

VILLAGE OF WEST HAMPTON DUNES

GENERAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

914 Dunes Rd West Hampton Dunes and Via Zoom October 23, 2023 at 7:30pm

Present: Mayor Gary Vegliante, Trustee John Eff, Trustee Gary Trimarchi, Trustee Michael Craig, Trustee Harvey Gessin, Village Attorney Joseph Prokop, Village Treasurer Claire Vegliante, Village Clerk Robin Santora, Sgt Brian Hennig, Sgt Tim Turner, Residents Charlie Lippert & Yale Nelson.

Via Zoom: Approximately 30 residents

Meeting called to order 7:37 pm - Pledge of Allegiance

- Motion to adjourn public meeting and go into executive session at 7:40 pm

Motion by: Gary Trimarchi
Seconded by: Harvey Gessin
All in favor: unanimous
Opposed: none

- Motion to reopen public meeting at 8:03 pm

Mayor's Report:

Trailers on the beach and trucks parked down at 914 Dune Road this past week have been our friends at the Army Corp. They are getting ready for next year's replenishment. It will be the last free renourishment, but it should be substantial. We have a great rapport with the Army Corp, a 30-year relationship and they will do the best they can for us.

Pothole Repair: We have a proposal from Laser Industries for \$18,641.64. The scope of the work is to remove and replace existing asphalt patch with full depth replacement and resetting pavers disturbed by construction. The Village will be reimbursed through the CHIPS fund. Under NY State law we are exempt from public bidding if we take a contract that was bid out to another municipality.

- Motion to except the bid from Laser Industries for \$18,641.64

Motion by: Gary Trimarchi

Seconded by: John Eff

All in favor: unanimous

Opposed: none

- The Mayor is scheduled to attend the NYCOM Executive Committee Retreat October 25-27, 2023 in Skaneateles, NY
- Motion to approve the legislative meeting

Motion by: Michael Craig

Seconded by: Harvey Gessin

All in favor: unanimous

Opposed: none

914 Dune Road Building:

- The building we are currently housed in and have been for the last 26 years. We proposed a meeting to help facilitate and maintain the use of this building as both village use and construction for other uses. The information became conflated and distorted and as a result Village Officials were sent the following unsigned letter from the BBPA – Barrier Beach Preservation Association.

**The actual letter from BBPA to Village Officials is shown at the end of the minutes below.

- The mayor believes there is a wedge between the village and the BBPA organization and an even further wedge between the mayor personally and the organization. The letter was both hurtful and inaccurate.
- The mayor was an original former of the BBPA and at the time the property was being offered to the BBPA he was also the mayor. It was in his position as “mayor” the offer was made to help enhance the profile for the BBPA. This organization is involved with environmental practices along with being tightly tied to the village residents. The mayor feels that the BBPA has lost its incentive to remain in concert with the village. Every village resident or property owner has the right to join the BBPA. He asks that residents join the BBPA and keep the interests of the village connected with the interests of the BBPA. He has hoped to reconstruct unity between the village and the BBPA, but this letter seems to say otherwise.
- The 914 Dune Road building was bought and funded by village residents with no assistance from the BBPA. The location on the property was the only coordination between the Village and the BBPA. The building was purchased by the village and the foundation was built by the village.
- Ultimately the mayor would love to see the village and the BBPA come together and have a resolution.

- The meeting was opened to the public where numerous residents voiced their opinions and questions.
- Robin Laveman stated that the BBPA does valuable beach clean-up. Robin also offered to mediate between the Village and the BBPA.
- Sarah Covelli and Molly Brown both asked why the mayor has not attended any of the BBPA meetings in over 2 years.

The mayor stated that he cannot attend if he is not notified of when the meetings take place. Once when he tried, he was not let into the zoom call. He also explained that he has sent in his membership dues to the organization and that the BBPA rejects it and returns his payment.

- Chris Djoganopoulos asks to explain the two different positions.

The mayor hopes to expand the 914 building and make it a more valuable space for meetings, a residential location for trustees, a place if needed during hurricane conditions and a place to house public officials from various offices of the government.

- Rene Brown explained the reason for attending this meeting is not about the BBPA but rather about having village officials reside at 914 Dune Road. Many residents seemed to have this same concern. If residency is not required, then could anyone claim residency and then run for office?

Trustee Michael Craig explained that the previous notice used the word “officials” and by definition no one can live here and then run for office because they were not currently an official. The word “reside” was mistaken for “resident”. Resident would be permanent where reside would be more of a short period of time. So, if there was a need from time to time during certain projects, we would have the space to house local officials.

- Both the Board of Trustees and the residents agree that future notices need to have the language cleaned up and offer more information.
- Chris Djoganopoulos stated that “we need to find the “highest and best use” for the property and at the end of the day, it all comes down to what is best for the community”.
- Kimberly Brown asked going forward if we could have clear communications. She would like to see an email outlining what happens next. What are the proposed uses for the building and a timeline of how those things will go down.

