

**Village of Buchanan**  
**Mayor & Board of Trustees Meeting**  
**June 4, 2019**

**PRESENT:**

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

**1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:**

Mayor Knickerbocker called the meeting to order at 7:30 PM. She led the Pledge of Allegiance and informed everyone of the fire regulations.

**2. PRESENTATION:**

Mayor Knickerbocker recognized the Beautification Committee and had each member come to the front of the room. She said that they do a lot of great things here in the Village. They do the planters coming into the Village, at the Circle by the clock, by Monroe Park and in the barrels around the Village. In the Fall they put the mums in. They do fund raisers. They are all volunteers. They work hard to beautify our Village and we want to recognize them for all their hard work. Mayor Knickerbocker presented each member with a Certificate of Appreciation. The members are Becky Makelainan, Tania Drezek, Cheryl Gilmore, Elizabeth Keenan, Eileen Outhouse, Leann McCarthy and Linda Willey. The Mayor noted that Linda is a fairly new resident who jumped in to help the Village.

The Mayor announced that next month we are going to recognize the Saint Patrick's Day Committee. Some of the members are on both committees. They are a very active group.

Mayor Knickerbocker introduced Jane Lemak and Robin Cook of the Woman's Club of Peekskill-Cortlandt. They gave an overview of what they do. They started with a simple project of providing shoes for needy children and have grown from that. Today they promote community welfare in Peekskill and Cortlandt. They donate to libraries, food pantries, Aunt Bessie's Open Door, Head Start and the Jan Peek House. They promote literacy among children. They give out holiday baskets and prepare and serve meals. They collect and donate needed personal care items for the homeless. They give scholarships and encourage student participation in a contest for art and creative writing which can go on to the district, State and national level. They promote awareness of domestic violence and childhood abuse to stop and prevent that from happening. They do fund raising in the community to help area students who have severe health conditions. If anyone knows of someone in our community who needs their help, please contact them.

Their group wants to plant a pinwheel garden. It is a national campaign to promote awareness of and prevent child abuse. In Carmel, it was a success. They wanted to know where they could plant a pinwheel garden for 2 or 3 weeks in Buchanan. They would like it to be in a highly visible area. She thanked Mayor Knickerbocker for letting them come tonight.

Mayor Knickerbocker said that they sound like a small group but a powerful one. Since they are helping the community, the Mayor said that we would put it on our Facebook page. She advised that they should work with our Beautification Committee to find the perfect spot for the pinwheel garden. There is also Buchanan Day. The Mayor commented that whatever we can do to support them, we are there. She thanked them for coming.

3. **APPROVE MINUTES:**

- a. March 26, 2019 Workshop Meeting: A MOTION to approve these minutes as presented was made by Trustee Funchion, seconded by Trustee Jackson with all in favor.
- b. April 2, 2019 Organizational Meeting: A MOTION to approve these minutes as presented was made by Trustee Funchion, seconded by Trustee Zachary.

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

None.

5. **NEW BUSINESS:**

- a. **19-21 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE ENGINEER TO PREPARE SPECIFICATIONS AND FOR THE CLERK TO ADVERTISE BIDS FOR ROADWAY WORK.**

Mayor Knickerbocker read the resolution (*copy attached*).

The Mayor commented that we are just starting with out roadwork. It is usually completed by September or October. There is \$250,000 in the budget and we have another \$107,000 in the Capital Fund that includes \$38,000 from the CHIPS Program.

Trustee Zachary wanted to know if there are any key areas targeted. The Administrator advised that she and the Village Engineer took a ride around the Village. They put together a list of the roads with the greatest need of repair and we will cover as much as we can. Trustee Zachary wanted to know if the far end of Lindsey Avenue by the hardware store will be done. The Administrator confirmed that it is one of the areas. Mayor Knickerbocker advised that they are considering all of Lindsey Avenue. It will be about \$400,000. This year there is more money available. The Administrator advised that usually we budget about \$200,000 plus whatever we

carry over from previous projects. The first year we did Bleakley Avenue because we had the money from the roadway bond.

