardi
	Recording Secretary	Donna Fusco
Absent:	Village Attorney	Robert Ponzini

Mayor Porcino called to order the Regular Meeting at 8:00 p.m.

**I. ANNOUNCEMENT OF EXIT SIGNS**

**II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**SWEARING IN NEW VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER – JONATHAN GOLDSTEIN**

**PRESENTATION BY VILLAGE HISTORIAN WALTER SCHWARTZ**

*Ardsley Village Historian's Annual Report*

*February 2, 2015*

*I am pleased to submit to the Board of Trustees and to the Village Manager my Annual Report for 2014 as Ardsley Village Historian.*

*A major highlight of the year was helping to organize the meeting of Region 3 of the New York State Historians Association, which took place at the Westchester County Records Center and Archives in Elmsford in September. A year earlier, I proposed to the membership of that Association the hope that Westchester County might serve as host for its next annual meeting. With the cooperation and assistance of the Westchester County Historical Society, this goal was achieved.*

*The meeting attracted at least 30 other local historians from as far as Orange County. We shared the work we were doing in our own communities, and I reported on Ardsley's varied activities. The membership agreed that it was important that we place before our public and local officials the aims and achievements of our local Historical Societies, and municipal Historians.*

*Often during the past year, my role as Historian became mingled with my role as program coordinator for the Ardsley Historical Society in the presentation of these fine programs: John Peene, Yonkers mayor from 1894-1898 who enjoyed a vast country estate off Heatherdell Road; Irene Beasley, Ardsley's lady of song and entertainment; the late Anthony Radomski, whose exceptional leather works adorn the Village Hall; and "The Great Ardsley Fire of December 1914" which destroyed the village business district and rendered 90 persons homeless.*

*During the past year, I wrote several articles, including a published piece relating to Adolph Lewisohn, which was enhanced by a three-hour meeting I had here in Ardsley with former US Ambassador John L. Loeb, Jr., Lewisohn's great-grandson. In the course of that visit and my guided tour of portions of Lewisohn's former 356-acre estate, Heatherdell Farm, Ambassador Loeb gifted me copies of Lewisohn's unpublished autobiography, one copy of which is now available in the Westchester County archives.*

*In November, I accepted an invitation as Village Historian to visit the Concord Road School and give a history lesson to the entire fourth grade as part of their local history curriculum. Several other members of the Historical Society's Board enthusiastically participated.*

*Beyond Ardsley, I was privileged to give a talk before the Dobbs Ferry Historical Society last March on Col. Franklin Quimby Brown, a national public figure and longtime village president. Further stretching my role as Ardsley Historian, I accepted invites to speak at the Woodlands Atria on the occasion of the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Dionne Quintuplets last May, and at the Greenburgh Public Library on the Brooklyn Dodgers at the opening of the 2014 baseball season.*

*During the last year, I continued my weekly service as a volunteer in the Reading Room of the Westchester County Archives and Records Center on Route 9A in Elmsford, a rich depository of material for anyone interested in genealogy or in the history of their community.*

*For the year 2015, our plans are to continue research for upcoming programs about the New Croton Aqueduct, which runs under the village and helps furnish water to New York City, and the Old Putnam Railroad, which served Ardsley for more than 75 years until its passenger service was discontinued in 1958. I know that the Ardsley Historical Society welcomes participation, support and new ideas from the community. My goal, as always, is to encourage residents to take an active interest in the history of their village.*

*In my various endeavors as Village Historian, I am appreciative of the advice and support of others, especially Ardsley Historical Society President Robert Pellegrino, and retired Village Manager George Calvi, who was always interested in all aspects of Ardsley's history.*

*Have you any questions?*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Walter Schwartz*

*Ardsley Village Historian*

### **III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Regular Meeting – February 17, 2015

**Trustee Malone: RESOLVED,** that the Village Board of the Village of Ardsley hereby approves the minutes of the Regular Meeting of Tuesday, February 17, 2015, as submitted. **Seconded by Trustee Kaboolian and passed unanimously.**

### **IV. DEPARTMENT REPORTS**

#### **LEGAL REPORT:**

Village Attorney Ponzini was not present for this meeting.

