

**VILLAGE OF SOUTH BLOOMING
GROVE
REGULAR MEETING**

**Monday
July 12, 2021
7:00 P.M.**

➤ **Call to order**

- Mayor Kalaj called to order the Village Board Meeting at 7:04 p.m. on June 14, 2021 at the South Blooming Grove Village Hall 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
- Asher Guttman – Trustee
- Yitzchok Feldman – Trustee
- Zalmon Rosner – Trustee
- Scott B. Ugell, Esq. – Village Attorney
- Kerry Dougherty – Village Clerk

Absent

- Abraham Weiss – Deputy Mayor

➤ **Mayor's Comments:**

- The Mayor received a call from the Police Chief this morning notifying him that there was a fire at 51 Merriewold Lane North. It is unfortunate that we lost a person in there and the family is homeless. It is a sad story. This is the second time in less than five months that we have this in our village. This is unacceptable and we need to do better. He is going to look into how to do it. The Mayor thanked all the surrounding fire departments and EMS.
- We are working on lights on Route 208.
- We are trying to flush our water system.
- We are obtaining quotes on Merriewold and Pine Hill to repave the roads.
- There is a new bus shuttle.
- We are obtaining quotes on a new well on O & R property. He would like to have an additional well to help-out with water flow.
- The Mayor spoke with the owner of Palamar Well. We had agreed to \$2,000.00 per month for use of the well and that now he wants \$3,000.00 a month.
- We do not need to have answers to your comments, but we do it as a courtesy, the village attorney can answer if this is correct.

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➤ **Correspondence:**

- June 17, 2021, Planning Board Notice of Intent to be lead agency regarding Shannon Subdivision.

➤ **Public Comments**

- **Joseph Rosenfeld** inquired if we are still under water restriction, the Mayor advised yes. Mr. Rosenfeld advised that he has seen residents power washing their car. Mayor will have building inspector investigate.
- **Joseph Ganz** thanked the Mayor and advised if he keeps it up, we will support you.
- **Jimmy LoFranco** thanked the great fire department for the job that they do day in and day out. It is a travesty what happened this morning, but nobody brings up what they did last Saturday when there was a fire at the strip mall where all our stores that all the community rely on. The fire department did a great job on saving that place from burning to the ground. He advised the board that they need to do better on the Pledge of Allegiance, we live in America and everybody is all over the place, we need to be in unison. Everybody should know the Pledge of Allegiance and we should do it in unison. Trustee Feldman stated two meetings ago that the prior administration never answered questions; that is false. Mr. LoFranco advised that Trustee Feldman was at a handful of meetings and Mr. LoFranco implemented going row by row and everybody in this room who attended the meeting could say that the prior Mayor went back and forth with a dialogue. The only time he didn't was in a public hearing towards a project. Those comments are for professionals. Mayor Kalaj advised that he does appreciate what the Fire Department has done.
- **Scott Morrice** asked the Mayor if he was at the fire when it started this morning, he pulled up and there was no water and they had to get water on the fire and there was one person inside and the fire department had to go into a burning building to get him out. His two kids were in there today, getting him out; so don't ever say we are not doing our job. Additionally, he said that when he attempted to get in touch with the Mayor, when there was a problem last week, nobody answered his calls. A baseball field is being built off of Route 208 and he feels there is dirt just being dumped there, somebody should investigate this. Do they have a permit to chop rocks at 40 Fort Worth Place on a Sunday, all day long.
- **Patty Morrice** she asked about dump trucks going up and down 1231 Route 208 and she was told that they were building a baseball field. Nobody knows anything about this. She didn't appreciate the negative remark about the fire department, this is her husband and her son were in that burning building risking their lives to help everybody else and she doesn't see where they can do better.
- **Donna Douglas** the new house of worship amendment she is concerned if they are coming off the tax role. Trustee Feldman advised that there is a public hearing coming up on July 29, 2021 and will address everything. There are "For Sale" signs still up all over the Village and the home is no longer for sale. The Mayor advised that he has been in touch with Code Enforcement and they are working on it.
- **Bonnie Rum** asked Attorney Ugell why would a municipality choose a lawyer and a judge whose background is not in municipal law but is in bankruptcy. The only ones who benefit from a bankruptcy are developers such as Clovewood so they could benefit but it doesn't benefit anybody else including the municipality. There is wrong advise being given about in person meetings, work sessions that are not public and that is illegal. Any time you have a quorum it has to be published. Local Law is not in effect until the County has its say, then the state. It questions a conflict of interest as he is getting a salary for advising municipalities he doesn't have the background for. She

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wonders what the NYS Commission on Judicial Conduct would think about this because they are going to hear about it.