A MOTION to adopt this resolution as presented was made by Trustee Funchion, seconded by Trustee Pasquale with all in favor.

**b. 19-22 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EMPLOYMENT OF SEASONAL HELP.**

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

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

**c. 19-23 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EMPLOYMENT OF RECREATIONAL PERSONNEL (POOL).**

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

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

**d. 19-24 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE EMPLOYMENT OF RECREATIONAL PERSONNEL (CAMP).**

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

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

**e. 19-25 RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE USE OF A VILLAGE FACILITY.**

Trustee Pasquale read the resolution (*copy attached*).

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

**6. INFORMATION FROM OFFICERS & DEPARTMENTS:**

a) Justice Court Report – April 2019

Mayor Knickerbocker noted that one amount received was \$1,418.00 and the other was \$200.00.

b) Police Report – April 2019

Mayor Knickerbocker noted that once again there were a lot of Medical Aided calls (13). There were 6 calls for Village Code Violations, 5 Utility Complaints, 5 Fire Calls and 6 calls to Assist Other Agencies to name a few. There were 9 arrests.

This report was received and filed.

c) Attorney's Report

Village Attorney Porteus will report in the Executive Session.

d) Administrator's Report

Village Administrator Hay reminded that tax bills are due by July 1. The wastewater treatment plant will undergo its annual evaluation. The Department of Health will evaluate the employees and see if everything is up to snuff. He will report the results next month. The Administrator does not believe there will be any issues.

The Administrator reported on the Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan. He and the Mayor met with the Town of Cortlandt officials and members of the interviewing the team. Village Administrator Hay is on that team. They interviewed all 4 firms that put in proposals. They narrowed it down to two. They will go with Behan Planning & Design Associates. They were involved in the Peekskill and Croton waterfront revitalization. This will be done with a \$250,000 grant that we got with the Town to cover this. This firm's numbers fit into that and the Administrator commented that there may be some money for some zoning work. Moving forward 5 residents from the Village and 5 from the Town of Cortlandt are needed to be on the advisory committee. They will meet monthly and will represent the Village on how the plan should be put forward. We hope to find those people by our July Village Board meeting. We will have a resolution awarding that to the selected firm and put the 5 members on the list as the advisory committee.

The Administrator advised that we need a part-time caretaker. We received one application. It will be held open for another month.

The Administrator announced, noting that the Village Board already knows, that as of July 19, 2019 he has accepted another position as Town Administrator with the Town of North Castle. He commented that as for leaving the Village of Buchanan, it is important for the residents to know that it was a tough decision. He has been here almost 10 years and enjoyed his time. He commented that this is a good opportunity for him. He is going to miss working here. Mayor Knickerbocker commented that he is a part of the family and we are sad to see him go. He is so good to work with. He will be here for one more Board meeting. She will wish him goodbye at that time and thanked him for all he did for the Village.

e) Mayor's Report:

Mayor Knickerbocker reported that concerning the waterfront revitalization, Trustee Zachary has volunteered to be our liaison and to be on the committee. He has been working on getting 5 residents to represent us. Trustee Zachary advised that we are waiting to hear from some people and thinks that we are very close to finding the five.

The Mayor reported that next month we will recognize the Saint Patrick's Day committee. She thanked all our volunteers.

Mayor Knickerbocker reported that she had gotten information from the County Executive that there is a Town Day in the County at Playland in Rye. Buchanan Day is on July 2. We received that news too late to include in our Newsletter. We will put it on Facebook and ask residents to help in getting out the word. The discounts include parking, mini-golf, ride and beach admissions and "value meals". It will be a fun day. The Mayor said that if we get enough people, we will get a bus so our residents can enjoy Playland for a day. The Mayor noted that July 2 is when our Village Board meeting is held. We are not sure if the Board will reschedule the meeting for the week after. Any Buchanan residents who are interested in going should call Recreation Director Nancy Bayer at the Recreation Department.

