

**VILLAGE OF SOUTH BLOOMING
GROVE
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY
JULY 11, 2022
8:00PM**

➤ **Call to order**

Mayor Kalaj called to order the Village Board Meeting at 8:29 pm on July 11, 2022, via Zoom Webinar ID: 821 7706 4100 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
- Zalmon Rosner – Trustee
- Asher Guttman- Trustee
- Joel Stern – Confidential Assistant to the Mayor
- Isaac Ekstein- Legislative Aide to Mayor
- Al Fusco, Village Engineer
- Scott Ugell Esq.- Village Attorney
- Kerry Dougherty – Village Clerk

➤ **Correspondence**

- 7.6.2022 Memorandum regarding NYCOM Fall Training Conference

➤ **Discussion**

- **Mayor Kalaj** is asking people to try and save as much water as possible, don't waste it. Don't wash your car or your house or your garden. We are in desperate need for water. We have been putting signs in the middle of the street to slow down traffic, for the public to be aware. People are knocking them down, they push them to the side. We went through a lot to get those signs and they serve a purpose. Therefore, please leave the signs alone, it is for the safety of our people and he doesn't know why people are pushing them to the side or knocking them down. He came out earlier today and there were three signs just pushed down. It is very important, it is summer, children are playing in the streets, therefore we try to do the best we can to keep those children safe.
- **Trustee Rosner** advise that there are safety reflectors at village hall for the public. **Mayor Kalaj** advise that you are more than welcome to come to village hall and grab a reflector, it is free of charge and please use it and use them wisely. Leave it somewhere and put it on at night. It may save your life. **Trustee Feldman** asked who brought the reflectors? The State? The **Mayor** advised that UJC provided the reflectors. All members of the board stated thank you, charitable

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of the organization.

- **Mayor Kalaj** discussed the NYCOM correspondence and stated that it is very beneficial for Mayor and Clerk and Deputy Clerk to attend. Very knowledgeable and educational for the job we are doing. He feels it should be attended.

➤ **Public Comment**

- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** at previous meetings it was requested to submit an email if you want to be a part of the parks or the transportation commission. She submitted for both but she hasn't received a reply as of yet and she noticed one of the resolutions has to do about park improvements so she is hoping that you are considering all residents because we are sorely lacking in diversity here in South Blooming Grove. We need some people of color and some woman to be a part of what is going on in our village because right now all we have white men. With regard to the resolutions that is there, where are we going to get the money to pay for those bonds and what the interest is on them and the time frame to pay them back. With regard to Skyscraper Insurance, it is out of Spring Valley, but it has a New York City phone number and she is just wondering at the last meeting it was just talked about, and now we are doing a resolution for them and I don't think we followed the village procurement policy. According to Chapter 5, there wasn't other businesses that were contacted, it was just this because she think it was mentioned that they would be saving us a lot of money. A while back she had asked about a master plan for the village, with all of the growth that is going on in all parts of the village it just seems to her that there is no plan in place. It is like every available piece of land is having construction or demolition on it and it seems more for an immediate gratification instead of thinking about 5, 10 or 20 years from now. She thinks it is something that the village should put in place and she would be happy to be a part of it being that she has been here 42 years, she has seen how growth has taken place and she thinks she could offer some guidance in that or her opinion or speak for some of the other residents. **Mr. Ekstein** replied and stated that her email was received regarding the commissions and they are considering all residents to be part of the commissions and the Mayor will make his choice whenever it will be ready, they will reach out to you in the next few weeks when they form the board. In regards to the Comprehensive Plan (Master Plan) they are actually in the process of that, there is a Comprehensive Board Plan started a few months ago, the Engineer, the Attorney and the Deputy Mayor and a few other people (the Chairmans of both boards) so there is a Comprehensive Plan in the works. The bond for the park is basically going to be paid. Every building/house that is being built, they are supposed to pay a certain fee to go towards parkland, he thinks it is \$5,500 for each house. In commercial it is \$5,500 for every 3000 square feet. For example, SBG Business Park are building 260,000 square feet, when they get a permit they will have to provide \$5,500 for each 3000 square feet. Same goes for Stonegate, they will have to provide \$5,500 for every 300 square feet of their building so that is where the money is going to come from, all the building that you mentioned. The procurement policy was followed regarding Skyscraper Insurance. They did get the proposal from our current insurance broker (Reis) and we compared the two quotes and they are 40% cheaper, so that is where

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the 40% savings came from. We compared rates and Skyscraper came out cheaper for the same insurance policy. The bond rate goes out to bid.

