

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

➤ **Call to order**

Mayor Kalaj called to order the Village Board Meeting at 8:03pm on March 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
- Asher Guttman- Trustee
- Zalmon Rosner – Trustee
- Isaac Ekstein – Legislative Aide to Mayor
- Joel Stern – Confidential Assistant to the Mayor
- Scott Ugell Esq. – Village Attorney
- Kerry Dougherty – Village Clerk
- **Absent** – Yitzchok Feldman - Trustee
- **Absent** – Al Fusco – Village Engineer

➤ **Correspondence**

➤ **Mayor's Comments**

- There was a sewer backup unfortunately some people got damaged and it's currently repaired.
- Just a reminder there is an election going next week.
- Additionally, there is supposed to be snow tomorrow. I urge everybody keep the vehicles off the street so the removal people can get through and clean up. Also your garbage cans should be safe and away from the streets.

➤ **Public Comment**

- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** – Are there any updates on the master plans? I know that the committee was started on that. When I looked around the village it doesn't seem to be any coordination or organization. There is like a big rush to approve projects like the South Blooming Grove Business Park is one and then the developments seem to stall same thing with the Stone Gate Drive. It just seems like it stalled. Then there are many new roads that are going in and those things haven't been before the Planning Board. So I'm just wondering, putting roads in they must have a destination for somewhere but it hasn't been before the Planning Board so I'm just wondering about that. Speaking of the Planning Board we have that public hearing on Thursday and you know we had heard over the past couple of years that people have moved to this area because they like the open space for their

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families and what we are doing now it seems with all these subdivisions that are going in they are putting multiple houses on these lots so you're taking away the space that people had supposedly moved here for. The water supply has always been in jeopardy and now when you are increasing the amount of housing that's going on these lots and the increase of residents that are going to be in those homes it's going to put the water supply more at risk.

- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** – We seem to be taking out more and more village bonds and so I'm just wondering how we are going to be paying for all of this. The budget was passed last fall without any tax increase yet there is all these bonds. You keep saying with all the commercial development that's coming in that's going to help generate tax revenue but that South Blooming Grove Park is sitting there empty and nothing is there. Stone Gate Drive hasn't come into play yet. Fiscally it got me a little bit concerned because of all the spending that we are doing, we got the buses and all that stuff.
- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** – Speaking of the buses have you heard from the county about the bus routes and we got the buses and we were waiting to hear from the county from the routes. Any updates about people with CDL for the driving of the buses.
- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** – Also the house of worship application for 206 and 212 Prospect any updates on that. That was supposed before the planning board and it didn't go on the February meeting and it's not on the March meeting either.
- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** – Any updates on Attorney Ugell's work for the security policy. He was going to develop a policy and then bring it.
- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** – Any updates on those 3 lawsuits that the village is involved in. The one with the fire department, the one with the county for the Mangin Road extension and the one with the News12 reporter. Are they still in play? They haven't been resolved yet? those three lawsuits? **Trustee Guttman** advised the News12 one, was a personal matter, not a village matter. **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** stated oh it's a personal matter I misunderstood.
- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** – Lastly there are no meetings in April. Not the Planning Board, the Zoning Board or the regular Board how are we going to conduct business.
- **Mayor Kalaj** – We haven't gotten all the paperwork done yet, but we are working on it. As far as the lawsuits one is personal and the others, hopefully they will be resolved. **Scott Ugell** – One is in litigation and we cannot comment on it. We are working on it.
- **Bonnie Rum** – Mr. Mayor you are going for more bonds there has been a lot of discussion about the bonds and grants and everything. So my question is a series of them. So who is your rating agency because to get a bond you need one. What is your rating? Who is your bond council? How much interest are you going to have to pay on these bonds because you used up a lot of your reserve funds so that is going to increase the interest rates you will have to pay if you get the bonds and I would be curious to find out how many grants I know you applied for a good number of grants which is a great thing. How many have you received and by that I mean the actual money for the grants and that's because that always doesn't follow-up and I'm assuming has everyone on the Board received the training for their positions that they were elected to. **Mayor Kalaj** thanking Bonnie Rum for her

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comments. **Scott Ugell** – Bonds vary by project by circumstance. The specifics to each bond and what program there are at what stage would typically be the area that Mr. Fusco would talk about because he actually handles the vast majority of the preparation. **Isaac Ekstein** advised that Will Jackson is our Bond Attorney then we have Noah at Munistat. They are our consultants and they are working with the ratings they are working with everything.

