

**Village of Buchanan  
Mayor & Board of Trustees  
Board Meeting  
February 2, 2016**

**PRESENT:**

Mayor Theresa Knickerbocker  
Trustees Nicolas Zachary and Richard A. Funchion  
Village Board Secretary Susan F. Matthews  
Village Administrator Kevin Hay  
Village Attorney Stephanie V. Porteus

Alexander H. Roberts, Executive Director of Community Housing Innovations (CHI)

**ABSENT:**

Duane M. Jackson  
Cesare Pasquale

Mayor Knickerbocker announced that Trustees Jackson and Pasquale send their regrets that they cannot be at this meeting. Trustee Pasquale had a family emergency. His wife had an accident today. The Board wishes her a speedy recovery. Trustee Jackson is away on vacation.

**1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Mayor Knickerbocker opened the meeting at 7:30 PM, welcomed everyone and informed them of the fire regulations. Josephine Antonini led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. APPROVE MINUTES**

November 17, 2015 Workshop Meeting: a MOTION to approve these minutes as presented was made by Trustee Zachary, seconded by Trustee Funchion with all in favor and Trustees Jackson and Pasquale absent.

December 1, 2015 Regular Board Meeting: a MOTION to approve these minutes as presented was made by Trustee Funchion, seconded by Trustee Zachary with all in favor and Trustees Jackson and Pasquale absent.

**3. PROCLAMATION: JOSEPHINE ANTONINI'S 90<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY**

Mayor Knickerbocker invited Ms. Antonini to the front of the room. The Mayor read the proclamation. Mrs. Antonini's family was present and photos were taken. The Mayor noted that

there were a lot of people here who live in Buchanan: 6 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren. Ms. Antonini is retired from the A &P and is a long time member of the Buchanan Senior's Club. The Mayor asked Mrs. Antonini her secret for staying so youthful. Ms. Antonini said "Be happy". The Mayor said that she was invited to Ms. Antonini's's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday party. Ms. Antonini's family and friends were there. She had a good time. Ms. Antonini said that she was really honored to get this proclamation. The Mayor told her that we are honored that she is one of our Buchanan Seniors. We are very lucky. Trustee Funchion said that Ms. Antonini was one of the youngest looking 90-year old persons he has ever seen in his life. Mayor Knickerbocker said that she thinks it is the Buchanan water and air.

**4. COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR: (agenda items only)**

None.

**5. NEW BUSINESS:**

**a. 16-04 RESOLUTION APPOINTING INSPECTORS OF ELECTION.**

Trustee Zachary read the Resolution (*copy attached*).

A MOTION to adopt this Resolution as presented was made by Trustee Funchion, seconded by Trustee Zachary with all in favor and Trustees Jackson and Pasquale absent.

**b. RESOLUTION REQUESTING THE REFORM OF THE NYS PUBLIC SCHOOL FUNDING.**

Trustee Funchion read the Resolution (*copy attached*).

Mayor Knickerbocker commented that many municipalities are going to be doing these resolutions and forwarding it to our State representatives, Assemblywoman Galef and State Senator Murphy. We are one of 12 states that still rely on property taxes to fund our school systems. It is becoming more and more expensive to live in New York State. Buchanan is on board to find alternative ways to fund schools.

Trustee Zachary commented that he has a lot of questions. He thinks this is kind of vague and misleading. To him, basically what they are looking at is not anything other than a tax shift if you are looking for other ways to fund schools. He commented that we are sort of authorizing or encouraging State Senator Murphy and Assemblywoman Galef to pursue alternative funding and as it says here "to advocate for reforms hereby put forth and we thank them for their diligence in this matter." Trustee Zachary does not know what reforms and what they want to do. He thinks that we are really looking at a tax shift. He commented that what a lot of other states do is to

transfer the school payments to income tax. New York State already has high income tax. He commented, do we want to raise income taxes, be they personal or corporate because there has been so much movement to keep corporate taxes down in New York. Governor Cuomo is constantly railing about how much business is moving out of New York State. Trustee Zachary commented, are we saying transfer real estate taxes to income taxes, personal and corporate? He does not know if that is anything but a tax shift and it may not be more equitable.