- **Sue Ann Vogelsberg** the public hearing on Clovewood was closed 7 months ago are there any updates? If we could hold a second hearing for the upcoming local law regarding houses of worship perhaps, we could hold a second one for Clovewood. The Village has an inadequate emergency response in place, logically the Deputy Mayor covers the Mayor's absence the latest water main break occurred on a Saturday, infrastructure is non-denominational; what is the Mayor and the Village Board's plan for coverage moving forward? 187 Prospect Road is beginning its second week of 5 large black plastic garbage bags curb side. I submitted an incident report this afternoon. I submitted a FOIL request for supporting documentation on the posted MS4 Report. My questions that were asked that I submitted by email remain unanswered. I also submitted the same to the DEC. 185 Prospect continues to operate as an Airbnb in violation of village code, incident reports will continue to be submitted to both the Mayor and the building inspector in addition to notifying corporate Airbnb. I am not sure why this village code is not being enforced. I submitted a FOIL for Village Engineer Fusco's statement at the public hearing on Stonegate Drive LLC use of the Army Corp of Engineers on this project and the DEC. I am awaiting a response back from them. Update on the village vehicle purchase. I haven't seen the old vehicle out for auction in the legal notices. I wonder why volunteer Ekstein was listed on the dealer paperwork. Again the New York Attorney General and Comptroller and the County Human Resources Commissioner were notified of a volunteer continuing to conduct business on behalf of the village. There is another large bus in addition to the two shuttle buses operating in the village. These buses are sponsored by the United Jewish Community of Blooming Grove which Deputy Mayor Weiss is on their Board and he did not recuse himself when the vote to approve that took place. Village roads have a weight limit, Peddler Hill Road has a 4 Ton weight limit as per the sign that is posted. That type of bus has a gross vehicle weight of nearly 40,000 pounds, that particular bus holds 39 passengers plus the driver with 34 standees with an average passenger weight of 150 pounds x 73 passengers you have a weight of nearly 11,000 pounds, this is a 50,000 pounds which equals 25 tons which is way more than the weight limit. Our roads weren't constructed to handle that weight and are these heavy loads further stressing and damaging our already weakened infrastructure, something to consider and correct. Trustee Feldman advised that Delfino and JCO are always available for the water on Saturday and all week. Attorney Ugell advised that another violation was issued to 185 Prospect Road, it was sent and they have a certain amount of days to respond and then we will put the case back on the calendar, not just to prosecute for the current violation but a violation of the conditional discharge as well.
- **Sonia Ayala** was checking the status of the 911 Memorial. Trustee Feldman advised that new lights have been ordered and will be installed when they are received. The water issue on July 2, 2021 Merriewold Lane South residents had no water at all, what occurred, Trustee Feldman advised that there was a power outage and will investigate why the generator did not correct. Ms. Ayala asked if they would put out a call to notify the public.
- **Gloria Gelletich** wanted to address the bus traffic on Peddler Hill and Prospect Road. Many buses are using Peddler Hill Road and Prospect Road as a short cut, there is nobody on the bus and she sees as many as 4-5 buses 4 to 5 times a day. It appears that the culver on Peddler Hill Road is dipping/bowing. She is concerned about the weight and the roads.
- **Joseph Wagschall** the fire department is all volunteers, but there is room for improvement. It is not the actual work in his opinion, but when it comes to social media, there is all these kinds of hate,

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Facebook pages and he has seen numerous volunteers from this village fire department, police officers commenting so much hate against “they” which we all know who they is, me, Jewish People, Hasidic Jews. Maybe the Mayor is also Jewish, we don’t know that. You are doing a superb job, but there has to be some kind of oversight if somebody posts a hate message on Facebook against Jewish People, Hasidic Jewish People, they should be disqualified from being a fire volunteer. I wouldn’t want them in my house, I don’t trust them, he hates me. I had a fire (carbon dioxide alarm) in my house about a year ago and I looked at everybody like maybe he is the guy who is posting against me, why would I want him in my house. He knows that to say foul language in a public place is not cool and we can all bring out our points without using foul language.

