

**Village of Buchanan
Mayor & Board of Trustees
Village Board Meeting
January 7, 2013**

PRESENT:

Mayor Sean Murray

Trustees, Richard A. Funchion, Nicholas Zachary and Duane M. Jackson

Village Administrator Kevin Hay

Village Attorney Stephanie V. Porteus

Village Board Secretary Susan F. Matthews

ABSENT:

Trustee Theresa Knickerbocker (work related)

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

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

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

November 20, 2012 Workshop:

Amendments were made by Trustee Zachary on page 4, paragraph 5, lines 4 and 6, change "Comptroller" to "Control"; and by Trustee Funchion on page 9, paragraph 2, line 3, change "because" to "unless", and add "not" before "allowed". A MOTION to accept these minutes as amended was made by Trustee Jackson, seconded by Trustee Funchion with Trustee Knickerbocker absent.

3. COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR: (agenda items only)

None

4. NEW BUSINESS:

- a) 13-01 RESOLUTION STATING POLLING PLACES AND HOURS FOR THE NEXT VILLAGE ELECTION:

Mayor Murray read the Resolution (copy attached).

A MOTION to adopt this Resolution was made by Trustee Funchion, seconded by Trustee Zachary with all in favor and Trustee Knickerbocker absent.

5. INFORMATION FROM OFFICERS & DEPARTMENTS:

a) Justice Court Report – November 2012

Received – no comments or questions

b) Zoning Board Minutes – October 2012

Received – no comments or questions

c) Police Reports

Received – no comments or questions

d) Attorney's Report

Village Attorney Porteus reported that it has been quiet. There are just some Planning and Zoning issues. She advised that if anybody wants any updates to call or e-mail her. Village Attorney Porteus reported that we are in court again tomorrow night concerning WIC. We have an open violation and are moving forward with that. Other than that it is very quiet.

e) Trustee's Reports

Trustee Zachary apologized that he was not at the last Board meeting because of illness. In his report, he is also including items going back to December.

Trustee Zachary wanted to apologize to the Seniors. He heard their luncheon was very nice and apologized that he could not make it.

Trustee Zachary reported that on December 6, he went to Indian Point to see a security presentation. He was quite impressed. It was in the news and some people have concerns. After seeing the presentation, he does not have concerns. The NRC operates drills where they try to create as realistic scenarios as possible. They have a trained, specialized adversary team that they use in these drills. They travel to plants around the country to do these drills. They were here in mid to late November. They act as an adversary and plot raids on the plant without the plant security team knowing where it is coming from. It could be from the water or the woods. They were met very successfully and the plant got very high ratings from the NRC for these drills. It is a learning tool and they were able to counter these adversaries in a very effective fashion. Trustee Zachary commented that it was very pretty impressive. It made him feel very secure to know how well it is protected.

Trustee Zachary wanted the public to know that the budget review is a process that the Board will be discussing at the next Workshop. If anybody is interested, we are just starting the process, bringing up whatever anyone wants to bring up and discussing any potential issues.

Trustee Zachary feels there is one issue, not just in Buchanan but in municipalities around Westchester, Rockland and across the state, where everyone is saying the same thing. We are doing our best with the 2% tax cap but they do not reflect the fact that many of our costs are going up significantly more than that. As an example, he compared our budget from 2011 with our budget from 2012 for the money we paid in those years for pension and retirement costs. In 2011, our budget for that was \$850,000. In 2012, it was \$985,000 which is an increase of 16% in the pension and medical costs. He commented that while we have these costs going up at that rate in the State retirement system, they say you cannot raise your tax levy more than 2%, so every year it is going to get harder and harder. If it continues, at some point you get boxed into a hole. He compared it to running a household. You have a certain amount coming in and a certain amount of bills going out. When the amount going out is more, you have to eliminate something. The Board is going to continue to be as efficient as possible and make it all work. It will be getting harder and harder every year. Trustee Zachary commented that about 600 residents voted in the last couple of elections so he knows there are at least that many people who are somewhat aware of what is going on with the Village government. He would like to see some of those people who would like to share their ideas on budgetary things to start coming to the Workshop meetings which are on the third Tuesday of the month. That is where questions can be raised in a less formal setting.

He always tries to encourage people to participate and hopefully some people will come out.