## MANAGER'S REPORT:

### VILLAGE MANAGER REPORT FOR MONDAY, MARCH 2, 2015

There are several items I would like to report on tonight.

1. The first item deals with the Fiscal Stress Monitoring System report that came out from the State Comptroller's Office. Although the rating the Village received should be taken seriously, it is not a result of any long term poor fiscal management, but rather an aberration of general practices and occurrences. Marion and I spoke directly with a representative at the State Comptroller's Office today to review their rating. While I can certainly understand and, in fact, agree with the concern raised over our fund balance and cash position, I was originally afraid that their rating may have also included other items that would require further analysis and correction. However, that is not the case. The rating system gives strong weight to the fund balance indicator – 50% and factors related to our cash position – 20%, which is what brought our score up so high and put the Village in a “Moderate Fiscal Stress” classification. There are four classifications of fiscal stress in the Comptroller's system. They are Significant Fiscal Stress, Moderate Fiscal Stress, Susceptible to Fiscal Stress and No Designation.

The fund balance level is very low ... at this point. However, there were significant factors involved in the diminution of the fund balance during last fiscal year that we were largely unexpected and required the use of available funds from the fund balance. The two main factors were higher than anticipated litigation costs and significantly higher pension costs than originally estimated. We do not anticipate the recurrence of these types of expenses. The Village has maintained a relatively healthy total fund balance of approximately 10% or better since 2007, which indicates that the low fund balance identified in the State Comptroller's report is not a “normal” result of ongoing operations. Our total fund balance based on the 2014 Fiscal Year was at 7.8% (compared to the Comptroller's Office comparables at 37.4%). Our unassigned fund balance was down to 4.4% (compared to the Comptroller's Office comparables at 27%).

Our cash ratio and cash as % of monthly expenditures, largely as a result of the low fund balance level, are at 21% and 11.7%, respectively. This compares to comparable communities, as determined by the State Comptroller's Office, at 541.5% and 404.2%!

Lastly, the Village ended the 2014 Fiscal Year with an operating deficit of expenditures over revenues of \$564,760, or -4.8%. Again, in contrast, comparable communities were at 2.4%.

Despite the concern that this fiscal stress rating could engender, it should be noted that it captures a single point in time and serves mainly as a benchmark for communities to consider as they determine their financial policies and practices over time. It may very well serve as a caution to communities, but it does not necessarily indicate a promise of fiscal stress in the future. One year does not make a pattern. In my opinion, it only becomes problematic if the issues identified become systemic and part of the normal part of operations. If that were the case, I would be very

concerned. But since this is not at all a pattern for the Village, we know exactly what led to these issues, we do not expect these things to reoccur, and we anticipate a variety of positive revenue sources and reduced expenditures going into the next fiscal year, I am not concerned.

I would be happy to try to answer any questions or get more information for anyone who would like to know more about this.

2. The second item I thought I would mention, simply for information purposes (and maybe a little bit of pride for all of our local governments), is the result of the survey recently conducted by the Siena Research Institute at the joint request of the NY Conference of Mayors and Municipal Officials, the NY State Association of Counties and the NY State Association of Towns as a means of getting an accurate portrayal of local governments and the public's view regarding (1) the performance of New York's local governments as compared to our state government; (2) satisfaction with particular local government services; (3) the perceived split of the property tax "pie" between school and municipal taxes; (4) the appropriate balance between local services and local taxes; and (5) how best to use New York's one-time \$5.4 billion windfall from bank settlement fines.

The results of the Siena Research Institute's statewide poll of registered voters, conducted February 9-12, highlight the fact that the public rates New York's Local governments significantly higher than their State government on a variety of criteria.

In selecting whether Local government or State government does a better job at three fundamental governmental tasks – protecting and managing tax dollars, understanding and responding to your needs, and getting important things done – New York voters, by a substantial margin, chose their Local government.

