

VILLAGE BOARD OPERATIONS MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 3, 2019
5:30 P.M.

PRESENT: Mayor Hubbard, Trustees Dove, Eriksen, Sennett, and Stokes-Cawley, DMO Harty, Deputy DMO Robinson, Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) Crompt, Atty. Pavlus

Sidewalks – Trustee Sennett thanked Atty. Pavlus for drafting a local law that incorporates a credit to property owners who participated in the 2017 sidewalk program. Trustee Sennett said she and Trustee Stokes-Cawley discussed a number of different scenarios. Since the re-payment plan is three years, they decided to give three-year credits. Every tax parcel will be charged \$50/per year (if that is the assessment amount decided on). Trustee Sennett said they asked Don Weber, Onondaga County Director of Real Property Tax Services, if we'd have to carve out the exempt properties. He advised that properties owned by the State or Federal Government would not be subject to the \$50, but every other property would be. For example, the State owned "developmental center" on West Genesee Street would not be subject to the sidewalk assessment. Properties that participated in the 2017 sidewalk program would not be charged the \$50 for the first three years of the program, essentially giving them a \$150 credit. We'd have to provide those properties to the County so that the \$50 would not be included on their tax bill. Relative to Section 183-5 being crossed off, in answer to Trustee Eriksen, Atty. Pavlus said that with the Village collecting a benefit assessment on every lot in order to construct and maintain Village sidewalks, abutting property owners would not be required to maintain sidewalks. However, abutting property owners would remain responsible for clearing snow, ice and other items from sidewalks. Also, prior written notice of defects in sidewalks would continue to be a condition precedent to Village liability. Trustee Eriksen asked if this potential exposure to additional liability for injuries allegedly suffered due to defective sidewalks will cause problems with insurance. Atty. Pavlus said he doesn't know if it will affect our premium. He said a lot of trips and falls are blamed on snow and ice and reiterated that the written notice with a reasonable time to repair the walk would still be in place. Atty. Pavlus recognized that a reasonable time to repair the walk is somewhat dependent on the time of year and that there is not a hard & fast time period. Trustee Sennett said one of the drivers of community sidewalks is safety. DMO Harty said this will lean heavily on the Operations Department – work plan, budget, inventory, notice of complaints, etc. Relative to page 2 of the proposed local law, section about sidewalk construction or repair, DMO Harty said it is broad. She also pointed out that the Village owns a section of the creek walk, but part is Parkside homeowners. In response to Trustee Sennett, Atty. Pavlus said the word "foot path" was added to be all encompassing, but it is not critical to the local law. Considerable discussion focused on foot paths with the Board ultimately deciding to remove reference to foot paths. DMO Harty suggested that if the question comes up, it can be clarified that it is not the intent to use sidewalk funds to handle paths. Atty. Pavlus noted that if the word foot path is deleted, the Village still has the ability to install sidewalks in easements, with or without this law.

Relative to reference of the Municipal Board in Section 183-4. Construction or Repair of Sidewalks, DMO Harty said she is not sure to what extent the Municipal Board would want to be involved. Mayor Hubbard said he thinks sidewalks should remain with the DMO. Similar to maintenance of roads, DMO Harty would know the dollar amount and develop a work plan. Mayor Hubbard said he envisions more calls coming to the Village Board than the Municipal Board. DMO Harty said there have been more calls about wanting sidewalks since the 2017 program.

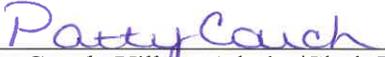
Regarding the \$50 per parcel sidewalk assessment, Trustee Sennett said that would be revenue of approximately \$50,000 - it may not be the correct number. We'd probably have to match the amount with VIP money or something like that. Mayor Hubbard said if the local law passed, the Village will be responsible for all the sidewalks. At budget time, the Board could stipulate using a chunk of savings to get all the sidewalks in good shape. He noted that VIP money is increasing to \$345,000. DMO Harty said the sidewalk inventory recorded 6,300 LF in poor condition and we essentially did that in 2017. There is