Mayor Knickerbocker reported that this Monday, June 10, the Village Board has been invited to the Grand Opening of Continental Building Products. It is the largest array of solar panels on top of their building. The Mayor understands that they will potentially be selling some of that power to people who live locally. Trustee Zachary imagines that it goes into the grid. The Mayor will report further at the July meeting.

Mayor Knickerbocker announced that our first Citizens Advisory Panel meeting will be on Thursday, June 13 at 6 PM. It will be held at the union hall at the former McKinley School in Peekskill. It will be taped and minutes will be taken. It is an official meeting. This is the first of the meetings on the decommissioning of Indian Point. It affects our community. They want to make sure it is done safely. This meeting will be an overview of the decommissioning process. There will be another meeting sometime in the Fall. There will be further meetings as things happen with the plant. There will be quarterly meetings each year. There is a lot of information about the process. She would like to see the residents giving their input and comments. The Mayor commented that other people will be commenting but this is our home and community. She would like to see as many people in the community there. The NRC requests that there are community panels to disseminate the information on what is going on. The Mayor noted that we are not an oversight board. The NRC controls the decommissioning process. We advise. If there is something we see on the property that we think should be done differently or better, or have a question or concern, we are going to speak up.

Mayor Knickerbocker called on Police Chief Johansen to talk about coyotes. Chief Johansen reported that there have been some complaints about coyotes. He noted that it is a common problem in Westchester County. He wants to clear up some misconceptions. One is that they can be easily trapped by the police or Animal Control. That is not the case. He has contacted the DEC and spoken to the officer who covers our area. They will not even handle it unless the coyote is sick or presents a public safety hazard. You would have to hire a trapper to catch a coyote. They are not easy to catch. The municipalities and agencies in this area are consistent in their policy. They say to leave them alone. The coyotes want nothing to do with us. They are just as scared of us as we are of them.

There are things that can be done. Feeding pets outside brings their attention to your property. Chief Johansen advised to refrain from doing that. Cats that are left outside are at risk. Coyotes do prey on cats. If you encounter one, the recommended action is to make yourself look big, make noises and clap your hands. If you see one that is not scared by you, it is an indication that they are sick. In that case, the DEC or Village police comes in and handles it as a public safety issue. You need a permit to take a coyote. You have to prove that they are a nuisance. It is mainly for farmers. It does not apply in our Village. The DEC guidelines say to make sure that your garbage is covered. Talk to your neighbors. The coyotes are more scared of us. If you see one in your yard, give the police a call and they will make noise. They are not trained to trap them. Those trappers that do take care of that have a special skill set. Mayor Knickerbocker commented that someone mentioned that we sometimes used the Town of Cortlandt's Animal Control Officer. Chief Johansen advised that this is not something they do because they do not trap coyotes or wildlife. They do domestic animal control. He commented that he has seen more wildlife now than in years past. You see turkeys in the yard, for example. The Chief advised to use common sense steps to minimize the impact with a coyote.

Trustee Jackson asked if we ever tranquilize a sick coyote. The Chief advised that the Buchanan Police have a tranquilizer gun but it is not sufficient to take down an animal of that size. It is something where you have to weigh the risk versus the reward and the issues. He commented that they would probably call in the DEC because they have larger equipment that could handle it. It is more humane. If it is a public safety issue, they take care of the problem immediately. There were some well publicized incidents down County in years past. Chief Johansen advised that there have been no negative encounters in the Village that he has been aware of. People have seen them. One person had one in their yard. It is the time of the year. The deer have had babies. Coyotes are a predatory animal.

Mayor Knickerbocker commented that we pushed out a lot of the wildlife with our building. Trustee Zachary commented that with more building they wind up in suburban yards. The Mayor commented that she had been told that someone on Tate Avenue was feeding the coyotes. This is not a domestic animal. The Mayor emphasized that we must cover our garbage cans. These animals are looking for food. We must all work together to get it done. She commented that somebody had said that people were starting to think of using guns to kill the coyotes themselves. She is directing the public not to do that because it is dangerous and illegal; as is trapping them without a permit. It is dangerous. Bullets can ricochet. It is a bad situation. Chief Johansen reminded that there is no instance where a resident should be using a firearm or a bow and arrow. It is not safe, is against the law and will not be tolerated.