However, registered voters have a clear misconception of the portion of their total property tax bill which goes to their school district as opposed to municipal services. Respondents estimated that 42% of their property tax bill is for school purposes and 58% is for all other services. In fact, however, for New York's average taxpayer, school district taxes account for approximately 60% of the property tax "pie," with the remaining 40% allocated to municipal governments.

Respondents believe public infrastructure should be given top priority when allocating the state's one-time surplus of \$5 billion. And by a nearly 2-to-1 margin, voters feel local infrastructure should be given funding precedence over state infrastructure.

3. Lastly, we held an informational session this evening, just before this Board of Trustees meeting, on workforce housing with the Housing Action Council representative, Rose Noonan. There were approximately 20 people in attendance. Rose walked through the provisions of the program and qualification process and responded to questions. The deadline for receipt of applications for workforce housing is May 1, 2015. The affordable units will also be marketed shortly, but those applications are not yet out.

**TREASURER'S REPORT:** Village Manager read the Treasurer's Report on behalf of Marion DeMaio.

Village Manager stated the bills for the past two weeks totaled as follows: General Fund: \$204,454.53; Trust & Agency Fund: \$1,465.29; and from the Capital Fund: \$3,864.99.

**Trustee Kaboolian: RESOLVED**, that the Village Board of the Village of Ardsley hereby authorizes the Village Treasurer to make the following payments: From the General Fund: \$204,454.53; From the Trust & Agency Fund: \$1,465.29; and from the Capital Fund: \$3,864.99. **Seconded by Trustee Malone and passed unanimously.**

#### **MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

- Comment on the Manager's Report. On the survey, the school tax is actually higher; real estate taxes for the school are 60% on the low end and 65% real estate tax bill goes to school taxes and the rest goes to local government and the Town and County accounts for the rest of it
- Regarding the Moderate stress, I spoke to Journal News/Rivertowns Patch regarding two municipalities in Westchester; Tuckahoe has severe stress and Ardsley has moderate stress
- We have a significant reduction in our pension contribution
- Attended Meeting of the Ridge Hill Committee with Trustee Malone, Frank Doherty and Patricia Hoffman
- Scheduled a conference call with the consultant and engineer for the plant to get accurate timing; dates keep slipping into the future; project is starting over the summer; they will be using the money for next March and there will be no problem getting plans finalized

- Attended a Monthly Officials Committee meeting regarding pothole killer; we are promised that it is a semi-permanent solution and we are moderately hopeful; there are issues in some of the other Villages; hopeful there will be a solution; it is less expensive and more effective.
- Troubling news that there is a developer proposing to build 296 apartments on Lawrence Street; both ends of Lawrence Street have heavy traffic
- St. Patrick's Day Parade in Tarrytown/Sleepy Hollow is scheduled for 3/15; Village Manager will coordinate who plans on attending

## **COMMITTEE & BOARD REPORTS:**

### **TRUSTEE DIJUSTO:**

- Added something about the pothole killer on email – Speed that filled up all the potholes went from curb to curb lengthwise in about fifteen (15) minutes. Very impressed with speed
- Attended Garden Club on 2/21; St. Patrick's Day dinner and soda bread was fantastic

### **TRUSTEE MONTI:**

- Nothing to report

### **TRUSTEE MALONE:**

- Attended Ridge Hill Committee meeting
- Attended Ardsley Library Board of Trustees

### **TRUSTEE KABOOLIAN:**

- Attended Garden Club on 2/21 St. Patrick's Day dinner
- 3/4 – Seniors are going to Rory Dolan's Pub
- Last Friday night was the Ardsley High School Dance and it was a huge success
- Thank our SAYF Coalition and our SAYF Coalition Coordinator, Theresa Del Grosso, Allison Mastrogiacomo and Tony Vacca

## V. VISITORS

Amen Boyajian stated that he is an engineer from Ardsley and stated that he listened to the Manager's Report and heard nothing that he never heard before. Mr. Boyajian asked if there is anybody that can organize the numbers graphically so it can be meaningful to him. Mr. Boyajian stated that he has been living with pension fear in the Village for several years and it's been an ongoing dialogue. He suggested that it would be great if a graph was projected from 2013. Village Manager, Robson stated that she received both estimates from the State and had a question about longevity payments. Mr. Robson stated that the estimate that was received from the State was about give or take \$200,000.00 less than the actual bill that we received. It was not that money had not been budgeted but there was a mistake. It was an issue of the estimate. We receive two estimates per year prior to the final bill. We base our budgeting on the estimates that we receive from the State. Unfortunately, both estimates that were received were given from the State Pension estimates. Mr. Boyajian stated that someone was responsible for that mistake from the State and that he was concerned. Mayor stated that the Budget and Financial Statements are posted online and he will try to keep everyone informed.