Trustee Funchion thinks that what the homeowners feel is that the people who rent and use other facilities in the state are not contributing to the overall education of people in the State. He does not think that they have a set thing that they could go before us with on what kind of taxation they would go to. But right now their goal is to take the entire taxation of the schools which is on the backs of property owners and distribute it to everyone in the State, not just the property owners.

Trustee Zachary commented that he has a two family house. Part of why his tenant probably pays a higher rent than in another district and probably a lower rent than if they were in Chappaqua for example, is because part of that rent reflects his mortgage and his taxes which get passed along. He commented that maybe in larger multi-family units where there are rent regulations, people are not able to pass along increases in school taxes. He does believe it should be studied and that there should be a combination of ways to pay for schools. But as this is written, he does not have enough clarity to know what it is that they are advocating for to be able to personally vote for this. Trustee Zachary commented that another thing that people do in other states is that it is based on sales taxes. We already have high sales taxes in New York. Do we want to see higher sales taxes? He sees this as more of a tax shift. For him, it is too vague to vote in favor.

Mayor Knickerbocker commented that because everything relies on property taxes now, she thinks that it is a more equitable way to distribute the school taxes. We are down to one of 12 states in the country. Everybody else has other ways of doing it such as mortgage tax and excess on profit taxes which the State, from the millions of dollars they recently got from the banks, could have put that money into helping the schools. So there are different ways. The Mayor commented that we want to send this out to them saying, yes, it is time. People are aware that the property taxes are high and we do not want to keep losing residents. When they retire, they move to Florida and all over the country. We would like to keep everybody and give them the ability to stay where they have lived all their lives instead of selling their homes because of the property taxes.

Trustee Zachary commented that is part of why we have the STAR program that gives Seniors discounts on their taxes. He believes it should be examined. There should be ways to make it more equitable. Perhaps Seniors need a break. He asked if we are equalizing the school districts

because he moved up here because he heard that the school districts were good and he wanted to raise a son up here. He commented that a lot of times people pick where they live based on the schools. He thinks that people should have a right to buy a house in an area that they can afford for the better schools. He commented if this is abandoning property taxes and going to some state-wide system, we all know how some of these districts spend so much per student. We know some of these stellar districts in Westchester like Chappaqua and Scarsdale, and we know that there are other districts that are struggling and their buildings are falling apart like Mount Vernon. He wanted to know if we are looking to equalize this. Trustee Zachary thinks that this is more complicated than he can absorb right now, so he would not vote on it.

Mayor Knickerbocker asked if we should adjourn the vote on this until next month. Trustee Zachary commented, until there are more people here so it gets approved when he votes no. The Mayor said no, she has no problem with Trustee Zachary not being for this. He has to vote how he feels. That is fine. But to have asked the questions ahead of time so that we could have gotten some answers. Trustee Zachary commented that he has been trying to read up on this. He said it is fine if the Mayor wanted to vote. The Mayor announced that we will adjourn it until next month and maybe we will be able to get some of Trustee Zachary's questions answered too.

**c. 16-05 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO ENTER INTO AN AGREEMENT WITH WESTCHESTER COUNTY TO USE THE VOTING MACHINES.**

Mayor Knickerbocker read the Resolution (copy attached).

Mayor Knickerbocker advised that we are going to be using the County's voting machines. We will no longer be using the lever [voting] machines which can no longer be used in New York State. We are setting up an agreement with the County to use their new ones.

A MOTION to adopt this Resolution as presented was made by Trustee Funchion, seconded by Trustee Zachary with all in favor and Trustees Jackson and Pasquale absent.

**7. PRESENTATION: Senior Multi-Family Project**

Mayor Knickerbocker announced that Alex Roberts is with us this evening

Mr. Roberts thanked the Mayor for inviting him. He said that the last time they met he talked about the 66 unit development. He commented that he got the message loud and clear that the Board felt that 66 units was more than they felt comfortable with and he began talking with the owner and the Village officials about a possible compromise. He commented that if you remember the original site plan which had 66 units had 2 buildings on 7 and 1/3 acres which was to be all multi-family. He said that basically what is before the Board is a request to re-zone that

