

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
October 23, 2023

PRESENT: Mayor Monachino Lapey
Trustee Bennett
Trustee Owen-Michaane
Trustee Case
Attorney Cornachio
Manager Luft

ABSEST: Trustee McLaughlin

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND FIRE SAFETY ANNOUNCEMENT

Mayor Monachino Lapey led those assembled in the Pledge of Allegiance and notified those in attendance where the fire safety exits were located.

OPENING REMARKS

Mayor Monachino Lapey opened the meeting and welcomed everyone.

The Mayor said that she would like to move the proclamation for Eagle Scout Luke Reische up on the agenda. He is a senior in high school and has a lot of work to do. She said that Trustee McLaughlin is in Korea on business. She said that he has an excellent attendance record at board meetings and she wishes him the best. The Mayor asked Trustee Case to speak about an important call he was on last night.

Trustee Case that he was on a call that discussed the possibility of moving the Town of Pelham from the 16th Congressional District to the 14th Congressional District. The 14th District encompasses almost all of the Bronx. The consensus of the call is that this action would be very bad for Pelham. This is a pending court case and there should be a decision by December 1, 2023. He said that the potential maps could stand or could be re-drawn. Trustee Owen-Michaane said that he thought the re-districting with the maps had been dealt with two years ago. Trustee Case said that it was dealt with last year, and then it was sent back to court.

The Mayor asked Manager Luft for a construction update.

The Village Manager said that a lot is going on. The State is preparing for its paving work on Boston Post Road. Actual paving is supposed to start within the next two weeks. The utilities in the Friedland parking lot have been connected and the contractor is starting to backfill. The Village Manager said that Pelhamdale Avenue is a high priority for Con Edison and they are working on that street.

The Mayor said that no one wants the gas turned off. She commended the Village Manager and Building Inspector on their diligence on the CVS project. She said that it has not been easy and we're in the home stretch.

Police Commissioner Bennett said that once again the Police Department has received a safety award from AAA. She thanked the Chief and the department for their hard work

PROCLAMATION FOR EAGLE SCOUT LUKE REISCHE

The Mayor said that less than six percent of all scouts become Eagle Scouts. Luke Reische, a Senior in Pelham High School, restored a recreational clearing at Christ Church. He worked with other volunteers to create a tranquil and well-kept path. She said that this project is so compelling because we have so little green space.

Trustee Bennett congratulated him for his service and his project. She said that he did a phenomenal job. Trustee Bennett asked what was the most challenging aspect of his project.

Luke Reische said that this was one of the last green spaces in the Village. He thought that the logistics and organizing the volunteers and keeping them on task was challenging. He wanted to make sure the work force understood the tasks and the project. He said that a lot of energy was put into making the clearing a better place.

Trustee Bennett said that it is an asset to the community.

Trustee Owen-Michaane congratulated him. He said that Troop 1 has been in existence since 1916 and they now have another Eagle Scout in their ranks. He said that Luke was setting an example for younger scouts. He also congratulated his parents for their help and support.

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, Luke Reische has attained the rank of Eagle Scout which is the highest honor in the Boy Scouting program, and

WHEREAS, Luke Reische is a member of Pelham Troop 1, and

WHEREAS, Luke Reische restored a recreational wooded clearing on property belonging to Christ Church for his Eagle Scout Service Project, and

WHEREAS, Luke Reische helped rehabilitate one of the last remaining areas of undeveloped land in Pelham Manor and restore the clearing to a useable condition which is in sync with Scouting's conservationist approach to service, and

WHEREAS, Luke Reische, with the help of fellow scout volunteers, removed five hundred feet of half-buried tarp, staked out new, modern-grade anti-weed mesh in place of the old material, removed any remains of the old layer of woodchips from the clearing and pathway making room for the eight and a half cubic yards of new woodchips which were laid using three wheelbarrows and several volunteers with shovels, lined the path and clearing with wood sourced on site from fallen trees and branches, provided a custom sign marking the entrance to the restored pathway, and

WHEREAS, Luke Reische helped create a tranquil and well-kept location for those who wish to spend a moment in solitude with nature

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees of the Village of Pelham Manor hereby recognizes Luke Reische on the occasion of his earning the rank of Eagle Scout.

