# MINUTES OF THE LEGISLATIVE MEETING OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF PELHAM HELD ON MONDAY, JUNE 5, 2023 COMMENCING AT 7:00 PM

**PRESENT:** TOWN SUPERVISOR DANIEL MCLAUGHLIN, DEPUTY TOWN SUPERVISOR RAE SZYMANSKI, COUNCILWOMAN KRISTEN BURKE, COUNCILWOMAN MAURA CURTIN, COUNCILWOMAN KARA MCLOUGHLIN

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** DEPUTY TOWN CLERK MOLLY GIROLAMO

**OTHERS PRESENT:** TOM KLEINBERGER – TOWN ATTORNEY, CONFIDENTIAL SECRETARY TO THE TOWN SUPERVISOR-RUTHANN DESIMONE, AUGUSTA TURNER – LIBRARY DIRECTOR, MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

**CALL TO ORDER-** Town Supervisor Daniel McLaughlin opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

**1. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Town Supervisor Daniel McLaughlin asked the Board to review and approve the minutes from the meeting held on May 1, 2023 and the special meeting held on May 25, 2023.

**Legislative meeting minutes:**

**Motion by**: Councilwoman Burke
**Seconded by**: Deputy Supervisor Szymanski

**Vote Taken**:
Supervisor McLaughlin- Aye
Deputy Town Supervisor Szymanski- Aye
Councilwoman Burke- Aye
Councilwoman Curtin- Aye
Councilwoman McLoughlin - Aye

**Motion passed unanimously**

**Special meeting minutes:**

**Motion by**: Deputy Supervisor Szymanski
**Seconded by**: Councilwoman McLoughlin

**Vote Taken**:
Supervisor McLaughlin- Aye
Deputy Town Supervisor Szymanski- Aye
Councilwoman Burke- Aye
Councilwoman Curtin- Aye
Councilwoman McLoughlin - Aye

**Motion passed unanimously**

## PUBLIC COMMENT

Supervisor McLaughlin opened the meeting by giving a brief history of the EMS in Pelham explaining that 20 years ago the Town was under contract with New Rochelle and the Board at that time did not feel like the contact was adequate. From that time until today the paramedic car was brought in and was working well until Covid hit. Post Covid there has been a local and national shortage of emergency service workers so much so that Westchester county has recently brought on four additional ambulances to help cover the entire county. Subsequently, the Town put out a Request for Proposal for a new EMS contract back in November of last year. Five companies picked up the proposal and two submitted bids. The Town is currently in negotiations with the two organizations who bid. Councilwoman McLoughlin added that we are currently contracted with Empress to provide our backup ambulance, noting that our flycar numbers have remained the same – it's the ambulance time that seems to have declined. Deputy Supervisor Szymanski explained that the Board has decided that a change is needed and is discussing both short term and long term options.

- Katie Keenan (225 Elderwood) – Deeply concerned about the state of our EMS. Was not aware of the current ambulance situation and expressed her sympathy to the family who recently lost their father/husband. Expressed that our current situation of not being able to consistently rely on a timely response from an ambulance is not acceptable. Ms. Keenan requested two things from the Board. 1) Commit to fixing the ambulance situation and explore every option. 2) To provide more transparency around EMS response times including a break down by unit. Ended by asking what concerned community members can do to help.
- Gene Iannuzzi (Fifth Ave.) – Gave his background as a paramedic and a RN. He has been involved as a volunteer committee member through the Town's EMS RFP process. He

praised the Town Board for their receptiveness and commitment to the process. Mr. Iannuzzi explained that there are different ways to approach this – some of which have immediate results others that will take time implement. Stressed that this is a time for everyone in the Town to come together to implement and support a solution. He went on to explain the difference of having a contracted ambulance versus a dedicated ambulance. Expressed that as a fellow citizen he is confident that this situation is being addressed and that this should be solved passionately - but with facts.