area pursuant to the Master Plan to make it all multi-family. He commented that the problem is for the owner to recoup his investment, etcetera, to reduce it would not be economically feasible for him. Mr. Roberts commented that he said to him what if they reduce the size and cut it in half but allowed the other lot to be used for the commercial use that is the current zoning. They had Tim Miller & Associates who did the work before do a site plan with only 33 units. That is what he presenting now. He commented that basically they are cutting it in half. The impact would be half, much less. He commented that obviously they did not feel 66 was too much and that the Planning Board felt it was okay. Mr. Roberts would like to go forward with it. He thinks that it is really important that Buchanan participates in what is going on around the County to try to get some housing choice into Westchester County because there is a tremendous shift in preferences among a lot of people. They talked about the fact that Seniors are not able to afford their own houses. He did an analysis. He commented that he found that people over 65 in Buchanan, 60% of are "housing cost burdened" which means that they are paying over 30% of their income for housing, which is pretty high. He commented that having an option for a family of 2 making \$50,000 is not a bad option. It is something that the County needs and really could be used in Buchanan. He looked at an analysis of the Mews II in Somers. Over 70% of the tenants come from Westchester County. A lot of them are local and basically represent the community as a whole. He commented that he guesses this is an effort to see if they can come to a reasonable compromise that would not overburden our police and EMS.

He commented that comparing the two, the 66 units were two buildings with 33 units. What they are proposing is to cut down to one building with 33 units. It would provide the owner with the ability to develop the adjacent lot with something that the Board might want in terms of commercial. Nothing would change. The specifics are the number of proposed Senior multi-family housing units would be reduced from 66 to 33. The lot of 7.34 acres would be subdivided into two separate lots. Lot 1 would be developed with 33 units on 3.27 acres. Lot 2 would have 4.07 acres to remain undeveloped. But they would have to modify the text amendment to basically allow the multi-family housing only on the 3.27 acres. He cited the maps he had given to the Board. [He had maps on a screen projector]. Mr. Roberts noted the lot with 3.72 acres. To the right of that, to the east of that, would be the lot that contains a lot of wetlands, etcetera but there is a developable piece just north of the property. At some point were that property to be developed, they would have to provide an easement for access because of the topography, etcetera. The access would be the same where you see the parking is. Trustee Zachary wanted to know if the section that would be subdivided that would remain commercial would include the pond. Mr. Roberts said that was correct.

Mr. Roberts introduced Deborah Post, his Director of Development. He noted the 3.72 acres that they would be developing. He said that the whole area that contains the wetlands and pond would remain zoned the way it has been. He noted the part that would contain the 33 units. He showed where the access would be. There would be an easement if there was going to be

development, whatever the Village agreed to at some later date. Mr. Roberts felt it could work for all of us. He commented that basically that is pretty much it. He feels it is very similar to the original.

Trustee Zachary commented that having visited the lot he remembers the triangular portion behind the building as being fairly steep slopes. Mr. Roberts said that is going to remain vacant. Trustee Zachary wanted to know if the other section was flat. Mr. Roberts said that it was more flat. Basically the only difficulty with it is that they would have to provide an easement. There is no other access to it. It is not developed. He commented that it is not a big issue. Trustee Zachary commented that there is no particular plan of what Mr. Griffin wanted to do with that at this point. Mr. Roberts said that is correct. The plan is to ask the Board what they would like.

Trustee Funchion asked who Mr. Roberts works for. Does he work for Mr. Balter or Mr. Griffin? Mr. Roberts advised that he does not work for either. They have a contract with the owner of the property to purchase the property. Trustee Funchion noted that is Mr. Griffin. He is the owner. Mr. Roberts advised that they are purchasing the property with the intent to develop it. Trustee Funchion wanted to confirm that he would become the developer. Mr. Roberts advised that is correct. Mayor Knickerbocker wanted to know who the builder would be. Mr. Roberts advised that they would probably sub-contract that out. It might be Bill Balter. He said he would have to convince him. Mr. Roberts commented that he has told the Board before that he thinks that Mr. Balter is the best builder of affordable buildings in Westchester. Mr. Roberts would try to have him because the Board seems to have been comfortable with him. It is a little small for what he does but Mr. Roberts thinks if there was some encouragement, he might be able to have Mr. Balter as the builder.

Mayor Knickerbocker wanted to confirm that this would still be the same project. It would still be the affordable housing and it would still be part of the HUD settlement with the County. Mr. Roberts advised that was correct.

Mayor Knickerbocker advised that we are missing 2 of our Board members this evening. She commented that this is a lot to take in. There are some things to think about and she is sure that the Board will have questions once they are able to review it.

