

MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE VILLAGE OF  
BRONXVILLE HELD ON JANUARY 10, 2011 AT THE VILLAGE HALL, 200 PONDFIELD  
ROAD, BRONXVILLE, N.Y.

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PRESENT: Mary C. Marvin Mayor  
Robert S. Underhill Trustees  
William H. Barton, Jr.  
Anne W. Poorman

ALSO PRESENT: Harold Porr III Village Administrator  
James Staudt Village Attorney

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**WORK SESSION & EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Mayor Marvin called the meeting to order at 6:35PM and in attendance were Mayor Marvin, Trustee Underhill, Trustee Poorman, Trustee Barton, Village Administrator Harold Porr, Village Treasurer Robert Fels, and Donald Gray.

Village Administrator, Harold Porr, reviewed the meeting agenda.

Village Administrator, Harold Porr, and Village Treasurer, Robert Fels, reviewed a preliminary budget and discussed the fiscal challenges of 2011 – 2012 with the Trustees.

At 7:27PM, on motion of Trustee Underhill, second by Trustee Poorman, the Trustees entered Executive Session to discuss personnel matters in the Parking/Court Office; preparations for PBA/Teamsters labor contract negotiations; and, to discuss real estate matters.

At 8PM on motion of Trustee Barton, second by Trustee Underhill, the Trustees re-opened the work session.

The Trustees entered into the public session at 8:03PM.

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Mayor Marvin opened the meeting at 8:06PM.

Mayor Marvin said she wanted to say farewell to a wonderful and extremely hardworking friend and colleague, Deputy Mayor Glenn Bellitto. Glenn is replacing our own Vicki Ford who stepped down after 17 years of continuous service on the Eastchester Town Board.

Mayor Marvin said she truly can think of no better choice for the Town role than Glenn. His involvement in and connections to all three communities in our town run deep. He is a tireless worker, a consummate public servant and I know he will be a champion of the needs of our Village on the larger board as well as ably addressing the needs of the Town as a whole.

It has been an honor and a privilege to work with such a self-less public servant. We have had many animated discussions, some disagreements but it has been a relationship of respect and common purpose with some good laughs thrown in.

So to Glenn, may I say we will miss you and Eastchester is getting a fine, fine gentleman.

**COMMENTS BY FORMER DEPUTY MAYOR GLENN BELLITTO**

Mr. Bellitto said he was happy he would be representing Bronxville on the Town Board but that he was sad to be retired from Village government. His goal will remain the same – low taxes especially in these financially hard times.

He thanked Mayor Marvin for her leadership and for using her skills and platform to protect the Village. He then thanked each of the Trustees for their dedication, friendship, and professionalism. Mr. Bellitto also thanked the people of the Village for their support and said that he had made extraordinary friends and learned a lot.

Trustee Poorman thanked Mr. Bellitto for his service to the Village and commented that he has been an inspiring Trustee and Board member. He has set a high standard. She was impressed by his embracing new ideas, to always being open minded, courteous and fair.

Trustee Barton said he also admired Mr. Bellitto's dedication and his "greening" of Bronxville. He inspired Trustee Barton to think of things in a different light.

Trustee Underhill said Mr. Bellitto was a great example for the Village and Town and he was impressed by Mr. Bellitto's energy, unselfish desire to get involved and was grateful that he will represent the Village on the Town Board. He also enjoyed his sense of humor and intelligence.

#### **APPOINTMENT OF NEW TRUSTEE**

Mr. Donald M. Gray was appointed by Mayor Marvin. Mayor Marvin gave a brief background of Mr. Gray.

#### **SWEARING IN OF NEW TRUSTEE BY JUDGE MCKINNIS**

#### **APPOINTMENT OF NEW DEPUTY MAYOR**

Trustee Robert Underhill was appointed by Mayor Marvin and signed his oath of office.

Mayor Marvin said that Glenn does have very big high heeled shoes to fill as he takes the place of our own Vicki Ford. Vicki is the quintessential citizen/public servant. Her motives are always pure and public service and good of the community always came first with politics a very distant second. Vicki has represented the Village with grace, passion and a huge dose of much needed common sense.

So thank you Vicki for all you have done for the Village and Town and all I know you will be doing in your retirement. We so admire and love you.

#### **MAYOR'S REPORT**

The Trustees and I will be conducting a public workshop in the very near future to structure our priorities for Village government in 2011. Given the unprecedented number of State unfunded mandates combined with a bleak revenue picture, it is incumbent upon us to formalize a prioritized blueprint for projects and spending going forward.

The following are subjects that will be on the agenda in no particular order.

