

**VILLAGE OF SOUTH BLOOMING
GROVE
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY
FEBRUARY 13, 2023
8:00PM**

➤ **Call to order**

Mayor Kalaj called to order the Village Board Meeting at 8:02pm on February 13, 2023, for the Village of South Blooming Grove located at 811 State Route 208, within the Village of South Blooming Grove, and having a mailing address of Monroe, New York.

➤ **Roll call**

The following persons were present:

- George Kalaj – Mayor
- Abraham Weiss – Deputy Mayor
- Yitzchok Feldman- Trustee
- Asher Guttman- Trustee
- Zalmon Rosner – Trustee
- Joel Stern – Confidential Assistant to the Mayor
- Isaac Ekstein – Legislative Aide to Mayor
- Scott Ugell Esq.- Village Attorney
- Al Fusco- Village Engineer
- Kerry Dougherty – Village Clerk

➤ **Correspondence**

- None

➤ **Mayor's Comments**

- If I do not attend meetings I am always in touch with members of the board. Congratulations to the owner of the new store, it is beautiful and on top of that the tax revenue will be good for the village. He hopes there are more stores and businesses in the village. We have the new bus shuttle and hopefully it will be rolling out soon. The light is great to have and is preventing accidents.

➤ **Public Comment**

- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** – I have been awaiting notification as homeowners about that second garbage pickup and the cost and the bill and all that kind of stuff. I haven't received anything as of yet. I have submitted multiple emails and foils and I am not getting any responses back. I would have listed them but the list is kind of lengthy. I expect to receive some kind of response.
- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** – There are traffic devices on Prospect Road. There was a monitor or some type of gadget that Round Hill and the other end of Prospect. I called the Blooming Grove Police and they said they know nothing about it. They said to contact the municipality. That was one of the emails but I didn't get a reply to that.

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- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** - At the last board meeting we were supposed to have a public hearing on the House of Worship application for 206 and 212 Prospect and that was supposed to be tonight. Joel Stern presented a verbal resolution the Board voted unanimously to have it tonight and it's not on the agenda so I'm wondering what's up with that.
- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** – Lastly I don't know if the residents have been experiencing it but just to share we've had a large commuter bus (I don't have the license plate off the top of my head) that idles on Prospect Road in front of my house and it idles there twice a day comes like 7:00am and then again in the evening. The first time it happened I thought that maybe there was something wrong with the bus and I went up to the driver but he didn't respond and I noted that this bus goes to the school at 206 drops kids off and picks them up but it's been happening more frequently. I don't know if it's happening to other people but I called the police this morning and made a report. They were there again this afternoon and this evening and the police came again. So each time this happens. I'm a little concerned and fear for my safety because having this bus. I don't know who this driver is and there's nobody getting on the bus. So why is this happening. Then this morning when the bus was idling a car came from the Peddler Hill direction and Prospect has a little turn there and he nearly drove into the bus because of the way the road is. Large white commuter bus with no markings and it's a Congregation Tour that's the only name on the side of it and it has a NYS tag on it. Being that it's carrying kids the driver is smoking like a chimney. When I asked at first if something was wrong he didn't respond. If this is happening throughout the village it's something that needs to be addressed. **Mayor Kalaj** – Just for your information as far as I know commercial vehicle as far as buses are only allowed if not mistaken 3 minutes to idle that might not be a rule in Orange County
- **Bonnie Rum** – About the garbage second pickup I know that this was in the works I don't know if has been instituted. I don't know if all of the neighbors know about it. I don't know if a robocall went out or a survey was taken that if everyone had to submit to it would be an extra tax of \$240 each. So I don't know if it's in or out but that's up to you.
- **Bonnie Rum** – At one of the meetings that you weren't here for Mayor, Joel made a comment that he felt that the village was not getting a fair share of the revenue of taxes given out by police. He said at a board meeting that the Village of South Blooming Grove should have it's own police department and court system. The expense that would entail something like that would be crazy and I'm sure Mr. Ugell can explain what happens with revenue from taxes they are earmarked. So I don't think he can get what he wants from that. Also, I'm sure Mr. Ugell can explain the complexities that you are getting grants but Mr. Ugell will probably be able to explain the complexities of the difference between getting a grant and getting the money from the grants. There are many municipalities that they think they are getting a grant and then they don't have the requisites, prerequisites that money is then given to other municipalities that have the reputation and know what they are doing and have the history or it so you may want to look at that. You have been using your reserves for a number of things to keep taxes down that's going to impact whether you are going to get a grant or not. Beyond that there is a lot more to that but I'm sure Mr. Ugell sure can explain everything.