Trustee Pasquale commented that a coyote may have a litter somewhere. He commented to be careful as there might be more than one eventually popping up.

Chief Johansen reported on the "Click It Or Ticket" traffic enforcement. He advised that Buchanan Police officers and the County and State police officers are increasing traffic stops in recent weeks to coincide with the "Click it or Ticket" campaign. It was to get the word out and increase compliance with the New York State law on seatbelt use. This is done every May and June state-wide starting on Memorial Day. He wanted to let the public know that Buchanan P.D.

will be participating in similar initiatives as they come up throughout the State. The Chief explained that their role and goal is compliance as opposed to writing tickets. Sometimes you do have to issue a summons but he likes to educate people and encourages that. They want to keep people safe.

Mayor Knickerbocker commented that we are seeing more and more wildlife. She encouraged people to not pile up wood clippings and branches because the wildlife will go in there. There is an area in the Village where people are starting to throw things in the back of their yards over fences and there are mounds of debris. These are places for the animals to have their nests. If people have work done, they should have the company remove the stuff. We do not want to have homes for these animals. We want to keep the Village safe.

The Mayor remarked that it is that time of the year and she cannot believe that she has to say this every year but she has to remind about curbing your dog. The residents in our Village really keep their lawns nice and cut. They have beautiful flowers. They take pride in all the work they do. Mayor Knickerbocker commented that she has to ask again this year because she does not know what else to do but do not let your dog pee and poop on people's yards. She does not want to have people putting up signs. She hates to see those signs. She commented that on Saturday night she happened to be looking out her window. She has flowers at the end of her driveway. A dog peed on her flowers. A day later the same person came by and the Mayor asked to not have their dog pee on her flowers. Let us just curb the dogs. Do not let them pee on people's yards. Let's keep the Village beautiful as we work together. The Mayor commented that some people are very good about this but she does get a lot of complaints about this. Trustee Zachary commented that some people do not seem to understand that curbing your dog means on the street side of the curb, not on the grass side.

Mayor Knickerbocker reminded that people should make sure to not throw things down the storm drains. They go right out into the lake. It is bad for the health of the lake.

f) Trustees' Reports:

Trustee Jackson wanted to echo the Mayor's comments. It is summertime and there are a lot of people out walking with their dogs. He has witnessed a couple of incidents around Lake Drive which is an out of the way place. He commented to be mindful and take a plastic bag with you when you walk your dog. Hold onto them until you get to your own house and dispose of them there. Do not throw things into the storm drains.

Trustee Funchion addressed Village Administrator Hay and said that he will be sorely missed. He has been a great manager for the Village Board and works very well with everybody in the Village. Trustee Funchion said that we hate to see him go.

Trustee Funchion commented to be aware that many people use fertilizers and weed killers on their lawns. That will make your dog sick. He commented that if you love your dog, keep them off the lawns and they will not get sick.

Trustee Funchion hopes that the people who own motorcycles have respect for the people in the Village who like to sit on their porch or deck. He commented that when you cannot hear the people next to you because someone is revving up their bike, it is not respectful to the people in the community.

Trustee Funchion reported that State Senator Harckham held a press conference about the closing of Indian Point. We hope to protect the labor that is working there and that those people maintain their jobs until the plant is closed. The plant employs a lot of our local people and also people who contribute to the local economy. We want to keep them there as long as possible.

Trustee Funchion reported that Thursday will be the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the D-Day invasion in Europe. There are a lot of things going on. Trustee Funchion commented that he had the great opportunity to visit Normandy and the village of Sainte Eglise where many of the paratroopers landed. They are very pro-American and show their love of Americans even these many years after. It was especially emotional. You see thousands of graves. The American section is very well done. You see what they were up against. There is a Coast Guard station at the site of a German gun. That one gun killed 1500 Americans. They show films. Trustee Funchion did not think that anybody - man, woman or child - could leave there without tears in their eyes. He commented that it is the "Greatest Generation" and that they deserve that accolade.