- **Bill Hewlett** – Just to keep that transparency of communication on the progress of the bonds that would be a great thing. I would appreciate that. You had mentioned in your opening comments about the upcoming snowstorm and thank you for mentioning that the cars need to be in the driveway and the garbage cans as well. I can only really speak for Worley Heights and that's what my comments are generally on. On the enforcement especially keeping the cars out of the streets from November until April. It might be a police issue as well for that enforcement because there are numerous cars out in the street and especially during that time period and it shouldn't be just for moving because of snow coming up so I appreciate you mentioning that.
- **Bill Hewlett** - Also you have used Facebook, twitter and the website which is great for sharing information you showed last year rolling out for residents to wear vests and the divider to the streets. I see very few residents within Worley Heights while they are walking wearing the vests and it's dark so can that message be encouraged to residents for their own safety to wear some type reflective gear. You may not see the residents and you know it's a risk so I appreciate that.
- **Bill Hewlett** – Another issue I have I would tell visitors I had some visitors come up on Friday make the right turn the Worley Heights sign on 208. That sign is no longer there. Are there plans to have it up once again. I understand that it gets knocked down by large trucks. Is that going to be put up once again. **Mayor Kalaj** – States that we will definitely work on it. We keep putting it up and they keep knocking it down and it's just an ongoing thing. Mayor Kalaj also states chief is enforcing the law.
- **Bill Hewlett** – This brings me to my other point stop signs. There is a stop sign on Pine Hill and there is a stop sign on Sears Road and Houston Avenue. They zoom right through that and you have children walking all over. So I'll reach out to the police I just wanted to make you aware of it that residents, people driving in the Worley Heights area really need to be respectful of stop signs. They are zooming right through. **Mayor Kalaj** – I'm sure you have heard me say this in the past slow down. **Scott Ugell** – Says if you can try and keep a record of license plates. Technically you can file a complaint being an observer you are a witness.
- **Bill Hewlett** – My last thing once again I compliment you on using the Facebook and using the different social media but I'm still getting phone messages in different language. **Isaac Ekstein** listened to the call and it was from Kiryas Joel.
- **Asher Ekstein** – I just have a general question which extent does the village have regarding policing here if at all. **Mayor Kalaj** – We do and we don't. **Isaac Ekstein** explained that the Town of Blooming Grove has a police department. The Town of Blooming Grove is responsible when the Village doesn't have a police department it is the Town's responsibility. For example, in Monroe the town doesn't have a police department so the state police provide for the town. **Asher Ekstein** – For example regarding policing a certain area, asking for help or filing complaints and things like that.