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- **Bonnie Rum** – Also Blaise Gomez came and Mr. Stern made a couple of videos that he published, in one he called himself the Assistant Mayor, which he is not. I'm sure the Deputy Mayor was in charge when you weren't here (you were overseas) so I'm sure he was in close contact with Mr. Stern and Mr. Eckstein. There is a real problem in that in the second video Isaac in a much calmer and professional voice asked 2 minutes and 30 seconds into that video who was even making allegations that we are not compliant with the DEC (talking about Clovewood). A cease and desist was not responded to and when he said we that implies....
- **Patricia Morrice** – About the garbage pickup. I spoke to some of my neighbors and none of them knew about the second pickup so again I don't know if it's going through robocalls so everyone knows. Today garbage pails overflowing again. You can drive around the neighborhood, and you can see that there is garbage in the roads now from the cardboard, plastic bottles. If they knew about the second pickup they aren't using it. **Trustee Feldman** advised that the village is working very hard to enforce the law so that garbage is cleaned up.
- **Patricia Morrice** – As for the supermarket, I drive up and down that road everyday going to work and coming back from work. I'm wondering why there are cars parked in the dirt on the other side of the supermarket and in the evenings they are parking on both sides of the road plus the parking lot. So it's very hard to get through at night when there are cars coming at you with the lights. I don't understand why they are parking on the road when they have the parking lot.
- **Patricia Morrice** – If we do get those buses will they be running on Saturdays. **Mr. Feldman** and Mayor advised that it is in the works to improve the parking. **Mr. Ekstein** advised that there are cones on the side of the supermarket to prevent people from parking on the street and it will be investigated, the cones are helping the parking.
- **Bill Hewlett** – I'm also concerned about the garbage tax. I've been a village resident for 17 years and used to a garbage pickup on Monday and I still comply with that. A number of questions with that. Is the village still recycling? Because one truck comes they pickup the blue recycling and the green recycling and they put it in the same bin. So are we recycling or are we no longer recycling. Secondly, I don't need the pickup on Thursday so why should I be subject to pay for something that I am not using and as for Clovewood I'm not pro or against it one way or another. However my concern is you sir as an elected official you're quoted as saying "that even though there are numerous cease and desist orders the construction of this is going to proceed" which to me says that even though an authority such as NYS is saying listen let's stop this until we can get everything clear before we move on, with that in mind as an elected official and as a role model why then should I pay this tax. He sees the disparity in this **Mayor Kalaj** – advised that he has he quoted him wrongly.
- **Bill Hewlett** – Congratulations on the market opening on Mangin Road. I definitely agree with those suggestions about the traffic because I take Mangin Road daily as well maybe some yellow lines on the street because now has become a one lane and it's an accident waiting to happen and then also many people are trying to make a left turn onto 208 and it's creating a traffic backwall and if there is a need for some type of police thing where's the

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data to support that. That we feel we need additional and that communication really needs to be put out throughout the village.

- **Issac Ekstein** – In regard to the garbage pickup there are many people that live in the community that only want once a month. Some people say once a month there is a big senior community here. They don't have kids at home they are good with one pickup a month. Monroe has twice a week pickup. Most municipalities have twice a week pickup. People are allowed to be frustrated and understand. There used to be a lot of households with kids in school it was twice a week pickup back in the 80's. Now it's needed there's families with a lot of children. We negotiated that from \$38 to \$20 pickup. That's a big accomplishment. The problem is why people are frustrated because it wasn't for a period of time it wasn't and now it's coming back.
- **Bill Hewlett** – States that it seems as though you have given that up for that extra person. You also have a person getting off a truck putting out the bag or whatever else on the truck. It's one guy on the truck.
- **Isaac Ekstein** – I was actually sitting with the Mayor when he was talking to the news about Clovewood what the mayor said is that it's true that there cease and desist orders, nobody argued that. The Village of South Blooming Grove is actually enforcing this. Al Fusco and his team are doing daily or every other day an inspection day. The DEC is doing their weekly inspection. Every cease and desist has instructions what they are allowed to do and of what they are allowed to do, what they are required to do. So part of what Clovewood is required to do at this time is continue to stabilize and do erosion control and make sure everything they have done, if was illegal I am not sure I do not work for the DEC. What's happening right now is they have to continue to stabilize the site they have to continue what they are doing and that's what the mayor said to the news, that the work continues as they are required to do by the DEC.
- **Bill Hewlett** – I appreciate your candor and response but your quote just didn't appear in social media communications as one that says okay we have the cease and desist order. If your response was as eloquent as detailed as yours I wouldn't have even bought up the question. **Mayor Kalaj** also mentioned that Al Fusco is working with the state and development to make sure things are done properly therefore the DEC didn't stop us them from working.
- **Simon Gelb** – It's really interesting that people in the news, everyone is busy writing and talking about an issue and no one even bothered to look at the reports from the DEC for the last couple of months. There are weekly reports and you won't find not one of them that there is a violation going on at that site and Mr. Fusco knows the village inspectors are almost everyday and most of the days 2 or 3 inspections and DEC is doing weekly inspections that last for hours.