MINUTES

Mayor Monachino Lapey asked if there were any comments or questions on the minutes from the Regular Meeting on October 9, 2023.

There was an error in the spelling of police in the seventh paragraph of the Opening Remarks section. There were two l's in police.

After discussion and upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

RESOLVED, that the minutes from the Regular Meeting on October 9, 2023 be and hereby are approved as amended.

REPORTS

Police Commissioner Bennett discussed the monthly report with Chief Atkins. The Commissioner said that it was good news about receiving the Bronze Award.

The Chief said that every year we get a request from Triple AAA Northeast. The Police department provides a substantial amount of data which Triple AAA reviews. The Village has received awards for many years.

The Business District was discussed. The Chief said that shoplifting and larcenies do continue. He said that the department often responds while they are happening. If they respond after the crime, the detectives will investigate. He said that an ATM was removed from the Manor Card Shop on Boston Post Road. He said that the door was pried open. The detectives are following up on this.

Police Commissioner Bennett spoke about a fraud case. She reminded residents to be careful when giving out personal information.

The Chief said that the person gave credit card and checking account information.

Commissioner Bennett spoke about Halloween and asked the Chief for some tips.

The Chief said that young children should trick or treat only during the day and should always be accompanied by an adult. Older children should be in groups. He reminded people who are driving to be careful going in and out of driveways and to drive below the speed limit. He said that parents should inspect candies and children should not eat any candy while trick or treating.

The Police Commissioner reminded people to drive very slowly because the children are excited and may dart out crossing the street.

The Mayor and Board thanked the Chief for his report.

The Village Manager gave the Village Treasurer's report. The Village received a reimbursement of one hundred fifty thousand dollars from the grant for the ADA lift. The Village was reimbursed five hundred twenty-eight thousand dollars from the State for street paving.

The Mayor said that this was an incredible point. You have to spend the money first and then have the money come back. She said that the paving contractor did a good job. It was very high-level work.

Manager Luft said that they got in and out very quickly.

After discussion and upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

RESOLVED, that the Police and Village Treasurer reports be and hereby are approved.

PROCLAMATIONS FOR PELHAM CIVIC ASSOCIATION'S 2023 PERSONS OF THE YEAR

Mayor Monachino Lapey spoke about two more proclamations. The Village is recognizing three people. They are being honored by the Pelham Civic Association. The Mayor said that that Cindy and Bobby Courtien are being recognized together. They are contractors who love to give back.

The Mayor said that Joe Benefico was a Police Chief when she first took office. He gives back to the community. He is selfless and quietly does things that address a need. He had a stellar career and received a Bachelor's degree in business as well as a Masters degree. He has also made a wide range of contributions.

The Mayor congratulated Cindy and Bobby Courtien and Joe Benefico on their contributions and on being the Pelham Civic Association's 2023 Persons of the Year. The Mayor said that she would be there on Friday night.

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the Pelham Civic Association, one of Westchester County's largest and most active volunteer organizations, has announced that it will honor Cindy and Bobby Courtien as 2023 Persons of the Year, and

WHEREAS, Cindy and Bobby Courtien are the successful owners of C&B Plumbing, and

WHEREAS, Cindy and Bobby Courtien are the proud parents of Kristin, Stephanie and Rachel and grandparents of Victoria, Anna, Adriana, Paige, Brooke, and Albert, and

WHEREAS, Cindy and Bobby Courtien have demonstrated altruism and leadership, served the Town of Pelham, and supported the initiatives of volunteer organizations and charitable causes especially involving local businesses, athletic programs for the Pelham Schools, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help – St. Catharine parish, and

