

Incorporated Village of Asharoken
Board of Trustees Meeting & Public Hearing
Tuesday, January 3, 2023, 6:30pm
Village Hall
Approximate Attendance (17)

APPROVED

Officers Present:

Greg Letica, Mayor
Pam Pierce, Deputy Mayor
Melvin Ettinger, Trustee
Laura Burke, Trustee
Ian Jablonski, Trustee

Officials & Appointees Present:

Michelle Glennon, Village Clerk
Bruce Migatz, Village Attorney
Raymond Mahdesian, Officer-in-Charge
William Raisch, Emergency Manager
Doug Adil, Superintendent of Buildings

The Pledge of Allegiance was said.
Publication of meeting was confirmed.

Trustee Ettinger made a motion to approve the Board Meeting minutes for December 6, 2022
seconded by Trustee Burke.

Trustee Jablonski	AYE
Trustee Burke	AYE
Trustee Ettinger	AYE
Deputy Mayor Pierce	AYE
Mayor Letica	AYE

Motioned Carried.

Deputy Mayor Pierce made a motion to approve the Board Meeting minutes for the BOT Special
Meeting held on December 20, 2022 seconded by Trustee Ettinger.

Trustee Jablonski	Abstain
Trustee Burke	AYE
Trustee Ettinger	AYE
Deputy Mayor Pierce	AYE
Mayor Letica	AYE

Motioned Carried.

Mayors Report:

The Village received notice late in the month from Senator Chuck Schumer and Congressman Tom Suozzi that Asharoken's request for \$1,000,000 for seawall repair was included in the federal appropriations bill. The bill passed both the house and senate and has been signed into law by President Biden. The Village is presently working with the Congressmen Suozzi and Lalota to finalize how the Village will access the money and exactly how it can be spent. I would like to thank both Congressman Suozzi and Senator Schumer for their hard work to help assist Asharoken.

The placement of 45,000 cubic yards of sand on the Long Island Sound beach was completed by midmonth. The quality of the material and the generally favorable weather allowed the sand to grade out very nicely. There was a substantial improvement in the beach between 100-216

52 Asharoken Avenue. I would like to thank NG power plant Joe Warren and his entire team for doing
53 a fantastic job.

54 During the month I finalized a date to meet with incoming Congressman Nick Lalota and State
55 Senator Mario Matera at the seawall. We will discuss ongoing repairs to the wall as well a review
56 any other areas where they will be able to help the Village out.

57 On December 18th Santa and Mrs. Claus visited the Village. Once again, the afternoon was a terrific
58 success with many overjoyed children getting to share their Christmas wishes with Santa. I would
59 like to thank Village Clerk Michelle Glennon for doing a terrific job setting up the meeting room and
60 getting snacks for the event.

61 Sadly, I must mention the sudden passing of Village Photographer Steve Silverman. Steve did a
62 great job memorializing many Village events. He was particularly fond of the fireworks and Santa's
63 visit. On behalf of the Village of Asharoken I extend my deepest condolences to his family. We will
64 really miss his smiling face and keen photographic eye in the years to come.

65 **Trustees:**

66 Deputy Mayor Pierce: During the month I attended a cyber security webinar, attended the special
67 meeting on the 20th and updated the BRIC application with the Dept of Homeland Security. I
68 reviewed beach lot guidelines with Trustee Jablonski and Trustee Burke. Reviewed the year end
69 and monthly police report. I reviewed the minutes for the Dec 6th meeting and the Special Meeting
70 on the 20th as well as the vouchers and attended the Santa visit at Village Hall.

71
72 Trustee Ettinger: Firstly, I hope that each of you and your families had an enjoyable Holiday Season
73 and I hope that you all have a Happy and Healthy New Year. Also, as many of you know, Steve
74 Silverman, the Asharoken Village Official Photographer passed away very unexpectedly late last
75 month. I have known Steve for many years and we have spent a lot of time together during the
76 many Christmas Santa visits and our July 4th celebrations while he was taking pictures of these
77 events. I considered Steve a dear friend and colleague and I shall miss him forever. RIP my dear
78 friend. During the past month, as usual, I had numerous meetings and conversations with Officer-
79 in-Charge Ray Mahdesian regarding a number of police related matters. Once again, I am happy to
80 report that we had a "good month" that Ray Mahdesian will comment on in his report. During the
81 month, Ray and I met and began the process of preparing the Police Budget for the 2023-2024 fiscal
82 year. We will meet several more time this month to finalize our draft budget that we will then
83 submit to the mayor for his review.

84 In addition, some other matters that I was involved in during the month were as follows:

- 85 • On December 13th, I attended the Cybersecurity Threat Briefing for Local Leaders Webinar,
- 86 • On December 18th, I attended the Santa visit at Village Hall,
- 87 • On December 20th, I attended the Special BOT Meeting,
- 88 • I also reviewed the foils that we received,
- 89 • I also reviewed some correspondences that we received,
- 90 • I also reviewed last month's BOT Regular Meeting's Minutes, the Special BOT Meeting's
- 91 Minutes
- 92 • I also reviewed this month's Abstract for the Payment Vouchers.