Trustee Jackson wished everyone a Happy New Year and hopes they had a safe and sound one. He congratulated the Highway Department on the job they did in the last snow storm. They did a fine job keeping things rolling. Trustee Jackson reminded everyone to put out their Christmas trees.

Trustee Funchion reported that since the last Board meeting, we had the Village Christmas luncheon. He thanked Trustee Knickerbocker for all the work she did in putting it together and doing the cooking. It was nice to share a meal with all the Village workers. He thanked them for their work in the snow storm. They always do a fantastic job. He commented that they do such a good job that when you look out your window you do not know how all the other roads in Westchester County actually are.

Trustee Funchion reported that the Buchanan Day Committee sent out Seasons Greetings and thank yous were sent to all the participants in Buchanan Day. The committee appreciates all the cooperation they get from the community. They hope to make it bigger and better next year.

Trustee Funchion reminded everyone to remember the Saint Patrick's Day party on March 2 and the parade on March 10. Mayor Murray noted that March 2 is the fund raiser at the Buchanan Fire House for the Saint Patrick's Day parade.

Trustee Funchion wanted to know if anything has been done about the shipping container that is still on Steward Street. Village Administrator Hay advised that the law has been filed. He just

received the letter back from the State today so we can now start enforcing it. Mayor Murray advised that the procedure is that in order to be enforceable, they first have to be approved by the State. After we pass it, we have to send it to the State. They tell us if it is enforceable and then they send us notification and that is when we can start any actions. Trustee Funchion wanted the community to know that we are working on it. It will come to some resolution.

f) Mayor's Report

Mayor Murray reported that as residents may recall, last year around this time we experienced a lot of water main breaks. Since then we have repaired several of the valves that were creating the biggest issues. When we did maintenance, it was noticed that they were in terrible disrepair. At that time we worked with the Village Engineer and contracting firms to set up a maintenance schedule. We are in the process of working on another valve that we feel is an issue. Once we do that, we will be able to balance our load. We have been working on it over the last year. Last year, those water main breaks impacted us at a cost of \$80,000. It was an expenditure that we did not foresee and that is why we entered into some emergency repairs. It is still on-going. We hit the ones we feel had caused the problem. We have not experienced any water main breaks as of this season. There were a couple of issues where someone took out a fire hydrant and it cracked the main and we did not know about it. The Mayor feels that through our maintenance program, we will save a lot of money on it now.

Mayor Murray reported that we received a letter from the New York State Attorney General about price gouging. We did not receive a lot of damage from Super Storm Sandy. For anybody who did, some disreputable firms are doing some things that are illegal and fraudulent. If anybody experiences any problems with contractors where you feel they are not doing what they are supposed to, or are being fraudulent, or are asking for some things that are out of the ordinary, you should report it to the Police Department or the Village Hall. We can get in touch with the Attorney General and investigate it. It is to safeguard yourself. The Mayor commented that unfortunately in times of need some people do not always do the right thing.

During the last snow storm, the Mayor was asked by some Seniors if the Village had any type of process to helping Seniors remove snow from their driveways. The Mayor suggested possibly working with some volunteer organizations. He asked if any Board members know of any programs, possibly the Cub Scouts or Boy Scouts. He directed the Village Administrator to check with other municipalities to see if they had anything so we can put together a list of Seniors who need help during snow storms. It may be something that the Village could sponsor. The Mayor directed the Village Attorney to check on the legalities of that. He noted that some of the high schools have mandatory community service. The Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts have different programs for the community.

Mayor Murray commented that last year we had some residents ask about having the pavilion open. We stated that it would be open seven days a week from dawn to dusk. The Board passed

a Resolution. The Mayor reported that he received information from residents that it is not occurring. The other day, following another call about that, the Mayor went down and saw that it is still locked on the weekend. He directed the Village Administrator to reiterate to the Police and Highway Departments how we want to handle it. We wanted to have the Highway Foreman open it during the day and have the police close it at night; and on the weekend the on-shift officer will open and close it for the public. The Mayor commented that it is a public facility and we want it used as much as possible. The Mayor thought the guys may have thought we wanted it used just during the summer. We want it to be open 365 days a year.

6. COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR:

None

7. BOARD MEMBER REBUTTALS:

None

8. ADJOURNMENT:

At 7:50 PM a MOTION to adjourn this meeting was made by Trustee Funchion, seconded by Trustee Jackson with all in favor and Trustee Knickerbocker absent.