

**VILLAGE OF SOUTH BLOOMING
GROVE
REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY
SEPTEMBER 23, 2024
8:00PM**

➤ **Call to order**

Mayor Kalaj called to order the Village Board Meeting at 8:03pm on September 23, 2024, 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
- Zalmon Rosner – Trustee
- Asher Guttman – Trustee*
- Scott Ugell Esq. – Village Attorney
- Al Fusco – Village Engineer
- Kerry Dougherty – Village Clerk
- Isaac Ekstein – Legislative Aide to Mayor
- Joel Stern – Confidential Assistant to the Mayor*
- **Absent** – Yitzchok Feldman- Trustee

➤ **Correspondence**

- None

➤ **Public Comment**

- **Bonnie Rum** – My comment is to make an apology to the Planning Board Members because there were an awful a lot of plans that came in with multiple houses not one was a single house and all wanting municipal water/sewer. She accused them of saying that maybe they were working with the developers because obviously everyone has a water restriction here, that’s what you talk about every time you have a meeting, so obviously it’s not in the best interest of the people who live here to continue to expand with more people wanting municipal water and sewer. After the meeting, I spoke to some Board members, and they said it’s really not in their power to have a moratorium that it’s the board that creates a moratorium in times of need for that and that it’s not in their power to create a comprehensive plan again it’s the board. So board members, it’s up to you. You have not done a moratorium when you have water restrictions for as long as you had them, and you have not created a comprehensive plan so that the developers can rely on that plan to create their plans for development. Are you going to do any of that? Most municipalities have a comprehensive plan and this one does not. What are you doing to help the board members when their hands are tied and that was coming from them. If you have a real concern for your constituency, you can’t continue to have people build and expect people to have water that is potable and in the quantity that they need when you don’t have it now. Joel Stern said we were supposed to get

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water from Clovewood which apparently heard you cannot have now. Bottom line is it is all speculation and that does not help a developer have water for the buildings they build now.

- **Jodi** – Regarding Local Law amending Chapter 235 which was introduced to the planning board on May 16th and passed as a resolution here in the Village June 24th and this was amending a lot of things including new definitions, establishing new districts, removal of all overlay zones and replacement of bulk requirements. She read out loud what the comments were and advised this is her prior to being introduced to the village. You all passed the resolution allowing this which was already denied by Orange County Planning.
- **Refused to provide name** - You're not gonna take away my rights, are you going to prohibit my speech? You can't regulate my speech. He had a comment concerning the garbage. Where does the power come from for you to tax the residents?
- **Barbara Hanley** – She wanted to clarify about the garbage that in the past there were two pick-ups, one for the garbage, one for the recyclables and the receptacles were much smaller. She is please that we have monies for the water, what do you project when will it be completed, what is the expectation, no more trucking in will the rust be removed and would water restrictions be lifted. She doesn't understand why we have not fixed the sewer stench from Monroe, we need to move forward with that. Who is the point person for sidewalks in the village?
- **Samantha O'Hanlon** – Where is everyone, she called the health department, the water department states they are testing they are not testing for a lot of things.
- **Marilyn Sosa** – the water is black it is insane the amount of water she has to buy at Walmart is insane. When she brushes her teeth, when she showers, when she cooks. It's a shame, for so many years to live with water like this. Something needs to be done. 4-6 buses a day in her cul-de-sac, her children walk to a bus stop there is no need for them to come in cul-de-sac.
- **Bill Hewlitt** – Opposes the new tax that is coming in. He has never encountered a more unresponsive board. Kids are standing on school buses.
- **Simon** (lives in Monroe) – Why does the town of south blooming grove refuse to give the town any permits, he works there (Blooming Grove). In the past he got all permits and even plans. Why is that?