93
94 Trustee Burke: This month I reviewed the vouchers, police report, minutes from prior meeting and
95 village correspondence. I also worked on making recommendations to amend our existing fence

code, wrote a new fence permit application which should make the process easier for our residents, and worked on the rural beach lot guideline recommendations. I attended the special village meeting on Dec 20 and the Northport Harbor Water Quality Protection Committee Meeting on Dec 15. The Meeting was hosted by supervisor Ed Smyth and Adrienne Esposito of the Citizens Campaign for the Environment. PDF copies of the presentations by Dr. Chris Gobler of Stony Brook and Julia Priolo of the Suffolk County Health Dept can be viewed on our website. Dr. Gobler gave an update on nitrogen in our waters...it's better than a decade ago but still not at acceptable levels...60% reduction in nitrogen loading in the sound since 2000. Northport Drinking Water is overloaded with nitrate. The Harbor still suffers from intense and toxic algae blooms, directly a cause of excessive nitrogen. Nitrogen in our waters leads to algae blooms, brown tides, harmful bacteria, loss of marine life, shellfish poisoning. Biggest Source of Nitrogen is our cesspools and septic systems. The Suffolk County Clean Water Initiative is focusing on upgrading septic systems and installing septic improvements and replacements. the goal is to upgrade 380,000 on site wastewater systems in Suffolk County in partnership with the long island nitrogen action plan...for individual homeowners who are faced with the costs associated with these new systems, there are grants available to help pay for these upgrades. Assemblyman Keith Brown reported that Northport is continuing their nitrogen reducing programs that include operational pump out boats, oyster reseedling programs, a future plan to connect the Northport Bay estates with advanced water treatment sewer system...he's committed to finding necessary funding for these programs. He lamented the lack of action on dredging the harbor, going on 60 years of inaction but the dredging of Northport Harbor involves Federal, State, County and Local/Village approvals and involvements, so it's a mammoth task and he needs to build consensus. But he seems dedicated to the cause. On a local level, we need to remember that anything we put on the ground on our properties just ends up in the waters...which is why every effort should be made to avoid using fertilizers, herbicides, and pesticides. Rain simply transports these harmful chemicals into our waters, wreaking havoc with our marine life, increasing the nutrient input, which increases algae and aquatic plant growth...less oxygen... When the plants die, the decay process uses up more oxygen in the water, reducing the amount available to fish...then fish die. What else can we, as individuals do? Use soaps and detergents that are phosphorus/phosphate free. Make sure your septic system is maintained and the tank is pumped out on a regular basis. Maintain shrubs or trees in the area between the septic system and the water, as plants help capture some of the nutrients that pass through the septic system.

Trustee Jablonski: During the month I reviewed the minutes, the vouchers, the police reports, various correspondence and had a meeting with OIC Mahdesian to review local laws and a letter to the rural beach lot owners.

Attorney Migatz: The Zoning Board did not meet and the Planning Board did not meet last month. I still do not have a date from the Appellate Division for the argument on the dock litigation. I did receive from Trustee Burke some suggested modifications to the fence code which I will be reviewing in the coming weeks.

Village Treasurer: At the end of December we received \$131,309.09 for the CHIPS reimbursement for the repaving and striping roadwork that was completed in August. We are still waiting on Multi Modal money. The vouchers for the month of December were \$48,523.02.

Police Report: Officer Mahdesian reported that they had a good year. Satisfied with the functioning of the police department and appreciate the support of Mayor Letica and Police Commissioner Ettinger. Reiterated that the theft of vehicles and their contents is alive and well. This past month Asharoken and Eaton's Neck were not hit but there were other cases throughout the township. Hoping to receive the new police vehicle in February. Police Commissioner Ettinger that the car should be shipped in January and then it will need to be outfitted for the police.

Emergency Manager: Bill Raisch – Congratulations to the Mayor for securing the \$1,000,000.00 grant for seawall repair, it is a dramatic vulnerability for our residents. Regarding Trustee Burke's comments Mr. Raisch and his wife received a grant to cover a third of their new septic system. Our oyster seeding program is a small step in helping to alleviate the problem. Approximately 49 residents participated in the Polar Bear plunge on January 1st.

Superintendent of Buildings: Doug Adil conducted a meeting with a homeowner on Bevin Rd regarding fill deposited without a permit. Reviewed plans for construction of a new detached garage at 60 S Harbor Rd, plans were approved for a building permit. Reviewed drawings and permit application for construction of an accessory structure at 277 Asharoken, a letter of denial was issued. Reviewed drawings and a permit application for an addition to an existing accessory structure at 276 Asharoken, a letter of denial was issued. Issued a stop work order for 250 Asharoken in conjunction with the Village Clerk and Asharoken PD for construction without a permit. Performed 18 inspections.