## V. OLD BUSINESS

### 1. Discussion/Workforce Housing Guidelines

Rosemarie Noonan from the Housing Action Council was present and spoke about the guidelines for workforce housing. The Board of Trustees and Ms. Noonan had a lengthy discussion regarding the guidelines and they decided to amend the guidelines as follows: 3 – bedroom units should be available on a priority basis, first to household of 3 or more persons, then to household of 2 persons and then to single-person households and the 2-bedroom units should be made available to any qualified households regardless of size.

### 2. Resolution to approve change of use permit – NiNu, Inc., - 2 Bridge Street

**8:15 P.M. – PUBLIC HEARING** – To consider a change of use permit to convert the vacant commercial space on the second floor at 2 Bridge Street into two one-bedroom apartments

### **Open Public Hearing**

Mr. Anthony Federico, Architect for Ni Nu, Inc. appeared at the Public Hearing. The parking spaces were discussed amongst the Board and the Architect. A Change of Use Permit was granted to Ni Nu, Inc.

## **Public Comments**

Mayor Porcino asked if there were any comments from the public.

Amen Boyajian, 23 Grand Avenue, Ardsley, New York stated that he was formerly a member of the Planning Board and he reviewed the original plans for this particular building project many years ago. It is a B-1 Zone and has certain obligations and requirements that he assumes the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Planning Board also reviewed. He stated that his building is also in a B-1 Zone and that he is sensitive to issues that occur in the Zoning Code. Mr. Boyajian felt that the rules were set aside in order to accommodate the request of the Applicant for two particular separate apartments. Mr. Boyajian stated that he objects to this granting.

## **Close Public Hearing**

### **RESOLUTION TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING FOR CHANGE OF USE PERMIT LOCATED AT 2 BRIDGE STREET – NINU, INC.**

**Trustee DiJusto: RESOLVED**, that the Village Board of the Village of Ardsley hereby closes the public hearing at 9:49 p.m. to consider a permit to convert the vacant commercial space on the second floor at 2 Bridge Street into two one-bedroom apartments. **Seconded by Trustee Monti and passed unanimously.**

### **RESOLUTION GRANTING PERMISSION TO NINU, INC. TO APPROVE CHANGE OF USE PERMIT LOCATED AT 2 BRIDGE STREET**

**Trustee DiJusto: RESOLVED**, that the Village of Ardsley hereby grants permission for a permit to convert the vacant commercial space on the second floor at 2 Bridge Street into two one-bedroom apartments with the following conditions:

1. The applicant must provide plans for the build-out showing full compliance with the NYS Building Code
  2. The applicant must obtain the required permits prior to commencing construction
  3. The applicant must appear before the BAR if it is determined that the façade of the building will be modified in any way
  4. Any conditions the Village Board deems appropriate
  5. Any conditions the Village Attorney or Village Manager deem appropriate
- Seconded by Trustee Monti and passed unanimously.**

**VII. NEW BUSINESS**

1. Resolution to Schedule Budget Work Sessions to review the 2015-2016 Village Budget

**RESOLUTION TO SCHEDULE BUDGET WORK SESSIONS TO REVIEW THE TENTATIVE**

**2015-2016 VILLAGE BUDGET**

**Trustee Monti: RESOLVED**, that the Village Board of the Village of Ardsley hereby schedules the following budget work sessions commencing at 8:00 p.m: **Seconded by Trustee DiJusto and passed unanimously.**

Wednesday, March 25  
Thursday, April 2  
Wednesday, April 8  
Thursday, April 23