- The timetable for the first stage of refurbishment for both Maltby Field and Sagamore Park as a result of grant money received in 2010. The grant monies will not cover the costs of the complete restoration of the parks so the work will be organized in logical stages while we seek additional funding sources.
- We will also be finalizing the plans for the installation of the traffic light at the corner of Kraft Avenue and Cedar Street which is fully funded thanks to the close-out of some stagnant capital projects from years past.
- The Trustees and I also need to find funding for the replanting of street trees that have been lost at alarming numbers due to disease and recent wind and snow storms. It is vital that we keep pace with replanting to preserve our Village's character. Areas of greatest need seem to be in the business district especially on Cedar Street and along Meadow Avenue adjacent to the school track.
- A priority on our docket will be to negotiate contracts with our police union, the Teamsters representing our Public Works employees and the CSEA representing the library staff. Contracts for the police and the Department of Public Works employees are set to expire in the spring and we have yet to reach agreement for an initial contract with library union representatives.

- Our effort to hold United Water's feet to the fire on hydrant maintenance, hydrant painting and upkeep will be redoubled given the exorbitant 30% increase in rates they were granted by the Public Service Commission. We are also part of a ten community consortium seeking legislative remedies to mitigate some of these costs to our taxpayers.
- We continue to explore quality companies and project ideas that will enhance the property along Kensington Road. Our goal is to return it to the tax roll and increase the value of the nearby homes with a quality development, hopefully encompassing parking, open space and high end residential development.
- Village staff will be requested to file grant requests applicable to any projects that make sense for the Village to relieve property taxpayers from funding every initiative. Thanks to the efforts of our department heads, we are still in contention for flood mitigation grants at both the County and Federal levels.
- We will be reaching out even more to our neighboring municipalities to look for cost savings and economies of scale by entering into more joint purchasing agreements for equipment and supplies. Village Administrator Porr and I continue to take active leadership roles in the Westchester County Municipal Officials' Association. The connection with our peers has proven invaluable in sharing information and ideas which has resulted in ultimately saving funds.
- An issue that must be addressed, at least in an early stage, is the amount and quality of lighting throughout the Village, especially in the business district. Not only are the current bulb/globe structures the most energy inefficient, but they provide a level of lighting that met the needs for a time when the Village was a less traveled place. An appreciable increase in vehicular and pedestrian traffic is the result of many factors, including the welcome proliferation of restaurants as well as many more residents arriving home on later trains. Increased illumination and energy efficiency is a must going forward.

Under the leadership of Deputy Mayor Underhill, our Finance Committee will also be convening later this month to discuss our investment policies in general with an emphasis on borrowing advice given the particularly advantageous interest rates of late. Just this past month, we received a borrowing rate of .86% on a one year bond anticipation note. Given our long standing need for parking, the committee will discuss possible prudent acquisitions.

Finally, we will look inward and review our staffing levels and procedures in an effort to increase internal efficiencies. As an example, we are way behind our neighboring communities in installing laptops in our patrol cars. A laptop that issues computer generated summons and tickets would eliminate a duplicative paper trail that is both costly and ripe for human error in its need for multiple transcription.

Financially, this will be the most difficult year in decades. We were able to craft two straight budgets with 0% tax increases, but 2011 presents new challenges. Our State unfunded mandates are at an all time high, revenues did not rebound anywhere near the hoped for levels, and we have little left to trim in our operations. We are at essentially minimum staffing and virtually every service contract has been re-negotiated in the past two years to achieve savings and unused funds in capital programs were closed out in the last two budgets.

We have begun the budgeting process three months earlier than usual in an effort to make the most careful and measured decisions about Village services and funding going forward.

On an extremely sad and personal note, just in the past few weeks, the Village lost two of its truly finest gentlemen, George Vojta and Pat Oden. It hit particularly close to home for those of us here at Village Hall because both gentlemen served tirelessly on our behalf on the Village's Finance Committee. Pat lent his expertise and intelligence for over a decade to the committee, the majority of time during which he served as chair. George was so able and was generously sharing his financial talents on the Finance Committee at the time of his death. We will miss their minds, their kindness, their class and most of all their dedication to the Village they cared for so very much.

**TRUSTEE REPORTS**

**Trustee Barton** reported on the Department of Public Works and reminded residents that there is a new garbage cycle out effective January 1, 2011.

**Trustee Poorman** reported on the police department as she is the new Trustee liaison. She gave a summary of the happenings in 2010 and compared them to 2009. Bottom line, crimes are down and arrests are up.

Library – Trustee Poorman reported that the library is busy updating their website to freshen the approach to the information delivery system. She told residents to look for a more user friendly site soon. Also, the library is developing a newcomers club for new residents with coffee and a local speaker each month.

Chamber – the downtown is more active and lively than ever and new ideas are being generated. Trustee Poorman will no longer be the Trustee liaison.

Trustee Underhill thanked the staff of the Department of Public Works for a job well done during the last two snow storms.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

On motion of Trustee Poorman, second by Trustee Barton, the Board approved the minutes of the Regular Meeting on December 13, 2010 as drafted.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**RESOLUTION – Village Election**

On motion of Trustee Underhill, second by Trustee Barton, the following resolution was unanimously approved:

**BE IT RESOLVED** the hours for Village Election Day, Tuesday, March 15, 2011 be set from 6:00AM to 9:00PM., and that the polling place shall be Village Hall, 200 Pondfield Road, Bronxville, N.Y.