roughly 10,000 LF in fair condition and that would cost approximately \$800,000 to fix. Trustee Sennett asked if there are things that can be done instead of total repair. DDMO Robinson said those methods wouldn't be acceptable to the Village residents; DMO Harty added that patches don't last. Trustee Stokes-Cawley said we will be replacing some walks with the water project – we can't do all of them all at once. DMO Harty said we need a realistic approach - we should look at everything that needs attention. Mayor Hubbard said there will be higher expectations with people giving money. In response to Atty. Pavlus, DMO Harty said life expectancy of sidewalks is 15-20 years. It may be 5-6 years for the fair walks to become poor. Atty. Pavlus suggested matching funds to what the property owners put in. Trustee Eriksen said he likes that idea. Trustee Stokes-Cawley said with the City of Ithaca having districts, they probably deal with certain districts at a time (not areas in several different districts at one time) – perhaps we could have zones. Trustee Sennett noted a lot of areas on the west side of the village where there are no sidewalks. Trustee Dove said the money has to come from somewhere and suggested doing what we've been doing to get caught up and then endocrine this. Trustee Stokes-Cawley asked how do we do new sidewalks? Mayor Hubbard said there is nothing preventing the Village from putting new sidewalks in. Atty. Pavlus added, "the Village would be paying." Trustee Dove said maybe we could bundle like we did in 2017; Trustee Eriksen said perhaps a multi-year bid. Atty. Pavlus said there are five different districts in the City of Ithaca. The money collected in a district is only used in that district. As other districts wait, money builds. He said he considered that method, but there are not enough sidewalks in the Village. Trustee Dove said she thinks we could get away with charging \$75 per parcel, but not as much as \$100. Mayor Hubbard said a benefit of the local law would be that we could do new sidewalks on West Elizabeth. Trustee Eriksen recognized that it would be easier to put down sidewalks where appropriate without one or two property owners being able to hold up progress. Mayor Hubbard said the 2017 program didn't address new walks, just hazardous walks. DMO Harty said it is up to the DMO for the budget proposal on sidewalks – inventory and prioritize. Mayor Hubbard concluded that the Board is in favor of removing the word foot path and the Municipal Board. DMO Harty said there needs to be a mechanism for property owners who replace their own walks. She'd also like specs of materials included in the local law. Atty. Pavlus said the ADA doesn't mandate material and he has concerns about materials and width being stipulated. New walks have to be ADA compliant. DMO Harty said we don't have adopted standards. Trustee Eriksen said we have discretion to say no. Atty. Pavlus said we don't have to include specifics – the Planning Board can do site plan review. The Board agreed to go to \$75 per parcel. Mayor Hubbard asked the Board if another Operations Meeting is needed or if they are ready to discuss this at a Village Board Meeting. Trustee Stokes-Cawley said at a Village Board Meeting. Trustee Eriksen said the sooner it gets out, we might get some input. Consideration of scheduling a February 28, 2019 Public Hearing on Local Law #1 of 2019 will be on the January 24, 2019 Village Board Agenda.

Executive Session – Resolution #2019-1: On the motion of Trustee Stokes-Cawley, seconded by Trustee Sennett, it was resolved and unanimously carried (5-0 in favor) to enter into an Executive Session to discuss a personnel matter at 6:44 p.m. **Resolution #2019-2:** On the motion of Trustee Stokes-Cawley, seconded by Trustee Dove, it was resolved and unanimously carried (5-0 in favor) to move out of Executive Session at 7:10 p.m.

Discontinued Employment – Resolution #2019-3: On the motion of Trustee Sennett, seconded by Trustee Stokes-Cawley, it was resolved and unanimously carried (5-0 in favor) to authorize notifying Frederick Dirisio that his part-time employment with the Village of Skaneateles is discontinued immediately. Clerk/Treasurer Couch was directed to formally notify Mr. Dirisio tomorrow.

Adjournment – Resolution #2019-4: On the motion of Trustee Eriksen, seconded by Trustee Stokes-Cawley, it was resolved and unanimously carried (5-0 in favor) to adjourn the meeting at 7:11 p.m.


Patty Couch, Village Admin./Clerk-Treasurer