

**VILLAGE OF SOUTH BLOOMING
GROVE
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY
MAY 22, 2023
8:00PM**

➤ **Call to order**

Mayor Kalaj called to order the Village Board Meeting at 8:10pm on May 22, 2023, for the Village of South Blooming Grove located at 811 State Route 208, within the Village of South Blooming Grove, and having a mailing address of Monroe, New York.

➤ **Roll call**

The following persons were present:

- George Kalaj – Mayor
- Abraham Weiss – Deputy Mayor
- Yitzchok Feldman- Trustee
- Asher Guttman- Trustee
- Zalmon Rosner – Trustee
- Joel Stern – Confidential Assistant to the Mayor
- Isaac Ekstein – Legislative Aide to Mayor
- Scott Ugell Esq.- Village Attorney
- Al Fusco- Village Engineer
- Kerry Dougherty – Village Clerk

➤ **Correspondence**

- None

➤ **Mayor's Comments**

- The Mayor asked Aide Ekstein to brief the board on his meeting with the Fire Chief today. Mr. Ekstein stated that there were conversations with the village board in the past regarding fire response and fire prevention. He is happy to say they have a very good relationship with the Chief and we had a walk through with the school building and we are looking forward to a great relationship. There was a lot of talk about members of the community who would like to join the fire department in the past and were not successful for various reasons so in order to open up a pool of people to join a fire department in the local community we discussed in the past potentially forming a fire department. Again it is no discounting anything from the existing fire department, we are changing the district of the current fire department, the independent fire department is staying the same as it is now, we are just from a village perspective, opening it up to assist the fire department with more personnel, for first responders, for exterior fires, for traffic control if they need help from us. Again, this is for people to go to the proper training they would need. It is here to help the community, help the village prevent and be more proactive for all the live and work right here to be able to put out fires. **Chief Castellano** commented that they never received any applications from people wanting to join the department, everyone is entitled to join. **Mayor** is concerned about having two fire

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companies and he understands that in the past there was a gentleman in the fire department, **Mr. Ekstein** explained further that two of the members applied unfortunately as you said it wasn't even received. Right now we are discussing having people who live and work in the village to be part of the fire department.

➤ **Public Comment**

- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** – At the May 8th meeting there was a resolution that fortunately wasn't voted on to have AISN Marketing to provide PR marketing for the village. I cannot find any evidence of that company anywhere. I looked all over the internet and I can't find this company. So thank goodness you didn't vote on it because it concerns me. Mr. Ugell was supposed to look over the contract. You guys didn't vote on it. If you did then we have bigger problem because there's no company. Are there any updates on that. The website is already there and people can log into it. But we have a vast population that doesn't have access to the internet. That goes to another point I have when I was a Trustee I went for NYCOM training. I didn't know how to be a Trustee and I'm sure you guys didn't know how to be a trustee either and one of the things I was told was take people's comments, say thank you very much and I will get back to you. There is not supposed to be this give and take. So when I ask questions here I expect that you guys are going to do your research and you are going to come back with an answer. Either give me a phone call, send me an email or bring it back to the next meeting. Joel read a letter in December of 2022 about the Mangin Road extension. I foiled it and haven't received. Joel said he submitted it to the county. The county has no record of that letter. I'm just reminding you about this that's something that we need to visit because that road is already in place. At the May 18th Planning Board Meeting Village Planner Shepstone spoke about a very active recreation department. I know nothing about it. There's nothing on the website so there could be updates posted about that. 1
- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** – 159 Prospect – I'm going to keep bringing it up it was there cut on March 17 and the brush remains 2 months afterwards and it's posing a fire risk for those of us that live over there. Any updates on that garbage contract? Because I haven't received any bills or any kind of notification on it and to comment on the resolutions 2 fire departments in a village. I agree with you Mr. Mayor. It's not a good idea.
- **Bonnie Rum** – I do agree with you we can't have 2 fire departments. I assumed that Simon Schwartz received training for the Planning Board. If he didn't get official training, he cannot be reappointed. The other boards are required to get training and if they don't do it within the first year they cannot be reappointed until certainly they get training. So I'm guessing that you have that.
- **Bonnie Rum** - My question about fair housing resolution what is that and what is the definition of the fair housing. **Al Fusco** – the concept of community development. It's the requirement that the board acknowledges that this is the community that has equal opportunity employment and fair housing. One of the things that they made us do is both Kerry, Karen and myself sat in for a 2 ½ hour presentation by a Community Development Department in relationship to watching for unfair housing standards in the community and for us to enforce that. It's to instruct the Board and the participants and consultants as to what their commitments are and there will be a resolution of the Board supporting their house and their opportunities. Things of that nature. In order to participate

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you need a federal grant. **Bonnie Rum** – So that’s something you vote on but how do you implement it. **Al Fusco** – I think we already do it on a regular basis