Public Hearing:

Local Law #1-2023 authorizing a property tax levy in excess of the limit established in General Municipal Law §3-c for fiscal year commencing 6/1/2023. Publication was read by Clerk Glennon. Mayor Letica; reported that the proposed local law (1-2023) to allow the Board of Trustees to override the NY State 2% tax cap. This is the first step in the budget process. The proposed local law (1-2023) gives financial flexibility without the constraints of an arbitrary tax limit imposed by NY State. Passage of this law gives a safety net should unexpected expenses arise, or revenue shortfalls occur prior to finalizing the budget. Examples are unusual high snow removal costs or police overtime incurred due to an unanticipated storm. The board is in the initial phase of preparing the 2023-2024 budget. I would like to stress that adoption of the override law should not be interpreted or assumed to mean that the board intends to have a tax increase above the 2% threshold. We must finalize the assessment roll, determine our projected revenues and expenditures, and develop a realistic budget for the next fiscal year. It is in the best interest of the village to adopt the law with the hope and expectation that it may not be needed. Please keep in mind due to the current inflationary environment a tax increase may be needed. Since I was elected Mayor 11 years ago, the average annual tax increase has been .86% and there has been no tax increase for the last 7 years. We have a long history of fiscal conservatism. The Board and I will do our best to develop a budget that maintains and improves all the necessary services for the village and its residents for next year. We have an increase in the fire contract and we do this as a safety net.

The Mayor read an email from a resident who opposed the passing of the law as they feel that the law is in place to promote fiscal responsibility and overturning it is unnecessary. Another resident commented that he doesn't believe there is a need for the law as there should not be an override. Another resident commented that the Mayor has a track record of maintaining the low tax rate and he trusts the Trustees, he supports the passing of the tax cap override law. Another resident questioned the necessity of a tax cap over ride law.

Mayor Letica made a motion to close the public hearing on 1-2023, seconded by Trustee Ettinger.

Trustee Jablonski AYE

Trustee Burke AYE

Trustee Ettinger AYE

Deputy Mayor Pierce AYE

Mayor Letica AYE

Motioned Carried.

Resolutions:

200 **Resolution (2023-01)** Be It Resolved that the Village Board does hereby approve the vouchers for
201 the month of December 2022 in the amount of \$48,523.02.
202 Deputy Mayor Pierce made a motion to approve, seconded by Mayor Letica.
203 Trustee Jablonski AYE
204 Trustee Burke AYE
205 Trustee Ettinger AYE
206 Deputy Mayor Pierce AYE
207 Mayor Letica AYE
208 Motioned Carried

209 **Resolution (2023-02)** Be It Resolved that the Village Board does hereby approve budget transfers
210 for December 2022.
211 Deputy Mayor Pierce made a motion to approve, seconded by Trustee Ettinger.
212 Trustee Jablonski AYE
213 Trustee Burke AYE
214 Trustee Ettinger AYE
215 Deputy Mayor Pierce AYE
216 Mayor Letica AYE
217 Motioned Carried

218 **Resolution (2023-03)** Be It Resolved that the Village Board, does hereby approve proposed Local
219 Law #1-2023 authorizing a property tax levy in excess of the limit established in General Municipal
220 Law §3-c for the fiscal year commencing 6/1/2023.

221
222 Mayor Letica made a motion to approve, seconded by Trustee Ettinger.

223
224 ROLL CALL:
225 **Trustee Jablonski** AYE
226 **Trustee Burke** AYE
227 **Trustee Ettinger** AYE
228 **Deputy Mayor Pierce** AYE
229 **Mayor Letica** AYE

230
231 **Resolution (2023-04)** Be it Resolved that the Village Board, does hereby approve in accordance
232 with the provisions of the Election Law of the State of New York, the 2023 Annual Village Election in
233 the Village of Asharoken shall be held on Tuesday, June 20th, 2023, and be it further resolved that
234 the offices to be filled at said election and the terms thereof are as follows:

235 Trustee, two (2) years
236 Trustee, two (2) years

237
238 Be it resolved that the polling place will be held at the Village Hall, 1 Asharoken Avenue, Northport,
239 NY 11768 during the hours of 12 noon to 9:00 pm, subject to change.

240
241 Mayor Letica made a motion to approve, seconded by Deputy Mayor Pierce.

242 Trustee Jablonski AYE
243 Trustee Burke AYE
244 Trustee Ettinger AYE
245 Deputy Mayor Pierce AYE
246 Mayor Letica AYE
247 Motioned Carried

248 Mayor Letica made a motion to approve, seconded by Deputy Mayor Pierce.

249 New Business

250 Public Session: A resident thanked the village for allowing a Guide Dog Foundation information
251 class to be scheduled to take place at Village Hall for village residents, details to follow.

252 Mayor Letica made a motion to exit public session, seconded by Trustee Ettinger.

253 Trustee Jablonski AYE

254 Trustee Burke AYE

255 Trustee Ettinger AYE

256 Deputy Mayor Pierce AYE

257 Mayor Letica AYE

258 Motioned Carried

259 Mayor Letica made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Trustee Ettinger.

260 Trustee Jablonski AYE

261 Trustee Burke AYE

262 Trustee Ettinger AYE

263 Deputy Mayor Pierce AYE

264 Mayor Letica AYE

265 Motioned Carried.

266

267 The January 3rd, 2023 Regular board meeting of the Board of Trustees was adjourned at
268 approximately 7:04pm.

269

270

271 Signed: 

272 Michelle Glennon, Village Clerk