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- **Mr. Diamont** – Making a left hand turn onto Red Bird on 208 very dangerous there. There's a lot of bushes there. Saw accidents not badly. **Mayor Kalaj** stated if it's the village we will work on it and if it belongs to DOT to the state all we can do is modify it. **Joel Stern** states they will be widening 208.

➤ **Business**

- **Resolution No. (10)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Appointing village inspectors for the upcoming Village Election. Motion to accept by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Trustee Guttman. *5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Guttman.*
- **Resolution No. (11)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Declaring lead agency and negative declaration for the Village of South Blooming Grove Transit Bus System. Motion to accept by Trustee Feldman, seconded by Deputy Mayor Weiss. *5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Feldman, and Trustee Guttman.*
- **Resolution No. (12)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Authorizing Mayor to sign agreement for Rehabilitation System Water project. Motion to accept by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman.*
- **Resolution No. (13)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Authorizing Mayor to sign agreement with Hawkins Delafield & Wood LLP, for applications and project for Rehabilitation System Water project. *Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Trustee Rosner. 5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman*
- **Resolution No. (14)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Authorizing Mayor to sign agreement with Scott Ugell Esq. for Rehabilitation System Water project. *Motion to accept by Trustee Guttman, seconded by Trustee Rosner. 5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman*
- **Resolution No. (15)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Authorizing Mayor to sign agreement with Munistat Municipal Financial Advisory Service for Rehabilitation System Water Project. *Motion to accept by Trustee Guttman, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. 5 Ayes Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman.*
- **Resolution No. (16)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Authorizing the acquisition of transit buses and the issuance of bonds in the principal amount of \$960,000 to finance said appropriation. *Motion to accept by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Deputy Mayor Weiss, 5 Ayes Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman.*
- **Resolution No. (17)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Referring 206 & 212 Prospect to Building Department. *Motion to accept by Trustee Feldman,*

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seconded by Trustee Rosner, 5 Ayes Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman

➤ **Discussion**

Mayor Kalaj – Stated anyone with a CDL you are more than welcome to apply to drive the shuttle. **Joel Stern** in answering your question Mr. Feldman regarding scheduling the bus, the tasks that are initiated the shuttle including scheduling, hiring are all for the Village Board.

Al Fusco - Speaks regarding the water rehabilitation project and towards that end we have some technical aspects on the application, hiring of attorneys and such going towards to promote this project and complete it. I have approved a \$10 Million project for a WIIA Grant and NYS Environmental facility and whereas of administrative cost for the Village of South Blooming Grove staff that we are looking at the sum of \$24,500 for technical assistance and \$24,500 for administrative services. This money comes from the project. There's no money directly coming out of the village budget. What will happen is when the project is finished then grant money is expended and the loan money is expended. We will have a closing and you will make annual payments for that for 30 years. We are trying to get it interest free loan. I have applied for a hardship loan that will be zero interest but regardless of whether that is accepted or not interest will be subsidized by 33%. Irregardless, we will do the best we can. Now towards that end we said this is on for the Village Board and the Village of South Blooming Grove authorizes the Mayor to sign an agreement for force account items required in accordance with the mandatory state revolving fund terms and conditions. Now these are for village workers that are going to work on this project that we can get reimbursed for them.

Al Fusco – The next one is very similar as you know for this bond we need to have bond council. We had them last year and we passed a bond resolution for \$6 Million. They have redone the bond resolution for \$10 Million which will be done probably in the last meeting in February and that's what we are hoping for so we get this thing rolling. That is Hawkins Delafield & Wood and they will have a contract that authorizes that will not exceed \$24,500 guidance with a mandatory state revolving fund and that the Mayor is authorizing signing these contracts.

Al Fusco – Another one at this point and this is the resolution that is basically very similar and it's where the village has received this grant and we're moving forward with it. There is a lot of work for local council paperwork and documentation. It will not be paid from the village it will be paid from the grant and the loans that the Village of South Blooming Grove received a quote from Scott Ugell, Esq. for not to exceed \$24,500 in accordance with guidance of mandatory state revolving fund terms and that Mayor is hereby authorized to sign contract.

Al Fusco – There is another one. The Village Board of Village of South Blooming Grove same application and grant towards that end the Village has received a quote from Munistat Municipal Financial Advisory service for the sum to not exceed \$17,000 in accordance again with the

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mandatory state revolving fund terms and fiduciaries. We have resolved with the Village Board with the Village of South Blooming Grove towards contract with financial services Munistat Municipal Financial Advisory the Mayor is authorized to sign.

Isaac Ekstein - Discussion about House of Worship Application– 206 & 212 Prospect, these are referred to the building department.

➤ **Abstract**

Motion to accept the Abstract by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Rosner, 5 Ayes Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Feldman, and Trustee Guttman.

➤ **Adjournment**

- Motion to close the meeting at 8:41pm. by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Rosner. 5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Feldman, and Trustee Guttman.

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Kerry Dougherty, Village Clerk