WHEREAS, Cindy and Bobby Courtien have supported the Danny Fund, The Anthony Senerchia Foundation, The Tunnel to Towers Foundation, Pelham Civic Association's Programs and Events, the Pelham Chamber of Commerce and local businesses, Catholic Charities, Lifting Up Westchester, the March of Dimes, Friends of the Pelham Library, the Pelham Girl Scouts, Pop Warner Football, the Boys and Girls Clubs of America, Pelham and Pelham Manor Police and Fire Departments, the Knights of Columbus, H.O.P.E. Soup Kitchen, Pelham Preservation & Garden Society, and Pelham Together

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Trustees of the Village of Pelham Manor hereby recognizes and thanks Cindy and Bobby Courtien on the occasion of their selection by the Pelham Civic Association as 2023 Persons of the Year, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this Proclamation be presented to Cindy and Bobby Courtien.

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the Pelham Civic Association, one of Westchester County's largest and most active volunteer organizations, has announced that it will honor Joe Benefico as 2023 Person of the Year, and

WHEREAS, Joe Benefico was born and raised in Pelham, and

WHEREAS, Joe Benefico and his wife Gail are the proud parents of Michelle and Katie and the grandparents of Alessia, and

WHEREAS, Joe Benefico spent his entire law enforcement career protecting and serving the residents of Pelham, first as a Police Officer from 1976-1992, then as Chief of Police from 1992 until his retirement in 2018, and

WHEREAS, Joe Benefico provided extraordinary First Responder leadership, and created a Police Department that excelled in safety initiatives, and

WHEREAS, Joe Benefico received his Bachelors degree in Marketing and Business Administration from Fordham University and his Masters degree in Criminal Justice from Iona College, and was the recipient of the Graduate Department award for Criminal Justice, and

WHEREAS, Joe Benefico has been President of the Pelham Police Benevolent Association, President and Member of the Board of Directors of the Westchester County Chiefs of Police Association, President of the Pelham Civics for three terms, Chairman of the Pelham Civic Board of Directors, Chairman of the Pelham Civic Benefit Golf Outing, Vice President and Member of the Board of Directors of the Pelham Booster Club

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That the Board of Trustees of the Village of Pelham Manor hereby recognizes and thanks Joe Benefico on the occasion of his selection by the Pelham Civic Association as 2023 Person of the Year, and be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of this Proclamation be presented to Joe Benefico.

CONSIDERATION OF AMENDED SITE PLAN APPROVAL

The Mayor said that ACDS, 575 Fowler Avenue, needed some refinements to the site plan for their playground. She thanked the Planning Board under the leadership of Bill Taubner for reviewing this project. They made some modifications. The Mayor asked Manager Luft for a little more detail.

The Village Manager said that there was some deviation from the original site plan which was approved. She said that there will only be one gate of entry and it will always be locked. Additional arborvitaes, which will be mature, will be planted.

The Mayor said that this was an appropriate use of the process and was ready to approve what the Planning Board recommended and the Village Manager reviewed.

After discussion and upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

RESOLVED, that the amended site plan for the ACDS playground, be and hereby is approved.

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MAYOR TO SIGN ABSTRACT OF VOUCHERS NUMBERS 31748-31795

After discussion and upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

RESOLVED, that the Mayor be and hereby is authorized to sign Vouchers Numbers 31748-31795

PUBLIC COMMENT

The Mayor asked if there were any comments or questions from the public.

Nathan Pereira, 804 Colonial Avenue, spoke about the Pelham Preservation Society using Weihman Park, a new species of American chestnut tree, and the donation of street signs to the Village. He asked about trees in Shore Park that have x's on them and was told that they are Trees of Heaven which were infested with Spotted Lantern Flies. They will be replaced by some trees from the New York Power Authority tree program.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

The Mayor said that there was an issue regarding an employment matter and pending litigation.

After discussion and upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

RESOLVED, that the Board be and hereby is authorized to conduct an Executive Session to discuss the following:

Employment of a particular person and pending litigation

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

Clerk