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- Policing a certain area and asking for more help, that is not a problem. The board asked if he had issue regarding this. **Isaac Ekstein** explained that the taxpayers pay the police on a town level but the town are working for the village as well. The village has to have meeting with the police if there are needs for any additional security. For example a few weeks ago there was a threat for national hate day, they called it, so the police worked with us to make sure they had sufficient police presence in the village. We are talking to the police, but they don't work for us. There is no agreement with the police. . **Isaac Ekstein** a few weeks ago we spoke about potentially opening a police department, a constable a court system within the village, exclusive to the village. It is a big expense and a lot of money involved. **Joel Stern** discussed tickets within the village and where do the funds go. **Asher Ekstein** where would I make a complaint? **Isaac Ekstein** advised to the Town and to the Village Clerk as well so that the Village has it on record as well. **Mayor Kalaj** – Don't hide your complaints, report them because the more you report the more pressure is on the chief to do things.
- **Isaac Ekstein** asked that mayor if he could address prior comments/questions. About a year ago under the leadership of Mr. Fusco as the engineer of the village and Mr. Ugell as the village attorney, myself, Joel and the Deputy Mayor were involved, everybody is involved, we are working the the General Municipal EIS to get together the zoning and projects , if someone comes before the boards they go through studies individually. When a person receives an approval it is their choice to make what he's going to do with that approval. If he is going to sleep on it or if he's going to get permits and start building it. He has to make a choice that's worth it for him business wise. It's not in the villages discretion to guide someone whether he should build or not after he gets an approval. At a Planning Board meeting something was said that about open space and we still stand behind what we always said we want open space we want green, we want to expand and we continue doing what we are doing.
- The buses we got 2 buses and we are working with the county we waiting for a meeting with the county planning department as to reimbursement for the cost of the trips and everything. We actually got close to 40 resumes for CDL drivers. We have 2 interviews already and we are waiting for more interviews to come in. We have 6 or 7 scheduled in the next few days but we have a whole bunch of resumes submitted which is very good.
- House of Worship, 206 Prospect Road was referred to the building department. It is a small house of worship and according to code it is being referred to the building department, not to the Village Board. **Sue Ann Vogelsberg** stated this public hearing was supposed to be scheduled for this was setup as a resolution. **Isaac Ekstein** initially we thought we had to do a public hearing so we scheduled it, then the attorney made us aware that a public hearing is not needed for that project. It just needed to be referred to the building department and that's what the village board did.
- **Isaac Ekstein**, there was a question of why there are no meetings in April since the majority of all 3 boards are Hasidic Jewish and a big chunk of April is Passover and shopping before Passover so we want to give them a time and break and try and squeeze in as much as we

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can these meetings before and after so business can go on as usual. I don't think there will be any interruption. Village Hall will be open, we are hoping there will be no interruption whatsoever due to no meetings in April.

➤ **Business**

- **Resolution No. (21)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Amending the Bond Resolution adopted October 25, 2021, authorizing the issuance of bonds for various water system improvements. Motion to accept by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Guttman. *4 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Guttman. 1 Absent Trustee Feldman*
- **Resolution No. (22)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Authorizing the construction of sewer system improvements and authorizing the issuance of of not to exceed \$350,000 bonds for said sewer system improvements. Motion to accept by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *4 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Guttman. 1 Absent Trustee Feldman.*
- **Resolution No. (23)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Authorizing the Mayor to Execute an agreement with Solitude Lake Management to provide aquatic pesticide services to Merriewold Lake. *Motion to accept _____, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. 4 Ayes Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Guttman. 1 Absent Trustee Feldman.*
- **Resolution No. (24)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Authorizing the Mayor to sign that contract with Marangi for a second pickup. *Motion to accept Trustee Guttman, seconded by Trustee Rosner. 4 Ayes Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Guttman. 1 Absent Trustee Feldman*

➤ **Discussion**

Isaac Ekstein - We had a conversation a few meetings ago about the second pick-up by Marangi so the contract that we were proposing to go in with Marangi is piggyback off the contract of the Town of Blooming Grove. They awarded the first bid to Marangi. They did not award the second bid. Maragni's bid for a 2nd pickup was like \$31.50. We advised the Town at that point we would negotiate the price because it's very high. We got a deal with the company they awarded the bid for company who submitted the bid and negotiated down even lower price and they should include the Village of that price. So we agreed with Marangi to go into contract piggybacking off that bid. Mr. Marangi in good faith started picking up the garbage starting January knowing that we are going off that bid. Last week the attorneys finally sent us a contract stating everything I just said with the piggybacking of the town. I think we should do another resolution.

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➤ **Abstract**

Motion to accept the Abstract by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Trustee Guttman, *4 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Guttman. 1 Absent Trustee Feldman..*

➤ **Adjournment**

- Motion to close the meeting at 8:41 pm by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Rosner. *4 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Guttman. 1 Absent Trustee Feldman.*

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Kerry Dougherty, Village Clerk