- Brittany Price (255 Elderwood) - Asked if there has been a forum for the public regarding the EMS situation.
  Supervisor McLaughlin and Deputy Supervisor Szymanski detailed how the process has progressed including the RFP process and any public meetings that have occurred. They also explained that we are currently in negotiations with the two RFP responders and specifics of the proposals cannot be discussed. They added that this will be part of the budget process in October.
  Ms. Price asked about the next steps and timing in the process.
  Deputy Supervisor explained that are two paths – one is that we need an interim solution right now but don't have the ability to change the current budget until the next cycle and we do not have the money for a new ambulance in our reserves. We are looking at a hybrid solution in the interim.
  Discussion around volunteer ambulance corps. Gene Iannuzzi explained that volunteer corps also have paid paramedics. He added that there is an issue with staffing ambulances in the county and there are incremental expenses with a "volunteer" ambulance corp. He expressed that he is not against the idea, just wants the facts to be considered.
- Louis Bastone (700 Wolf's Lane) – Didn't realize we didn't have a dedicated ambulance. Detailed one positive instance of an EMS response and one emergency situation where timing was crucial and the police showed up, but no flycar or ambulance. Discussion around the system, mutual aid and how there needs to a backup solution if the flycar and ambulance are out on other calls. Further discussion about fire departments and EMT first responder status. (Village of Pelham fire department is staffed with EMT's 24/7, Village of Pelham Manor is not).
- Ramsey McGrory (619 Esplanade) – He coordinated combat logistics for a hospital in the Gulf war and emphasized that layers of capabilities provide the most protection. He asked about budget numbers.
  Supervisor McLaughlin stated that the anticipated increase to the Town budget would be approximately 1.7 million to a 4.3 million dollar budget. He used the example of a current $1,000,000 house pays $410 annually in taxes and the new number would come out at approximately $730 per year (per $1,000,000) for an ambulance and flycar. Supervisor McLaughlin also explained that the budget process begins in October and that the final budget is voted on in December.
- Ashley Mills (215 Loring) – Expressed that many community members are discussing this on social media and that the amount of the increase in relation to what we are already paying in taxes seems minimal compared to the seriousness of the situation. Asked how the community can support the process.

- Brittany Price followed up by stressing that there is a sense of urgency and she is shocked that there will not be a solution until December. Asked for communication, a plan, and accountability of the Board. Stressed the urgency.
  Town Attorney, Tom Kleinberger, responded that as a government agency the Town cannot discuss current negotiations in a public forum.
- Katie Keenan asked if we could do an out of cycle budget with approval.
  Supervisor McLaughlin explained that this is not possible in NY state and we are looking into other solutions such as working with Westchester county and reaching out to state senators. The budget timeline was clarified. Private citizen fundraising was discussed.
- Mike Lahn (6 Country Club Lane) – As a medical professional advocated for a full ALS ambulance and for EVAC (Eastchester) from personal experience. Also noted that the fire and police departments are already trained by EVAC and have an existing relationship.
- Marilyn Zelinski (60 First St.) – Thanked the Board for their service. She was shocked to learn that we do not have a dedicated ambulance. Expressed the sense of urgency and that EMS should be a number one priority. Asked if the funding could be reallocated from elsewhere in the budget. Wants to make sure the Board is discussing this and looking at all solutions.
- Ray Florida (Village resident) – Has worked with many boards over the years as a medical professional and commended the Town Board for their tenacity and thoroughness.
- Supervisor McLaughlin wrapped up the public commented by expressing that he is delighted to see the attendance at the meeting and encouraged the engagement.
- Johanna Guerro from State Senator Fernandez's office offered any help they can provide.
- Ed Doty (Chester Park) – Asked about the timeline for an elevator at Town Hall.
  Supervisor McLaughlin explained that we are asking for that money to be reallocated to the renovation of the downstairs when the police department moves to the new municipal building so that public facing offices will be downstairs and accessible. Plans are still being discussed. It was decided that a sign will be posted downstairs so that in the interim Town employees will come downstairs to accommodate the public.

## COMMITTEE REPORTS

### 1) DEPUTY TOWN SUPERVISOR SZYMANSKI

**a. FLY CAR REPORT**
**Month of June 2023**
Village of Pelham - 40
Pelham Manor- 34
HRP- 7

I95 – 0
Average time for the transport unit arrival was 9 minutes and 42 seconds. 50% of the fly car calls were answered in under 6 minutes. 82% of the fly car calls were answered in under 7 minutes.