Trustee Funchion announced that the Veterans BBQ at the pavilion is on June 20 from 11:30 AM to 2 PM. He hopes all the veterans will come out and enjoy the day.

Trustee Funchion wished everyone a Happy Father's Day.

Mayor Knickerbocker mentioned the legislation that State Senator Harckham and Assemblywoman Galef introduced. If it passes, it helps the Village because the spent fuel rods are currently not assessed or taxed because they are not considered real property. This resolution will make them taxed which will benefit the Village. The Mayor commented that we would prefer that the spent fuel is removed but the Department of Energy has had challenges in finding a permanent repository. It has not happened in 30 years so we do not expect it to happen anytime soon. We hope that legislation gets passed so we see some revenue from that.

Trustee Zachary wanted to personally thank the Beautification Committee. They do a great job. He recently saw them working on the Circle. Everything looks so nice. He commented that the Beautification Committee should be the frosting on the cake with the whole Village being the cake. He commented that even if you do not have an interest in flowers, try to keep things nice. If there is a bulk pick up, do not put it out ahead of time so that it is just lying there. Teach your children to not throw candy wrappers on the ground. Throw cigarette filters in the garbage or get filter-less. He said to keep things neat and nice so that the Beautification Committee is the frosting on the cake.

Trustee Zachary reported that we had a Workshop on May 14. It was not a regular Workshop. It was specifically to go over possible changes to our zoning. He personally has pushed for this because he feels that some aspects of our Zoning Code are outdated, restrictive or could be more positive to encourage development. The Village Board will review it. He commented that it is not something that can be done overnight. He would like to resume the conversation at our next Workshop. There could be legal questions. It is an on-going process.

Trustee Zachary reported that in the last few months the Board has talked about changing the parking on Route 9A. We would like to take over the parking enforcement between Bleakley and Tate Avenues. We will wait for the repaving being done by the State and see what they do with certain intersections. Trustee Zachary reported that the Board talked about doing a proactive letter and enforcement of the new trailer law that we passed a year ago. We discovered that there were a couple of things we might possibly want to change. We will continue discussions at the next Workshop and keep things moving.

Trustee Zachary said to enjoy June before it gets too hot.

Trustee Pasquale reported that a couple of weeks ago he, Mayor Knickerbocker and Trustee Funchion had the pleasure to march in the Montrose Memorial Day Parade. It was a privilege to be invited to march. He wished everyone a Happy Father's Day.

Trustee Pasquale told Village Administrator Hay that the Village will miss him. He thanked him for all the help he has given him. He always took the time to answers his questions. North Castle is very lucky to have him.

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

Reed Outhouse, 241 Westchester Avenue, commented about Trustee Zachary bringing up Route 9A. The pre-work is going on in Montrose. They are doing the sidewalks. He wanted to know if we have interfaced with the State about the on-going drainage issue from Lindsey Avenue down to White Street. It has been an issue for a long time. Mr. Outhouse commented that as a long time member of the fire house they fare pretty well but some of the businesses along there have to sandbag. The Administrator advised that we reached out to the State. The Highway Foreman sent some pictures to their engineer. This is primarily a mill and pave job. They advised that they did have some work with some pop up drains that they were looking at.

Mayor Knickerbocker again thanked the Beautification Committee and the Woman's Club of Cortlandt/Peekskill. They do a great job. It is good to work with them and continue to support them.

Mayor Knickerbocker wished everyone a happy June and to have a great Buchanan Day.

## **8. EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

At 8:20 PM a MOTION to enter into Executive Session was made by Trustee Zachary, seconded by Trustee Pasquale with all in favor. Mayor Knickerbocker noted that it is to discuss a personnel issue and no monies will be spent or decisions made.

**9. ADJOURNMENT:**

At 9:25 PM a MOTION to exit the Executive Session and adjourn the meeting was made by Trustee Jackson, seconded by Trustee Zachary with all in favor.