Trustee Funchion wanted to know, on the summary page of the proposal handout, under the topping "Use" it says "multi-family Senior 10% affordable". Mr. Roberts thinks that is a mistake. Ms. Post thinks that maybe the requirement of the zoning is a minimum of 10%. Mr. Roberts advised not here. Trustee Funchion wanted to confirm that he is saying it would be 100% affordable housing. Mr. Roberts advised that was correct.

Mayor Knickerbocker wanted to know what the estimated rent was for a one bedroom. She knows that Mr. Roberts had given us some numbers on that. Mr. Roberts said these are not the lowest income. This is not “very low income”. It is what they call “low income”. It is 60% of the area median income.

Trustee Zachary commented that it would be kind of hard to weigh this without more clarification of what might go on that other lot because some things would be more compatible or more incompatible than others. He feels that it is hard to go with this without a sense of what would go there. Mr. Roberts commented that nothing would change beyond what is there now. The concept would be that the Board would only re-zone the 3.72 acres. For the rest, the owner would have to come to the Planning Board with a proposal that was acceptable just as he did before. Village Attorney Porteus advised that what would help would be if we looked at the “as of right” uses. We could look at that at a Workshop to get a better idea of what could go there “as of” right.

Mayor Knickerbocker asked the Village Attorney if she had any questions. Village Attorney Porteus said that she has a lot of questions but they are not for tonight. The Mayor commented that we will have questions. The other Board members who are not here will watch the meeting on t.v. so they will also see the diagrams and drawings shown here this evening. The Board needs time to process this as it is a new plan.

Mr. Roberts said the next step is to discuss this with the other Board members. He asked what then happens? Mayor Knickerbocker advised that at next month’s Board meeting on the first Tuesday the Board will come back with questions or needs for more information. We will try to get the questions to him ahead of time. She commented that this is something new that we have to mull over and think about it. Mr. Roberts thanked the Board. The Mayor thanked Mr. Roberts for coming.

#### **PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE TO ALLOW SENIOR MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING:**

At 8:10 PM a MOTION to open the Public Hearing was made by Trustee Funchion, seconded by Trustee Zachary with all in favor and Trustees Jackson and Pasquale absent.

Mayor Knickerbocker asked if there were any questions or comments from the audience.

John Mattis, Tate Avenue, asked how many stories this would be. Ms. Post advised it would be 3½ stories. It goes into a hill. It is a half story on the bottom and 2 or 3 on the back. Mr. Mattis commented that the entire property had only 2 buildable acres. He wanted to know how many acres are buildable when they carve it out. Mr. Roberts said that he did not hear that only 2 were

buildable. Mr. Mattis commented that it was stated at the last meeting and that Mr. Roberts was there. Mr. Roberts commented that he knew. It was said by the Mayor. In response to Mr. Mattis' question, he does not know exactly. Mr. Mattis commented to assume it was a full 2 buildable acres. They are carving out something from the M1 zone. He commented that he does not know the law but he has heard over the years the term "spot zoning". He wanted to know if you do not make the whole M1 zone change, can they do this. Village Attorney Porteus advised that is not spot zoning. Mr. Mattis commented to let us assume that if it is the full 2 acres that is buildable, they are doing 33 units which is 16.5. The maximum density now is 5. So they are talking about more than tripling what is allowed. He commented that changes the character of the Village. He commented that we do not know whether or not we will need another police officer if this is built or not. We know if we built two that we will. We have to talk to the Police Chief about that.

Mr. Mattis commented that it would now be 3.27 acres that they would build on. 33 units is 10 per buildable acre which is twice the density that we have anywhere in the Village. It is going to change the character in the Village. He commented that he said last month and will say again to look at the buildable acres if the Board does some kind of resolution and allows the maximum density we have now which would be 5 per buildable acre. Otherwise they will change the entire character of the Village and they do not get a "do over". Once they change it, we are stuck with it for he believes, 50 years. It is going to be longer than any of us will be around. So the Board has to get this right the first time.