2. Resolution to Schedule a Public Hearing on Tentative 2015-2016 Village Budget

**RESOLUTION TO SCHEDULE PUBLIC HEARING ON TENTATIVE 2015-2016 VILLAGE BUDGET**

**Trustee Malone: RESOLVED**, that the Village Board of the Village of Ardsley hereby schedules a public hearing for 8:15 p.m. Monday, April 6, 2015 to review the Tentative 2015-2016 Village Budget. **Seconded by Trustee Kaboolian and passed unanimously.**

3. Resolution Declaring Lead Agency & Scheduling Public Hearing for Furry Fashions Salon -646 Saw Mill River Road

**RESOLUTION DECLARING LEAD AGENCY AND SCHEDULING A PUBLIC HEARING FOR FURRY FASHIONS SALON LOCATED AT 646 SAW MILL RIVER ROAD**

**Trustee Kaboolian: RESOLVED**, that the Village Board of the Village of Ardsley hereby declares itself Lead Agency for the proposed permit to convert the existing vacant retail/business space located at 646 Saw Mill River Road into a pet grooming shop;

**AND RESOLVED**, that the Village Board of the Village of Ardsley hereby refers the applicant to the Planning Board for review and comment;

**FURTHERMORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Village Board of the Village of Ardsley hereby schedules a public hearing at 8:30 p.m. on Monday, March 16, 2015 to discuss the proposed project. **Seconded by Trustee Malone and passed unanimously.**

4. Resolution regarding approval for a \$4,000 grant for improvements to Bicentennial Park and Pascone Park

**RESOLUTION REGARDING APPROVAL FOR A \$4,000 GRANT FOR  
IMPROVEMENTS TO  
BICENTENNIAL PARK AND PASCONE PARK**

**Trustee DiJusto:** WHEREAS, the Village of Ardsley has received notice to a Legislative Initiative award from Assemblyman Thomas Abinanti, District 92, for improvements to Bicentennial Park and Pascone Park;

NOW BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Village Board of the Village of Ardsley accepts the award of a \$4,000 grant for improvements to Bicentennial Park and Pascone Park, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Legislative Grant PKS-14-TA-020. **Seconded by Trustee Monti and passed unanimously.**

**RESOLUTION FOR AUTHORITY TO SIGN LEGAL DOCUMENTS**

I, Barbara Berardi, the Village Clerk of the Village of Ardsley, New York, do hereby certify that the following resolution was adopted at a regular meeting of the Village Board of Trustees held on March 2, 2015, and is incorporated in the original minutes of said meeting, and that said resolution has not been altered amended or revoked and is in full force and effect.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

**Trustee Monti:** WHEREAS, this organization has received a special grant in the New York State Budget, and

WHEREAS, there are specific requirements and regulations governing the expenditure of these funds;

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NOW THEREFORE, this body resolved the following:

1. Administration of all funds under this grant will be in accordance with all terms and conditions contained in the GUIDELINES for Projects over \$50,000 or those Involving Construction September 18, 2014 provided by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation'
2. That Meredith S. Robson, as Village Manager of our organization, is hereby authorized to sign legal documents on behalf of our organization and that such signature is acknowledgement of the acceptance by this body of compliance with all terms and conditions of the MASTER CONTRACT FOR GRANTS, to be executed for the grant.  
**Seconded by Trustee Di Justo and passed unanimously.**

**VIII. CALL FOR EXECUTIVE SESSION.** No Executive Session.

**IX. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING**

**Trustee Malone: RESOLVED**, that the Village Board of the Village of Ardsley hereby adjourns the regular meeting of Monday, March 2, 2015 at 10:14 p.m. **Seconded by Trustee Kaboolian and passed unanimously.**

**X. NEXT VILLAGE BOARD MEETING:** Monday, March 16, 2015 at 8:00 p.m.  
**REMINDER...8:15 P.M. PUBLIC HEARING** – To consider a permit to construct a two story addition on the rear of the building located at 891 Saw Mill River Road

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Fusco  
Recording Secretary

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