

**VILLAGE OF SOUTH BLOOMING
GROVE
REORGANIZATIONAL MEETING
Wednesday
September 30, 2020
7:00 P.M.**

➤ **Call to order**

- Mayor Kalaj called to order the Village Board Meeting at 7:00 p.m. on September 30, 2020, 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
- Abraham Weiss – Deputy Mayor
- Yitzchok Feldman– Trustee
- Johnny Belfort – Trustee
- Scott B. Ugell, Esq. – Village Attorney

Absent

- John L. Ross - Trustee

➤ **Correspondence**

- *None*

➤ **Mayor's Comments**

- Dear Friends and constituents the residents of our Great Village of South Blooming Grove, On Tuesday September 15, 2020 the people spoke, and your voice was heard loud and clear! The people of this great village chose to elect the new Village Board on the promise and belief of Clean Water, an Upgraded Sewer system, upgraded Roads, Public infrastructure, Lower taxes, and for a Business friendly, financially and fiscally stable, healthy village and local economy.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

We can hear you loud and clear! And rest assured that as long as I am the Mayor of this great village we will work as hard as possible and give your promise everything we got to ensure that we deliver together on those promises.

We will do everything and anything, whatever it takes, and we will go over, under and through to deliver to YOU the People of this great village!

We will work TOGETHER with ALL residents to unite this village for the good and for the better, We will have an Inclusive village where everyone has an equal voice, We will listen to YOU THE PEOPLE and take YOUR ideas into consideration. Division and Discrimination will have NO PLACE in my administration, and there will be Zero Tolerance for that.

We will make sure that the decisions made by our village board are based on the best interests of the Village Residents and that they are NOT based on some Facebook warriors that do NOT reside in our Village boundaries.

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To ensure that we can hear your voice and execute fair and balanced judgement and decisions that work to everyone's favor and satisfaction, the Village Boards will be diversified and with the participation of every Race, Color and Religion, and we will always implement steps to ensure that the minority has a voice at the decision making table.

We are blessed to be surrounded with a great team of legal counsel and municipal and community advisers, and we are working together to ensure your best interest.

We also look forward to work with both the elected and administrative staff from the previous administration, as well as with the Town of Blooming Grove and Orange County.

This village board will have an open-door policy for every resident of this Village and you are always welcome to stop by and voice your comments, complaints and -of course- compliments, We are looking forward to working With and For you.

On Tuesday evening September 15, I stood in line for close to 2 hours to cast my ballot, the passion was in the air, One could almost feel and touch the Passion, Excitement and Positive Spirit, and I would like say Thank You to each and every one of you who endured the long wait time to come out and vote for myself and for a better future for all of us.

We Thank You from the bottom of our hearts and we greatly appreciate it! and we will never forget you, Ever!

Rest assured that we will do our best and That we will not disappoint you!

Now let's get down to Business Shall We?

➤ **Business**

- **Resolution No. (32)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove adopting the procurement policy of the Village of South Blooming Grove. Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.*
- **Resolution No. (33)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove approving the form of undertaking to be executed by certain village officers. Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.*
- **Resolution No. (34)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove designating Christine Bodeker as Records Access Officer and Kerry Dougherty as the Records Access Appeals Officer. Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.*
- **Resolution No. (35)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove reinstating Bus Permit No. 01-2019. Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.*
- **Resolution No. (36)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove retaining Fusco Engineering & Land Surveying, P.C. as Village Engineers/ Planning Board Engineers/ZBA Engineers. Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj.

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Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.

- **Resolution No. (37)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove designating The Reis Group as the official insurance broker/advisor for the Village. Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.*
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- **Resolution No. (38)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove designating Munistat Services, Inc. as the official financial advisor for the Village. Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.*
- **Resolution No. (39)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove Designating Sterling National Bank as the official depository for the Village Funds. Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.*
- **Resolution No. (40)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove designating mileage allowance of \$.57.5 cents per mile. Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.*
- **Resolution No. (41)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove designating The Times Herald-Record and the Orange County Post as the official newspapers for the Village. Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.*
- **Resolution No. (42)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove retaining Ugell Law Firm, P.C., Scott B. Ugell, Esq. as the attorney for the Village. . Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.*
- **Resolution No. (43)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove retaining Dennis E. A. Lynch of Blanchard & Wilson, LLP, as Special Counsel to the Village. Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.*
- **Resolution No. (44)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove retaining Daniel Kraushaar, Esq. and Bleakley Platt & Schmidt, LLP, as Counsel to the Village Planning Board and Village Zoning Board of Appeals. Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.*