Mr. Mattis wanted to know if all 33 units would be affordable housing. Mr. Roberts advised that was correct. Mr. Mattis wanted to confirm that there would be no market rate any more. Mr. Roberts advised that was correct. Mr. Mattis commented that makes it even more difficult for anyone in Buchanan to get in there. Before, there were 10 units that Buchanan people could get in, first come first served. Now you would go through this whole process of the 9 counties and Westchester County. He commented what is the likelihood of this serving our local people, especially with less units available. He commented that this could fill up quicker from those other 9 counties. We welcome people but we want to take care of our own. He thinks it is way too dense. He wants to go on record that he is against it.

Tino DeSilva, 2 Donahue Court, agrees with Mr. Mattis. He thinks that they are really asking for two things. They are asking to change the zoning from commercial to residential and for a variance to allow a higher density, to 16.5 per acres. He commented that a lot is being asked for by them. Number two, it is not for the Village residents first. It is the 9 counties. We are a village of 2200 people. He thinks there are 800 property tax payers. He feels this is too much for us to take on. He commented that two Board meetings ago Police Chief Tubbs said that additional police will be needed. The ambulance corps would have additional calls there. There are all these other reasons. He commented that in his mind, originally it was half the size of

Bohlman Towers in Peekskill. Originally it was supposed to be 66 units. Now it is half of that. But if you think of it in terms of the relationship of the size of this to Bohlman Towers in Peekskill, it is a lot more for a village of 2200 people than Bohlman Towers is for a population of 23,000 people. He feels that this is more than the Village of Buchanan should be asked to accept. He thinks there is no reason the 800 taxpayers should take this on. There is no logical business reason. He commented that we owe a debt to the older people and the less fortunate. If it was for Village residents, he would raise his hand and say yes, let's do it. But it is not. It is 9 counties. You do not know who you are getting. He commented that it is not up to us 800 taxpayers to help all of society first. Let us help our own first. This is not going to do that. It is just going to be a big burden to us. People from who knows where are going to come. Who knows what it is going to cost us. There are so many unknowns. He feels that it is too big of a project for the Village of Buchanan. He thinks that if the Board votes yes, you would not be voting yes because you think it is for the good of the Village. There must be other motives. Maybe social motives or they want to do good for society. But he commented that is not why the Village Board members are here to do. They are here to represent the residents of the Village of Buchanan. He commented that he has not heard anyone other than Mr. Griffin who are property owners who are for this. He cannot see how the Board would vote yes for this when everyone in the Village is saying no. The Mayor thanked him.

Village Attorney Porteus asked to correct one thing. She noted that Mr. DeSilva mentioned that they were asking for a change of zone and he thought it was a variance. They are asking for what is called a "density bonus". What they want is where normally we have 5 we have given variances in the past. But in this particular case they were asking for what she supposes in this scenario would be 10 or 11. So they would not need to go for a variance. She said that Mr. DeSilva is right that they are asking for more than what is normal here. It is a different procedure.

Trustee Funchion wanted to correct something. He noted that the original statements made by Mr. Griffin in conjunction with Tim Miller & Associates were for over 90 units of market rate housing. That is where it started from. He commented that many people may see this going on forever but it is not the Village Board that is changing it. The property owner has changed and changed and changed. Mayor Knickerbocker commented that we have had many different variations of this over the 2 years. This is another proposal. Mr. Roberts commented, which has continued to try to accommodate some of the fears of the community over density.

Mr. Roberts wanted to clarify that it is not for the 9 counties. It is going to be open to people from the Village and everywhere else. He commented that is true of any property. You cannot specify that it is only for the people of Buchanan. It is open to anybody who is looking to rent. That is the way that it works. The people are going to be screened. They will be screened for their ability to pay and who they are. He commented that the people who are going to be

managing and owning this property are not going to want to bring people in who are not going to be able to pay the rent. The Mayor agreed that is not good business. Mr. Roberts commented that they are going to be investing millions of dollars in the project here. It is going to be open to the residents of the Village of Buchanan.

Eileen Absenger, 138 Tate Avenue, had a question about the easement. She commented that Ms. Post advised that it is 2½ stories. The third level is a half level. It is 3 stories on one side and 2 stories on the back because the slope goes up. Trustee Zachary noted that it was intended to stay within the Village Code which is a 35 foot maximum height. Mr. Roberts confirmed that was correct. Ms. Absenger is looking at the parking lot and the part that would be commercial. She wanted to know depending on whether you have a truck entering the commercial does it go through the parking lot to go to the easement. Ms. Post advised that it is not exactly a parking lot. It is a road with parking on both sides. It will be the width of a road. She commented that as was said before, whatever gets built up there needs to be compatible with whatever is built down there in the housing portion. She commented that compatibility with surrounding uses is something that the Planning Board generally looks at. Ms. Absenger wanted to know if they are still looking for a commercial building for this. She is not in favor of residential or of mixed use.