**BE IT RESOLVED** the Village Clerk is authorized to contact the County Board of Elections requesting the use of up to four voting machines.

**BE IT RESOLVED** the Village Clerk is authorized to appoint up to four inspectors each from the Democratic and Republican parties to serve on Election Day, as needed.

**BE IT RESOLVED** that there will be no Village registration day.

**RESOLUTION – TAX CERT – STONELEIGH CO-OP APARTMENTS**

On motion of Trustee Underhill, second by Trustee Poorman, the following resolution was unanimously approved:

**WHEREAS**, petitions having been filed by the property owner below, challenging real property tax assessments on the Village's Final Assessment Roll with respect to the following parcel:

<b><u>Property Owner</u></b>	<b><u>Address Description</u></b>	<b><u>Year(s)</u></b>
Stoneleigh Co-op Apartments	Section 21- Block 2 Lots 3 & 3A also	
<b>2003-2010</b>	Section 11 - Block 3, 3A & 3B	

**WHEREAS**, petitioner's court challenges are now pending in the Supreme Court, Westchester County; and

**WHEREAS**, the Village and the property owners have reached a mutually agreeable resolution;

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Village Board hereby authorizes the Village attorney to execute the following settlement on behalf of the Village and School reducing the assessments to no less than the following amounts:

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>REVISED ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>REDUCTION</b>
2003	858,330	851,970	6,360
2004	858,330	795,980	62,350
2005	858,330	823,940	34,390
2006	858,330	824,050	34,280
2007	26,465,800	26,465,800	NONE
2008	26,465,800	26,465,800	NONE
2009	24,505,368	24,505,368	NONE
2010	24,505,368	24,505,368	NONE

**The indicated reductions are to be applied only to parcel 21./2/3 which is assessed at 804,030**

**RESOLUTION – CCAP GRANT FOR MALTBY PARK**

On motion of Trustee Barton, second by Trustee Underhill, the following resolution was unanimously approved:

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Bronxville shall enter into the Grant Disbursement Agreement with the Dormitory Authority of the State of New York under the Community Capital Assistance Program to receive \$100,000 for funds for the renovation and refurbishing of Maltby Park, and the Village Administrator is authorized and directed to execute and deliver the Agreement to the Dormitory Authority.

**RESOLUTION – PROPERTY TAX CAP TO INCLUDE MANDATE RELIEF**

On motion of Trustee Barton, second by Trustee Poorman, the following resolution was unanimously approved:

**WHEREAS**, the level of municipal property taxation throughout New York has reached high levels; and

**WHEREAS**, New York leads the nation in property taxes simply because we lead the nation in imposing inefficient State mandates on our local governments; and

**WHEREAS**, two of the largest components of every municipal budget over which local officials have little or no control – pension payments and health insurance costs – are increasing; and

**WHEREAS**, in the case of pension costs, bills from the State Retirement System will increase by an average of 40% in both 2011 and 2012; and

**WHEREAS**, State laws pertaining to the collective bargaining of contracts between municipalities and employee unions, particularly those pertaining to firefighters and police officers, do not allow local officials to reasonably control the costs such contracts impose on property taxpayers; and

**WHEREAS**, as a solution to New York’s property tax crisis, the Governor of New York and the New York State Legislature will, in 2011, consider enactment of legislation imposing a cap on the annual growth in property taxes; and

**WHEREAS**, a property tax cap will only work if it is simultaneously accompanied by a repeal of current State mandates that require local governments to increase spending and property taxes; and

**WHEREAS**, a property tax cap without repeal of costly State mandates will, by definition, lead to drastic cuts in essential local services and layoffs of municipal employees and a general diminishment of the quality of life at the local level;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the Board of Trustees of the Village of Bronxville urges the Governor of the State of New York and the members of the New York State Senate and New York State Assembly to reform the cost drivers that lead to high property taxes in New York – including pension benefits, health insurance costs and the collective bargaining process – as the central element of any effort to provide overdue property tax relief to the residents and businesses of New York.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Governor, Senate Majority and Minority Leaders, Assembly Speaker and Minority Leader, Senator Jeffrey Klein, Member of Assembly Amy Paulin, and the New York State Conference of Mayors.

**RESOLUTION - DATE CHANGE FOR FEBRUARY TRUSTEES MEETING**

On motion of Trustee Underhill, second by Trustee Poorman, the following resolution was unanimously approved:

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the Board of Trustees is officially now moving the date of the February 2011 meeting from Monday, February 14, 2011 to Monday, February 7, 2011 with the work session beginning at 6:30PM and the regular meeting beginning at 8PM. It will be located at Village Hall, 200 Pondfield Road, Bronxville, NY. This change will be posted in Village Hall and on the Village website.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS –**

There was no public comment.

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There being no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 9:03PM by motion of Trustee Poorman, second by Trustee Barton.

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Harold Porr III,  
Village Administrator/Village  
Clerk