**2) COUNCILWOMAN MCLOUGHLIN- RECREATION/SENIORS**

a**.** Clinics will be held throughout the summer – including football. Recreation camps will start on July 5th.

b. Recreation department sponsored "Athletes Helping Athletes" where the varsity baseball team held a clinic for children with special needs on June 2 at Glover Field.

c. The Marshall Award will be given out at the October meeting of the Recreation Commission.

d. The AED devices for the fields are on backorder and as soon as they arrive Phil DeSimone will install them. The cabinets are weatherproof and have sound alarms. The Rec department will have access to the AED equipment in the schools during the camps.

e. There were 51 trips in the senior van – a record number. Senior programs are continuing to run through the summer with additional small trips – including a trip to Arthur Ave.

d. June 3rd was a very busy day in Pelham with the Civics Olympics in the morning, the Pelham Together Summerfest in the afternoon with teen bands and many other activities. To end the evening the Pelham Preservation Society held their annual Garden Party fundraiser.

e. Pelham Together Director, Laura Caruso, was honored as a Woman of Distinction by the New York State Senate. The Board offered its congratulations to Laura!

f. The Pride Party will be at Gazebo Park on June 16th from 5:30pm – 8:30pm. The pride banner is hanging in the park for the month of June.

**3) COUNCILWOMAN BURKE – LEGAL**

**a.** The last hire for the Court Clerk position fell through and a new search has commenced. The position has been posted on our website. The Board discussed posting on job boards.

b. The office of court administration has ended Covid protocols. Signage is to be removed. The verbiage from waivers, etc. can now be removed.

c. Property assessment grievance day will take place on June 20. There are two sessions that day – 9am- 11am and 6pm – 8pm at Town Hall. The office will be closed that day and Town employees will be working remotely.

**b. Justice Report –**

**April 2023**

Justice Kagan - $16,793.00

Justice Gardner - $48,968.00

**f. Monthly Tax Receiver's Statement – April 2023**

| | |
|---|---|
| Town/County 2023 | $12,516,715.47 |
| Town/County 2022 | $0 |
| School Taxes | $68,781.08 |
| School Collection Fee | $577.77 |
| Duplicate Payments | $14,036.19 |
| Duplicate Refunds | -$6,396.08 |
| Penalties and Interest | $63,464.75 |
| Liens | $0 |
| Taxpayers Agreement | $0 |
| Misc. | $66.00 |
| Pro-Ratas | $2,181.44 |
| **Total** | **$12,603,716.90** |

**f. Monthly Tax Receiver's Statement – May 2023**

| | |
|---|---|
| Town/County 2023 | $2,736,855.69 |
| Town/County 2022 | $8,448.50 |
| School Taxes | $73,609.01 |
| School Collection Fee | $618.31 |
| Duplicate Payments | $85.02 |
| Duplicate Refunds | -$7,640.11 |
| Penalties and Interest | $20,829.59 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Liens | $26,450.50 |
| Taxpayers Agreement | $4,737.00 |
| Misc. | $1,888.27 |
| Pro-Ratas | $2,46352 |
| **Total** | **$2,868,345.30** |

**4) COUNCILWOMAN CURTIN – LIBRARY**

a. The library is celebrating pride month with resources and activities.

b. The library will be closed on June 16th for Juneteenth and will be attending the Juneteenth celebration in the Village.

c. The summer reading program is kicking off.

d. Storytime continues on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. The program is very popular with many participants.

e. Novel night is seeking hosts for September 30th.

## SUPERVISOR'S REPORT

- There was a great Town Board showing for the Memorial Day parade.
- Supervisor McLaughlin attended the Civics Olympics - over 300 kids participated and the Pelham Together Summerfest.
- We received the flycar check for $109,000. Still waiting the check for the Constable van.
- The Deputy Town Clerk announced the mobile shredder will be in back parking lot on, Saturday, June 17th from 10am-1pm. More information can be found on the website.

**Motion to adjourn the Legislative meeting at 8:38 PM.**

**Motion by**: Councilwoman Curtin
**Seconded by**: Councilwoman Burke

Vote Taken:
Supervisor McLaughlin- Aye
Deputy Town Supervisor Szymanski- Aye
Councilwoman Burke- Aye
Councilwoman Curtin- Aye
Councilwoman McLoughlin - Aye

Respectfully Submitted,
Molly Girolamo, Deputy Town Clerk