- **Kristie Johnson** she feels like there was a meeting that was missed because the information provided Mr. Ekstein, does clarify a lot, she feels that would have been something that should have been mentioned at this meeting before passing this resolution to use the cyber insurance, something to look into and think about. With regard to the Comprehensive Plan, it does take a long time and you guys currently have, I don't know, I haven't counted in a while, lets say anywhere between 12 to 14 building projects going on right now. Why not put a building moratorium in place, since there is not water, there is not real plan to expand Route 208 and traffic is already horrible. Now you know just before Christmas, my second vehicle was destroyed because a commercial vehicle made a sharp left turn into a residential property; something that happens a lot on that road, she saw the debris there. Well just a couple of weeks ago an SUV, she is on the road very early in the morning, a large black SUV ran a stop sign coming out of Whorley Heights and almost took out me and my unborn daughter, than God she knows how to drive. Your village is not safe. She is beyond upset about it and she is looking for ways to get this corrected with or without your help. She would hate to have to spend any of her savings on an attorney, but clearly my life is at stake, one car was taken out and she was almost killed and this is a very serious problem. No she wasn't speeding that road is 45mph and that is exactly what she was doing. This is something that you guys really seriously need to look into, she doesn't know if you are talking to the DOT or the County level with all of these building that you are putting right off of Route 208, which is not a village road, she is going to be looking into it and suggests you do as well. You have a responsibility to the safety, not only to the residents of your village but of this town and the surrounding municipalities and she doesn't see this be taken seriously, what she sees is, we want to spend more money than we have, we want to dip into the reserve, we want to do all this stuff and we are going to justify it with irresponsible expansion and construction. It is a problem.
- **Mayor Kalaj** stated that Route 208 is guarded like Fort Knox, he sees police by the village hall, by Mountain Road, by Clove Road, he sees the police all over. He doesn't know where the idea of it not being safe, the police are all over Route 208. **Isaac Ekstein** agrees with the Mayor. Route 208 is a very reckless road but it is being guarded by our police Town of Blooming Grove like a hawk. There is not other road in the area that has so much police presence as here. Unfortunately, accidents happen. They happen here, they happen in any other place. Everybody has been involved with an accident every once and a while, he was involved on Route 208 with a deer, should he consider now that Route 208 has a road that has deer walking around, he doesn't think so because it is an accident, that is why it is called an accident. Accidents do happen and unfortunately will always happen. The comparison of the Skyscraper Insurance to the Reis Group it was mentioned in the previous meeting and we compared it and Skyscraper came back cheaper. He doesn't think the board has a moratorium on the table at this time. Moratoriums have always been used for the only purpose, stopping the growth of the Hasidic Community and we are not going to be a part of that. Route 208 is being expanded, we have a few developer's agreement. With every development that comes onto Route 208, the village has a development agreement. We are doing everything in our capacity to make the roads safer, as you can see on all the roads, we have cones to slow down traffic

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and it is helping a lot and to add what the Mayor said earlier, please don't push them to the side, it is there for a reason. With regard to dipping into the reserves, we were the only municipality in the entire New York State that did not raise their taxes last year. We dipped into the reserve, absolutely and we will do it again to save your taxes, so you don't have to pay more taxes, we will provide all services, we will have the road safe and at the same time, not raise your taxes as much as we can. **Mayor Kalaj** if it makes you happy we can raise your taxes by 3-4% and this way we don't have to dip into our reserves any more. **Attorney Ugell** stated that a moratorium would cause less building permits and other fees to be generated by the village, that is the money we are using to improve the roads, the sewers, the water and that money is also being used for green space, so a moratorium would be negative to us, it wouldn't help us at all and it would prevent us from being able to plan the advancement and the improvement of all our services and infrastructure in our village.

- **Jean Galli** she disagrees with the comments made about the building moratorium, right now we are dealing with potential drought conditions. The Mayor started this conversation begging people to save water and it would seem that while you are working on a master plan or a comprehensive plan, to get that in order so that you can move forward with building just to slow it down, just to stop it, so that people don't suffer right now. She thinks some of the logic that folks here are trying to impress upon you all that, the building is happening very fast and there is a need for infrastructure here between sewer and water, that is at risk. **Isaac Ekstein** none of the current projects along Route 208, any of these big projects are currently relying on village water and sewer, none of them. The biggest one, Clovewood/Lake Ann they are relying on their wells which they are offering to the village to actually relieve of that stress so as we have it we will be able to provide for them as well because we will have an overflow of water at that time. The SBG Business Park is relying on their own wells. We have some many well dig permits going on, these projects are not relying on our wells and they are not relying on our sewage.
- **Bonnie Rum** there have been a couple of comments about improving Route 208, for example it was Stonegag Drive that stated they were going to donate some lands so that there could be a turning lane into their property. Correct me if I'm wrong but she doesn't remember that NYS requires for an easement, now they haven't agreed to expanding the road, but there is a requirement of 25-30 feet from the center of the lane that is nearest the property and the way Stonegate seems to be growing, she doesn't think that is possible. She looked at the site plans, at the bottom they show a scale of inches but they don't do the equivalent in feet so it is hard to tell from the maps, she has never seen that ever, she must have missed something, you may want to check those maps, if there is not that room to have the easement then you can't widen the road or if whatever is being constructed needs to be demolished to the point where you can have that easement if you want the turning road. The fact that you are saying all these projects are not using the village water, the aquafer is deep under ground and where these wells are being dug is very important that you be sure that the surrounding wells do not get diminished. That has not been the case in the past, but be very careful you may end up with all of these constructions and hoping that you can tap into the water from KJ and they don't have that water yet either. KJ has this thing where they are trying to get water from the aquafer and