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- **Resolution No. (45)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove retaining the Law Firm of Hawkins, Delafield & Wood, LLP as Special Bond Counsel for the Village. Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.*
- **Resolution No. (46)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove retaining Fusco Engineering & Land Surveying, P.C., as Planners for the Village Board and the Planning Board. Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.*
- **Resolution No. (47)** – Mayoral Appointment of Abraham M. Weiss as Deputy Mayor.
- **Resolution No. (48)** – Mayoral Appointment of Isaac Ekstein as Legislative Aide for a term to expire at noon on the first Monday in April 2022.
- **Resolution No. (49)** – Mayoral Appointment of Joel Stern as Confidential Assistant to the Mayor for a term to expire at noon on the first Monday in April 2022.
- **Resolution No. (50)** – Mayoral Appointment of Kerry Dougherty as Village Clerk, for a term to expire the first Monday of April 2022.
- **Resolution No. (51)** – Mayoral Appointment of Kerry Dougherty as Village Registrar, for a term to expire the first Monday of April 2022.
- **Resolution No. (52)** – Mayoral Appointment of Kerry Dougherty as Records Management Officer and Records Access Officer, for a term to expire the first Monday of April 2022.
- **Resolution No. (53)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove appointing Village Clerk Kerry Dougherty to collect all taxes and assessments with such interest and penalties as may be due thereon, for the Village of South Blooming Grove. Motion to accept by Trustee Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *Resolution passed. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.*
- **Resolution No. (54)** – Mayoral Appointment of Holly Brown as Village Treasurer, for a term to expire the first Monday of April 2022.
- **Resolution No. (55)** – Mayoral Appointment of Christine Bodeker as Village Deputy Clerk for a term to expire the first Monday of April 2022.
- **Resolution No. (56)** – Mayoral Appointment of Christine Bodeker as Clerk to Boards for a term to expire the first Monday of April 2022.
- **Resolution No. (57)** – Mayoral Appointment of Joel Stern, Isaac Ekstein and Johnny Belfort as Village Emergency Management Officers. For a term to expire the first Monday of April 2022.

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- **Resolution No. (58)** – Mayoral Appointment of Johnny Belfort as Village Historian for a term to expire at noon on the first Monday in April 2022.
- **Resolution No. (59)** – Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove appointing Board Members as Liaison to Various Committees (see below):

Orange County E-911 Liaison / County Sheriff	Joel Stern & Isaac Ekstein
Census 2020 Coordinator	Trustee Yitzchok Feldman
NIMS Officer	Joel Stern & Isaac Ekstein
Liaison to the Moodna Creek Watershed Intermunicipal Council	Trustee Johnny Belfort
Orange County Office of Emergency Management	Joel Stern & Isaac Ekstein
Liaison to the Planning Board & ZBA	Trustee Yitzchok Feldman
Liaison to the Washingtonville School District	Joel Stern & Isaac Ekstein
Liaison to the Highway Department	Trustee Johnny Belfort, Joel Stern & Isaac Ekstein
Liaison to the Blooming Grove Police Department	Trustee Johnny Belfort, Joel Stern & Isaac Ekstein
Liaison to the Water & Sewer District Operators	Trustee Johnny Belfort, Joel Stern & Isaac Ekstein
Liaison to the South Blooming Grove Fire Dept.	Trustee Johnny Belfort, Joel Stern & Isaac Ekstein
Liaison to the Senior Citizen of the Village	Trustee Johnny Belfort
Liaison for Village Parks	Trustee John L. Ross, Johnny Belfort & Abraham Weiss
Liaison to Orange & Rockland	Trustee Johnny Belfort, Joel Stern & Isaac Ekstein
Liaison for Blooming Grove Ambulance Corp	Trustee John L. Ross & Isaac Ekstein
Liaison for the Town of Blooming Grove	Mayor George Kalaj, Joel Stern & Isaac Ekstein

➤ **Abstract**

- Motion to adopt the Abstract by Deputy Mayor Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman and Trustee Belfort; 1 Absent - Trustee Ross.*

➤ **STATUS UPDATES**

Status Reports— By Mayor Kalaj

Water Situation Status Update

As you are all aware the Village is under a water restriction for a couple of years now, which is greatly affecting the quality of life for each and every resident and household in the village.

As soon as I took office the water issue has been front and foremost, I have spent countless hours over the last two weeks with Engineers, and Advisers to draft a plan and strategy how we are going to address this issue in a proactive approach with at least a 10 year forecast.

We will have a 2-phased strategy with short- and long-term goals.

Our short-term goal is to work towards lifting the water restrictions As Soon As Possible.

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We are now pumping water from a number of wells, some of them are problematic and clogged and therefore, do not reach their full capacity and potential, and some of them are contaminated and/or have a high volume of Magnesium and Iron which do not work with chlorine cleaning filtration processes, and the water gets discolored upon coming in contact with Chlorine, due to the chemical reaction, which is in part one of the reasons of residents having brown and discolored water coming from their faucets.

We are currently pumping ONLY 147 Gallons per minute from all of our wells combined!

In order for the water restrictions to be raised we will have to be pumping at least 225 Gallons per minute!