Ms. Absenger still finds it unacceptable to compare us with Somers because we are on the other side of the tracks and we have a track that has the train and Peekskill is not that far away. So she thinks that you are going to get a different mix of demographics. She feels that even though this goes back to HUD and 2000 that in 2010 we have met our quota of a mixed group of people. She does not think that Buchanan needs to be in this mix. She is not opposed to it because we have a group of other people that have come into this Village. She commented that when they say affordable that it sends a red flag up that compares the 66 units to whatever it was; that there still needs to be a lot more clarification to either soothe the fear or to explain it so that everybody understands it precisely as to who is able to put in an application, where they are coming, where they are advertising. She commented that it seems redundant but she thinks that it really needs to be put out there again. The Mayor thanked her.

At 8:22 PM a MOTION to adjourn the Public Hearing to next month was made by Trustee Zachary, seconded by Trustee Funchion with all in favor and Trustees Jackson and Pasquale absent.

## **8. INFORMATION FROM OFFICERS & DEPARTMENTS:**

a) Justice Court Report: December 2015

Received and filed. Mayor Knickerbocker noted that \$7,498 was received.

b) Fire Inspector's Report: December 2015

Received and filed.

c) Planning Board Minutes: November 19, 2016

Received and filed.

d) Police Reports: October– December 2015

Received and filed.

e) Attorney's Report

Village Attorney Porteus reported on a project that came in back in 2000 for the triangular property across from the hardware store where they were going to put commercial on the bottom and residential on top. It has been vacant. She thinks that Mr. Velardo owned it at the time. The owner had gone to the Zoning Board and got all kinds of variances to allow for parking and commercial. Those expired because they did not come back to the Planning Board. She reported that now there is a new application. There is a new owner. She is not sure whether it was foreclosed and this person is looking to develop it on behalf of the bank or if he is the owner. It is back before the Zoning Board. It is the exact same project. Because the variances expired, they are coming before the Zoning Board next Wednesday. She assumes that if they get the variances that they will be right back in front of the Planning Board. She just wanted to make the Village Board aware of this.

Village Attorney Porteus reported that the Village has an Employee Policies and Procedures booklet. She would really like the Board to look at it and recommend anything that may need to be tweaked or if it is still good as is. She wanted the Board to familiarize themselves again with the Employee Policies and Procedures. There have been some things coming up in the Village in the last 6-8 months that she thinks this speaks to or speaks to more accurately. Each Board member had a copy. She advised that it is lengthy but perhaps this could be discussed at the March Workshop. She noted that this was put together in 2010 because we thought that it was needed then. Things change. Mayor Knickerbocker advised that if the Board can get through it perhaps we can touch base and discuss it at our February Workshop.

Mayor Knickerbocker announced that the date for this month's Workshop was changed. Normally, it is the third Tuesday. This month it will be next Tuesday, February 9.

f) Administrator's Report

Village Administrator Hay reported that the cobra heads for the LED lights are installed all over the Village. They said that it would take 3 weeks but they did it in a week and a half. The decorative lighting that we have on certain streets as well as the center the Village will be 10 weeks before we will have it all installed. That will wrap up the project. Mayor Knickerbocker

commented that everyone loves the LED lighting and how it fans out. It is a whiter light instead of the yellow. There has been positive feedback.

The Administrator reported that Tax Grievance Night is the third Tuesday of the month, between 9 AM and 5 PM. Applications can be received up to that night.

The Administrator reported that the budget process has started. Requests have been sent to all the department heads and the Administrator will start putting the budget together when they are returned. Mayor Knickerbocker noted that the tax cap is 0.12. It is going to be a challenge. There is much talk around the State concerning the tax cap and that it is hurting a lot of municipalities. They are cutting back doing infrastructure and other important things. Trustee Zachary commented that it is hurting the schools even more.