➤ **Business**

- **Resolution No. (56)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove adopting Local Law amending Chapter 150. Motion to accept by Trustee Guttman, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *4 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Guttman and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Trustee Feldman.*
- **Resolution No. (57)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove authorizing the clerk to submit a list of all delinquent village water and sewer charges, rents, fees, assessments and the like to the County of Orange for relevying on the next fiscal year's Real Property Tax Bill. Motion to accept by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Trustee Guttman. *4 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Guttman and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Trustee Feldman.*

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- **Resolution No. (58)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove authorizing the County of Orange to collect delinquent village taxes. Motion to accept by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *4 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Guttman and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Trustee Feldman.*
- **Resolution No. (59)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove setting the 2025 Budget Workshop for October 28, 2024 at 8:00 pm. Motion to accept by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Rosner. *4 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Guttman and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Trustee Feldman.*
- **Resolution No. (60)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove setting the public hearing for the proposed 2025 Budget on November 4, 2024 at 8:05 pm. Motion to accept by Trustee Rosner, seconded by Deputy Mayor Weiss. *4 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Guttman and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Trustee Feldman.*
- **Resolution No. (61)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove authorizing Mayor to accept donation and enter into agreement with donor. Motion to accept by Trustee Guttman, seconded by Trustee Rosner. *4 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Guttman and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Trustee Feldman.*

➤ **Joel Stern** asked the board if they would allow him to answer some public comment as follows: We got 4.7M in grants and up to 10M in loans he will leave that for Mr. Fusco to explain, as he has prepared extensive intended use reports for the State in order to be able to receive that grant, we again thank you for your work. The sidewalk grant is for next year's budget, it was just appropriated and allocated to be in next year's budget. Mr. Fusco will work on this and any studies and engineering that may be required. The concern of water at 5 Lone Oak, we will send out the water department to look at the situation and come up with a solution. Buses are allowed and permitted to drive in a cul-de-sac. The Merriewold Dam concern will be addressed by Mr. Fusco, the Dam required enhancements under the DEC direction and supervision. The village has received help in the past from the County. Concerns about bus safety and the kids, the police department enforces traffic and road safety in the village and do an incredible job and if you see something, say something. You can contact the police department. Additionally, you can contact the school administration and/or bus company. Again, there were extensive speed tests performed by the police department and they are available. There was someone asking about permits not being submitted properly to the Town Mr. Stern was not sure if this person was talking in his personal capacity or in his official capacity but Mr. Stern thinks that we can all admit that there has been a snag with communications especially official communication with the Town since there was an incident in 2021 wherein documents with illicit intent snuck into IMAs only to find out about same a couple of months later, we now have to double check everything. He understands the frustration on their end but the village has to be extra vigilant and these things take time. The vehicles for public safety were asked about and again we are very thankful to Mr. Halpert there is an initiative down the road, there is no time frame for it, to form a public safety department which will work in conjunction, hand-in-hand with the Town of Blooming Grove Police Department, Mr. Chief Wakeham is fully aware of it, he is aware of this donation as well, we made him aware of it today. The communication with the Police Department is on a very good level. When we reach that point, we will have more information on that.

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- **Al Fusco** - Two years ago we applied for the water grant when we obviously identified the need for water. It has taken 2 years but on October 4, 2024 the village will be having a closing for a 10 Million Dollar project. 4.7M is a grant from the State of New York and the balance of the 10M will be included as 1.7M at 0% interest loans and the balance at market rate loans. It is very affordable for the village. The village will start off working on tying in some wells, put in a new water tank that will be over 400,000 gallons, improvements to the water plants and the pumping systems. We also successfully submitted to the State for future work on the water which will improve water meters and the pipes, that is not yet a grant but we are on a list for that grant and that will be pursued as well. Regarding Merriewold, we had a hurricane some time back and we were unable to lower the water. There is a valve at the bottom of the lake and it was frozen closed. There was flooding on Lake Shore Drive and other areas around Merriewold. We applied to FEMA and did get some relief but not sufficient, we also had it inspected by the DEC recently and the dam needed some repairs and we need to replace that valve. In order to replace the valve we have to lower the water level in order to get to the valve and replace it. We had a big storm months ago and during that time, the water levels were rising and we couldn't use the valve to lower the level. The County assisted the Village and provided a pump to lower the water level. Resident asked what is the plan for drinking water. Mr. Fusco advised that the village wants to increase the supply of water, more water into the system and the new tank will be high, provide better pressure especially for fire fighting. Second phase is to replace all the pipes which would be a big benefit, it takes time but we are working on it. 1st phase will take about 2 years, restrictions on grant monies and going out to bid.

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

- **Adjournment**
 - Motion to close the meeting at 8:55 pm by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Rosner. *4 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Guttman and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Trustee Feldman.*

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Kerry Dougherty, Village Clerk