The good news is, that we are -as of today- in discussions with a couple of parties located in the village that have the resources and water supply, and we have already identified a new water source which has the potential to provide us with 250 Gallons Per minute! Just from a single additional source itself!

We are now in the early stages of starting the process to have that well properly analyzed, drilled and tested and approved by the Department of Health so that the water can be made of immediate use to you the residents of our great village.

We are at the same time working on our long-term goal to research, locate and identify sufficient water resources on the ready, and to have that water supply available over the next 18 months with the potential to pump at least One Thousand Gallons Per Minute Locally in the village without the needs and massive cost of trucking water.

Sewer Situation Statue Update

We have an outdated Sewer System, the sewer lines are narrow and do not tolerate the volume of Our Village as it is today, with an influx of young families in the village, the lines tend to get clogged more often which cause sewer backups, and sewer line breaks which create major hassle and increased costs to maintain and repair.

The previous administration has installed a rag lift device at our sewer pumping station which alleviates some of the problem to a limited extent.

We are looking into the available options to obtain a more advanced and capable grinding machine which will greatly assist with keeping our lines clear, and as well as with the offloading procedure to the Harriman Sewer Plant.

I have also tasked my team of advisers and engineers to research and work towards getting state and federal grants for a total sewer system overhaul, and I have good news to report.

3 hours ago we have submitted an application to get on to the list of the New York State Clean Water Revolving Fund for which the application deadline is tonight, and we were able to get on the list just in time!

Just as with our initiatives for Clean Water, we are entitled, and we need a sewer system that can get us through the foreseeable future and growth forecast of at least 15-20 years.

This initiative will not come easy, but we will give it everything we got as with all of the initiatives of this administration.

In the meantime, I would like to ask all residents to please help out just a little bit from your end, please try to refrain from flushing any heavy and not flushable materials. Thank you

Traffic Situation Status Update

The residents and specifically the motorists of our village are well aware of the traffic and safety situation and hazard at the intersection of State Route 208 and Mountain Rd.

We have on our hands an aging issue which gets worse each day that passes by, and unfortunately, since this is a State Road under the jurisdiction of the New York State DOT, their protocols and requirements to take corrective

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actions and change the traffic pattern, slow the traffic, and potentially add a traffic light at the intersection, require a certain number of incidents resulting in the deaths of motorists and/or pedestrians before those corrective measures will be reviewed and then implemented... which is unbelievable and Cannot, and Will Not be tolerated. We are going to draft every possible avenue to help with remedying this situation ASAP, this is a Life and Death hazard, and we should not sit by idly until this is fully resolved for the safety of all village residents and for all of the traffic that is passing through our village boundaries.

We will pursue due process, political, legal and public relations options to ensure that we can rectify this issue, the sooner the better.

In the meantime, The village board is now in contact with the property owners around the intersection to work on lighting up the intersection parameters during the night hours which will at least solve a small part of the problem.

Winter Season Readiness Update

We have met over the last two weeks with the owners of CSB Contracting, who are contracted by the village and in charge of our Winter Season Road conditions and Snow Removal, They have a great team, and lots of expertise, and have done a phenomenal job in the past.

They are all set and ready to tackle whatever the winter has in store for us.

Department of Public Works Initiative

We are looking into an initiative to create a Department of Public Works for the Village of South Blooming Grove, or to subcontract all of our Public Works functions to the Town of South Blooming Grove, or to an independent contractor through the open and fair bidding procedures.

This initiative, can and will, potentially save the Village tens of thousands of dollars annually, which will hopefully leave us with surplus for much needed work and improvements throughout the village.

We will keep you apprised with additional updates as they become available.

➤ **Trustee Comments**

- Trustee Belfort felt that this being the first meeting it should have been open to the public so that all could introduce themselves to the public and it would only be fair if they were able to comment.
- Trustee Weiss thanked all the residents of the Village of South Blooming Grove for coming out to vote. He also thanked Honorable Mayor George Kalaj for investing his trust in himself and for voting for him to be Deputy Mayor. Trustee is Weiss is looking forward to working with all of you and would like to thank everyone again.
- Trustee Feldman expressed that he is humbled and honored to be elected Trustee of the great Village of South Blooming Grove. He is glad to be a part of the growth and future of the community and to learn from all his new colleagues all of which live in this great village. Thank you so much.

➤ **Adjournment**

- Motion to enter into attorney client session at 7:30 p.m. by Deputy Mayor Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. 3 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman, 2 Absent - Trustee Belfort and Trustee Ross.

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- Motion to exit attorney client session at 8:00 p.m. by Deputy Mayor Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *4 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman and Trustee Belfort; 1 absent, Trustee Ross.*

- Motion to close the meeting at 8:00p.m. by Deputy Mayor Weiss, seconded by Mayor Kalaj. *4 Ayes - Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Weiss, Trustee Feldman and Trustee Belfort; 1 Absent Trustee Ross.*

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Kerry Dougherty, Clerk