- **Scott Morrice** – asked an audience member who said he tried to join the fire department how did you do it? He was asking who he gave it to and when. Audience member replied William or Bill in 2017. He said he will look into it because he never stopped anyone from coming down. **Isaac Ekstein** – In November 2020 we went to the meeting in the fire district and pointed out at that time, that people were submitting applications and were not receiving a response. He advised that Scott should remember the response they received. **Scott Morrice** – I’ve been there for 28 years and I’m pretty sure either they came down with the application with the check and then they have to go and get their medical they are allowed to join. There’s no stopping them. There’s plenty of things to do and you have 2 years to become an internal firefighter and after that no longer.
- **Uri Deutch** – On December 6, 2017, I hand delivered a fully filled out application to join the fire department. I am actually a NYS certified EMT. I had my training from the O.C.E.M.S. I served as an EMT in the Monroe Ambulance for a few years. As I moved here, I was ready to serve the community. I’ve risked my life to pull people out of burning cars. I have not been afforded the denial letter or a rejection letter. I’ve just reviewed the application online for the South Blooming Grove Fire Department both the actual application and the application instruction. There is no mention of any need for a check and if I’m mistaken, I would be glad if anyone can show me where it is. The fire department here has been telling that to the County and even if we can become a county firefighters, they should be realistic and see there is a large community here that needs to be.... I don’t know if you guys know but the South Blooming Grove Fire Department and Department of Health met with first response agency. The nearest ambulance agency is fifteen minutes away. If someone is in cardiac arrest, they need to respond, if they don’t have enough members, they cannot be picky and say oh we cannot take you because you have a beard, you don’t qualify for everything, they need to be realistic and they have a community to protect, and they have to look at that without any prejudice and if that’s not the case then I don’t think two fire departments is a good idea either. But either they shape up or I don’t know, you tell me.
- **Shia Liberman** – I have been a member of the KJ EMS for over 10 years, I have worked hand in hand with the Blooming Grove Fire Department. I have only good things to say. When I first started he had similar issues such as don’t come into my district, etc. He feels at this point a majority of us are grateful to have extra and full coverage. I applied as well, he doesn’t resent but feels we are going backwards. If we could work something out it would be helpful. We are people that help others and should work together.

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➤ **Business**

- **Resolution No. (34)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Authorizing the Mayor to form a village fire department. Motion to accept by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Deputy Mayor Weiss. *5Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Guttman..*
- **Resolution No. (35)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Authorizing emergency redesign and replacement of sewer line in the vicinity of Mangin Road and Pennsylvania Avenue. Motion to accept by Trustee Feldman, seconded by Asher Guttman. *5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, and Trustee Feldman, and Trustee Guttman.*
- **Resolution No. (36)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Declaring certain property (Sweeper and Jet Truck) to be surplus and authorizing the sale, donation or disposal of the property. Motion to accept by Trustee Guttman, seconded by Trustee Rosner. *5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman.*
- **Resolution No. (37)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Designating mileage allowance of \$.65.5 cents per mile. *Motion to accept by Trustee Guttman, seconded by Trustee Rosner. 5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman*
- **Resolution No. (38)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Appointing Simon Schwartz as a member of the Village of South Blooming Grove Planning Board. *Motion to accept by Trustee Guttman, seconded by Trustee Rosner. 5 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman*
- **Resolution (38A)** Resolution of the Mayor of the Village of South Blooming Grove Appointing Eli Hiller as an Alternate Member of the Village Zoning Board of Appeals.
- **Resolution No. (39)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Fair Housing Resolution. *Motion to accept by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Deputy Mayor Weiss, 5 Ayes Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman.*
- **Resolution No. (40)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Authorizing the Mayor and Engineer Al Fusco to Prepare Plans to Repair Village Culvert at 31 and 33 Virginia Avenue. *Motion to accept by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Trustee Guttman, 5 Ayes Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman.*

➤ **Discussion**

Trustee Feldman asked the status of the street lights. **Al Fusco** advised this is a slow process with DASNY, it usually takes 2 or 3 years to get.

Status of retention pond, the clerk advised she just received a response yesterday.

Trustee Guttman thanked the village engineer for addressing the sewer issues on Merriewold Lane South. Al Fusco advised that they have been working and getting all the information and plans together.

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Mr. Ekstein advised that he met with the Police Chief a few weeks ago. There is the school up on Fort Worth we increased the police presence like when the buses are coming and going to make sure they are obeying all the traffic and stop signs. I think it's a big success so far.

Mayor asked again that residents only flush toilet paper to help alleviate sewer back ups. Safety vests are very helpful at night.

Chief Castellano wanted all to be aware of lithium ion batteries. They are very dangerous if they are not charged properly or damaged. So I know all the kids have the scooters and hover boards and e-bikes. I just want the adults to know that you should use the proper charger. If they are damaged or anything do not charge them because they are very dangerous.

Mayor Kalaj – I don't think it's wise to have two fire departments in the village.

➤ **Abstract**

Motion to accept the Abstract by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Rosner, *5 Ayes Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Feldman and Trustee Guttman.*

➤ **Adjournment**

- Motion to close the meeting at 8:47pm. by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Rosner. *5 Ayes, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Rosner, Trustee Feldman, and Trustee Guttman, Mayor Kalaj.*

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Kerry Dougherty, Village Clerk