The mayor said we can put an email together and reminded everyone that they can always call the office. He is happy to discuss any concerns with any of the residents.

Building Department Report:

- The Village Board of Trustees acting as Planning Board for West Hampton Dunes acknowledges receipt for application 738 & 742 Dune Road which is under review by village staff.

Attorney Joseph Prokop explained that several months ago there was an application for a subdivision where two properties were to be merged into three lots. This application did not conform with our code in terms of lot width. The applicant has since submitted a new plan and this application is under review by John our building inspector, along with Aram and Joe. Under Aram's suggestion and due to non-conformities in the new plan with our zoning code, we have decided to deem the application incomplete and allow the applicant to take back the plan to see if applicant would like to make new changes.

Trustee Report:

- Trustee Michael Craig wanted to know how the negotiations with Altice have been going.
- He also asked where are we with cell issues, such as not getting good reception in the village? Has there been any conversation with Verizon or AT&T about putting up some kind of moderate antenna in the village?

Village Attorney Joe Prokop said we are still working with Samantha Pardel-Jarez from Cablevision and trying to get an agreement. We need to have a public hearing so the public can comment and be heard on their thoughts about Cablevision. We still need to work out the franchise fee, the renewal agreement and any money we are due on our equipment.

Treasurer's Report:

- Claire has emailed bank statements and reconciliation reports to the Trustees & Boards. We are waiting for the completed village audit. The annual AUD – Annual Update Document has been completed.
- We are now waiting for the new auditors, R S Abrams & Co, LLP to start the audit.
- We have \$1,100,000 of tax payments deposited into NY Class and expect higher interest this year. We are getting around 5% interest and we are way over budget for what we have received. We budgeted \$10,000 in interest for the year and as of the end of September we already have \$26,000.00.
- If you have any questions call or email Claire at the office.

Constable's Report:

- Sgt Hennig said they would wait until the end of the meeting to answer any questions the community might have for them.

Village Attorney Report:

- Joe mentioned how nice the 30th Anniversary party turned out. It was great seeing so many people and remembering back to when the village started.
- The Village court – the constables are doing a great job policing quality of life issues along with parking tickets. We had one resident who installed a pool without a permit and without a fence. Together with the constables and John the building inspector, they helped prepare and gather information. This case went to trial and the person pleaded guilty. There will now be a hearing to determine how much fines will be.

Public Comment:

- Resident Doug Milles asked about the propane tank survey.

Joe Prokop explained that John McAlary performed a complete survey on every propane tank in the village. The tanks in the village are about 80-85% compliant. The 10-15% of above ground tanks that are not compliant mostly have minor repairs needed. Repairs such as weighing down or strapping the tank or needing to move the tank away from a window. John is going through the process of notifying any resident that needs to make any adjustments or repairs to their tank. In doing so, he will stop by and show the resident how to become compliant.

- Doug Milles also asked about it being the last round of our beach replenishment.

Under our original stipulation or settlement, this is our last beach nourishment due to us. However, because of the relationship the village has maintained with the Army Corp, we have been included in the FIMP project (Fire Island to Montauk Project), which will help protect us for the next 30 years.

- Resident Kimberly Brown asked how healthy the Beach Preservation Fund is and what do we do with the funds.

The money is in a certified fund approved by the state. There is about \$790,000 in the fund and it is earning around 6% interest currently.

- Resident Nancy Palmer asked if there was an update on the Village Improvement District (VID)?

Aram has resubmitted a proposal that was like a project that was approved in Patchogue. It was signed off by four state agencies, so we are hopeful it will be approved here.

Trustee Gary Trimarchi says we are looking for more information from Aram in order to understand what happened and why the initial project failed.

Motion to close a public meeting 9:18 pm.

Motion by: Gary Trimarchi

Seconded by: Michael Craig

All in favor: unanimous

Opposed: none



Barrier Beach Preservation Association
PO Box 1448
Westhampton Beach, NY 11978

October 13, 2023

Re: the Barrier Beach Preservation Association property located at 914 Dune Road

The Village of West Hampton Dunes
Po Box 728
Westhampton Beach, NY 11978

Dear Village Officials,

This letter is to formally express our displeasure with the attempt this past Monday evening, October 9, 2023, to "set a public hearing date for the adoption of a Local Law authorizing Village Officials to reside at Village property located at 914 Dune Road."

We are strongly in opposition with this attempt by the Village to take over a property that has, at the consent of the Barrier Beach Preservation Association, been utilized by the Village Constabulary for many years. As the decided owners of this piece of land, we have graciously allowed for its usage by the Constabulary to help serve our Village. As the Constables have now vacated the building, and are located at their new facility, the property at 914 shall rightfully be used as the Barrier Beach Preservation Association so chooses.

Sincerely,

The Board of Directors

"To preserve and protect the beaches, bays, wetlands, and wildlife of West Hampton Dunes for the benefit of its citizens and visitors, and to promote respect for the coastal environment through public education and scientific research."