- **Johnny Belfort** The past administration had two types of meetings – hearings and regular board meetings. In the hearings we listen to the concerns of the village; we didn’t answer questions because they were hearings. When we had board meetings two times a month on a Monday at 7pm, not on a Friday at 11:00 am when most people are either working, at school or doing something that is more important. At those meetings the prior administration answered questions. There are times that we did not have an answer but will find an answer. Meetings are for interacting with the community. Additionally, he lives on Briar Way and people have been taking short cuts near his property. He has noticed that on that short cut path, people are dropping tissues, napkins and just leaving trash all over the place. That area is designated for wildlife but unfortunately people are now throwing trash onto this property which is owned by the village. A section that was once beautiful, now has trash, a path, the deer are avoiding this area. He feels the fire department is doing a phenomenal job and they put their lives on the line all the time as they did early this morning and for anybody to second guess them. If you have never done it don’t say anything.
- **John Salka** asked if anybody had proof of allegations against the fire department regarding negative or hate messages. If you have seen that done or heard it done, the fire department address is public, write to the Fire Chief at the fire department address, advise of the post, who made the post and the content of the post, and we will handle that. He agrees that it is unacceptable behavior by anybody, we would not condone it, would not allow and he will handle it in his agency.
- **Donna Douglas** the retention pond needs to be cleaned it is fully overgrown.
- **David Horowitz** he saw the Mayor and Building Inspector Jeanne at 4am at the fire. They were there from beginning to the end. Making sure everything was under control and the Mayor said with one wish he hopes this never happens again and work to keep everybody safe.

➤ **Business**

- **Resolution No. (065)** - Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove setting a time and place for a public hearing (August 9, 2021) to determine violations of the Village Code’s Property Maintenance Provisions. Motion to accept by Trustee Feldman, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. 4 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Guttman, and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Deputy Mayor Weiss.
- **Resolution No. (066)** - Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove setting a time and place for a public hearing (July 29, 2021) on a proposed local law amending Chapter 235 of the Village code establishing house of worship special permit. Motion to accept by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Rosner. 4 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Guttman, and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Deputy Mayor Weiss.

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- **Resolution No. (067)** - Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove to submit a Grant for wastewater treatment system improvements. Motion to accept by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Guttman. *4 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Guttman, and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Deputy Mayor Weiss.*
- **Resolution No. (068)** - Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove setting Community Day for Sunday, September 26, 2021. Motion to accept by Trustee Feldman, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *4 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Guttman, and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Deputy Mayor Weiss.*
- **Resolution No. (069)** - Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove setting the schedule for future Village Board Meetings for 2021. Motion to accept Trustee Feldman, seconded by Trustee Guttman. *4 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Guttman, and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Deputy Mayor Weiss.*
- **Resolution No. (070)** - Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove authorizing Belleville Landscaping to perform property maintenance to abate violations of the Village Code's Property Maintenance Provisions for the Property Located at 10 San Marcos Place. Motion to accept Trustee Rosner, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *4 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Guttman, and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Deputy Mayor Weiss.*

➤ **Abstract**

- Motion to adopt the Abstract by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Rosner. *4 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Guttman, and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Deputy Mayor Weiss.*

➤ **Trustee Comments**

- Trustee Guttman expressed that he believes the Mayor was misunderstood with regard to the Fire Department. He said that we need to look at why this happened and what safety measure we can take to prevent this from happening again.

➤ **Adjournment**

- Motion to close the meeting at 7:53 p.m. by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *4 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Guttman, and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Deputy Mayor Weiss.*

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Kerry Dougherty, Village Clerk