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that hasn't been completed yet and you never know what is going to happen with that. In the meantime, you are paying all this money to truck in water on a regular basis and your adding developments that may be tapping into the same water access all together, because underground they don't have the boundary lines. She is curious you are voting to rescind a resolution, a resolution 70 from 2022, what is that resolution. **Mr. Ekstein** Stonegate is meeting all their boundaries that they need to meet and Mr. Fusco and his team is making sure of that and it is not growing, it is the exact foundation as it was a few months ago they are just getting the structure done. It is getting exactly as high as it got approved for, when it got approved, the building department made sure that they are meeting all of their requirements that the DOT is requiring and including adding the 30 feet addition to Route 208. There was a resolution to authorize the Mayor to go into a lease agreement for a property and the Mayor wants to take that back.

- **Mr. Ekstein** spoke with Scott Ugell this morning and there is a resolution back from 2016, Resolution No. 58 that is also pertaining to a property exchange agreement with the Village and South Blooming Grove Fire District. There has been some back and forth with their attorneys that it was never filed and it is still up in the air, so Mr. Ugell advised a potential rescinding that Resolution No. 58 of 2016. If you are interested in going further with this? **Attorney Ugell** we looked into the resolution, it was something that was never done, never followed up. No activity on either party as far as he could tell was taken. So if it is the position of the Village since nothing was done since the vote, you have the right to rescind that and change your policy. The board moved forward with Resolution No. 86, see below. **Mayor Kalaj** asked what did they want from that resolution, he discussed it briefly today but wanted the board to know it, please provide a brief input. **Mr. Ekstein** the entire board received the emails on Friday and it was sent a few months ago and now they followed up again. Basically, the fire department is now situated on a parcel right next to village hall and there is a part of a driveway that the fire department is using to get through to their firehouse is owned by the village, they want to change that so that it is owned by the fire department, not by the village. It is a technicality; they are using it for the last 10 years or more. Nothing changes right now and they had the resolutions since 2016 and all the previous administrations didn't feel important to follow through with this so it doesn't look like it is a very important thing.

➤ **Business**

- **Resolution No. (082)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove authorizing the Village to pay for NYCOM Fall Training September 12-16, 2022. Motion to accept by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Deputy Mayor Weiss. *5 Ayes- Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Guttman and Trustee Feldman.*
- **Resolution No. (083)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove authorizing the construction of various park improvements, stating the estimated maximum cost thereof is \$300,000, appropriating said amount for such purpose, and authorizing the issuance of Bonds in the principal amount of \$300,000 to finance said appropriation. Motion to accept by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Trustee Feldman. *5 Ayes- Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Guttman and Trustee Feldman.*

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- **Resolution No. (084)** - Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove authorizing the Mayor to enter into an agreement with Skyscraper Insurance for Cyber Security Insurance. Motion to accept by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Deputy Mayor Weiss. *5 Ayes- Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Guttman and Trustee Feldman.*
- **Resolution No. (085)** - Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove rescinding Resolution No. 70 of 2022 - authorizing the mayor to negotiate and sign a lease with Cong Lev D'Satmar KJ, 1 Roanoke drive. Motion to accept by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Deputy Mayor Weiss. *5 Ayes- Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Guttman and Trustee Feldman.*
- **Resolution No. (086)** - Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove rescinding Resolution No. 58 of 2016. Motion to accept by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Deputy Mayor Weiss. *5 Ayes- Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Guttman and Trustee Feldman.*

➤ **Comments**

- **Joel Stern** updated the status of the solar street lights, the samples that were put out 2 weeks ago. The majority of votes came in for option #4, which is the first one coming in from Route 208. It is a beautiful model and we will continue with option #4. We will now price out how much it will cost for the light plus installation, Mr. Fusco provided detailed engineering specs for a concrete base today, so we should be ready to go ahead and get final pricing. **Mayor Kalaj** we need these lights. **Trustee Guttman** confirmed that these will be purchased with grant monies. Senator Skoufis gave us two grants for this.
- **Joel Stern** provided an update on water meters and there will be another meeting with a second company next weeks so we can finalize between FW Web and Sensus Netflex to choose which will be a better option for the new digital water meters. Hopefully in the next few weeks, we will have a final update.

➤ **Abstract**

- Motion to adopt the abstract by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Feldman. *5Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Guttman and Trustee Feldman.*

➤ **Adjournment**

- Motion to close the meeting at 9:03pm. by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Rosner. *5 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Guttman and Trustee Feldman.*

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Kerry Dougherty, Village Clerk