#### g) Mayor's Report

Mayor Knickerbocker reported that people are starting to see that we have a work notice from Con Ed. It will be put on the Village's Facebook page as well. A Con Edison contractor will be working on a gas construction project on Tate Avenue from Valerie Court to Lake Drive from February 1 to March 25. Just as was done on First Street, they will be digging up in front of the homes. They are replacing and updating gas lines. The Mayor commented that she knows that it is a nuisance and that it digs up the roads but it is better that they do it now before we repave the roads. We want everyone to be safe. She commented that most of the Con Ed infrastructure is very old. So they are coming to different communities updating it. They have advised that while they work they will need to store supplies and equipment along the road in some areas. They will not be leaving anything in the road. They might also need to excavate sidewalks, driveways or lawn areas. They have said that if your property is affected that they will restore it. If you have sprinkler lines or dog fences, you are asked to notify Con Edison's construction group. The phone number will be available at the Village office and on the Village's Facebook page. They may need to temporarily interrupt gas service. You will be notified in advance if your service will be affected. They would need access to your home to restore your gas service. They will work with you to accommodate your schedule. Trustee Funchion asked if they have an ID to show people. The Mayor believes that Con Ed always has identification to show people. Trustee Funchion noted that these are contractors of Con Edison, not Con Ed employees themselves. He commented that a lot of bad people are getting into people's houses. The Mayor directed the Administrator to confirm that the contractors will have ID. Trustee Zachary noted that they say that they are going to minimize the inconvenience but if someone has gas heat and it is very cold, that is not just an inconvenience. If they are cutting off somebody's gas services between now and the end of March, it could be sub-freezing temperatures.

#### h) Trustee's Reports

Trustee Funchion reported that January was a continued negotiation before the police union. He believes we gave them a very good response in January. He hopes that they look at it closely.

Trustee Funchion gave a “shout out” to Trustee Zachary for the LED lights because he started the whole discussion. Trustee Funchion commented that it has proven to be a great thing to have done. It looks great and will save a lot of money. It is going to save a lot of heartaches changing bulbs. Trustee Zachary thanked Trustee Funchion. He commented that it was the efforts of a lot of people. The idea was there before he brought it up here. It is a trend that is happening. Village Administrator Hay did a lot of work. Everybody else helped out. Mayor Knickerbocker commented that it is a nice company to work with. They were very good. She commented that she is home for a while with her foot injury. She watched them install. It was like 5 minutes. They pulled the other ones out, hooked up the new ones and were on to the next light. It was a very quick and easy installation. She noted that Trustee Zachary brought it up and Village Administrator Hay researched the companies to use. We spoke to them today. They were a very good company to work with.

Trustee Funchion reported that the Saint Patrick’s Day Parade Party will be on February 27 for all concerned with the parade. He said to come out and have a great time. The parade will be on March 13.

Mayor Knickerbocker announced that Joe Ryan will be the Grand Marshal. Our very own police officer Mike Guida will be one of the Aides. The other aide will be Mr. Kelleher. It will be a great party and a great parade. She looks forward to seeing everyone there.

Trustee Zachary commented that last year around this time he was perturbed and brought up that there were 6 leaf and clippings pickups scheduled in January and February when generally there are no leaves and clippings. He is glad that it was reduced this year and he thanked the Village Administrator for bringing that to the attention of the Highway Department. In March and April when people start doing their clean up those numbers will go up again.

Trustee Zachary reported that the planning is getting under way for Buchanan Day. The first meeting will be on Monday, February 8 at 7 PM at the Highway Department building. It is a conflict with the Saint Patrick’s Day Parade committee meeting. He commented that it is hard to find a date so they are going to meet. He wants to go ahead to start thinking about things they have to reserve in advance as far as performers and other things. They will communicate with the other people involved who cannot be there that night. Anybody who is interested can join them then or leave a note at the Village Hall or send an e-mail to Trustee Zachary.

Trustee Zachary reported on a consumer matter. He was focusing on the way oil prices are going down and down and the price per gallon was getting ridiculously low, to prices we thought we would never see again. He noted that all the gas stations dropped their price per gallon over December and January except for our local stations. He commented that at some point he noticed that going back about 6 months while we had lower prices here than the stations along Route 6 and in Croton suddenly we were the highest. While Croton and Route 6 were down to \$2.09 per gallon, the gas stations in the Village and our immediate area were sitting at \$2.29. He commented that to some extent it is a matter of competitive pricing. But at some point he questions if the local stations decide “If you don’t drop yours, I don’t have to drop mine.” He commented that he is not accusing anybody. He is not doing a criminal investigation. He did report it to a New York State consumer protection complaint line and got a response from Attorney General Eric Schneiderman’s office. It thanked him for the information and said that it has been added to their file. Trustee Zachary commented that he takes that as meaning that nothing will be done. He noted that gas is currently \$1.99 per gallon on Route 6 and in Croton. He commented that if you are in Buchanan and periodically go to those places, you do not have to pay \$2.29 per gallon here. He commented that a consumer’s decision to buy one place or another is basically like buying a boat. He commented do not drive 20 miles out of your way to get cheaper gas but there is cheaper gas to be had right now. Mayor Knickerbocker commented that this is capitalism at its best. Even though sometimes the prices are more expensive, we try to support our local businesses. Trustee Zachary commented that he feels that way about our local deli, not about Sunoco.

## **8. COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR:**

Eileen Absenger, 138 Tate Avenue, commented that when she was at the Workshop, she said the Board changed the date for the February Workshop to February 23. Mayor Knickerbocker commented that was what she thought as well. Ms. Absenger said that now the Mayor is saying a different date so she wanted to know when it will be. The Mayor advised that there were crossed communications. It was publicized for February 9 and she wants to keep it for that date. Trustee Zachary commented that originally we were talking about scheduling two Workshops for that month. Ms. Absenger commented that the Board said they were going to go over things with the Building Inspector. She wanted to confirm that the correct date is now February 9. The Mayor advised that it is. She commented that she noticed it in the Newsletter but we will keep that date because it has been publicized. Trustee Zachary wanted to know if February 23 is also in the Newsletter. The Mayor advised that only February 9 is on the calendar there.

John Mattis, Tate Avenue, commented that in the Public Hearing he commented on where do these people come from. That is totally irrelevant. He commented that if it were market rate housing, 33 units on that property is still out of character for Buchanan. He feels that we are way too small to absorb that. He noted that the tax cap this year is not even 2%. It is 0.16%. He

commented that one police officer costs 7.5% in taxes. So should we raise the possibility of burdening our residents with a 7.5% tax increase let alone all the other things that are going up in price, just to change the character of the Village. Mr. Mattis commented that even if it were market rate, he would still be against it. He commented that Mr. Roberts said something that was not correct when he said that yes, it is available to 9 counties and Westchester. Mr. Mattis commented that Mr. Roberts did not say that Westchester is only after they satisfy or don't satisfy the needs of all the others. They have to go to the other 9 counties first before they can even advertise in Westchester. Mr. Mattis commented that in his opinion that is irrelevant. He thinks that this will be an albatross. It changes the entire character of the Village and gives us potential strain on our services. As he said, there is no "do over" on this. If the Board gets it wrong, we are stuck with it forever.

Don Zern, Westchester Avenue, had a suggestion. He would like the Board to not discuss it tonight but at the Workshop. He asked that at the next meeting that the Board come and give the public, himself and those who watch this on television a little explanation if at all possible. He commented that last month we had a reporter here who was taking photographs on the floor standing up in people's faces and this and that. Mr. Zern called it a total, total distraction. He commented that tonight we had another total, total distraction. He felt that it was totally not necessary. Mr. Zern commented that if somebody wants to come before the Board and put up a venue such as tonight or something on the wall, they should be here to set it up one half hour prior to the meeting, at 7 PM sharp. Mr. Zern commented that it is a total distraction, not only for himself but for the audience here and in t.v. land. He commented that the Board saw the man sit down in front of the camera with his assistant. Mr. Zern commented that it was total disrespect. He would appreciate an answer at the next Board meeting.

Mayor Knickerbocker agreed that they came in late. There was a distraction. The Mayor said that she would comment now. In the future, we have to be very specific with these people that at 7 PM they have to be set up and ready to go when they are called upon. The Mayor commented that Mr. Zern was right. Mr. Roberts had gotten in front of the camera.

#### **10. BOARD MEMBER REBUTTALS:**

None.

#### **11. ADJOURNMENT:**

At 8:43 PM a MOTION to adjourn this meeting was made by Trustee Funchion, seconded by Trustee Zachary with all in favor and Trustees Jackson and Pasquale absent.

Mayor Knickerbocker thanked everyone and hopes they have a great Buchanan Day!