

MINUTES
TOWN BOARD
TOWN OF OSSINING
MARCH 30, 2021
SPECIAL MEETING
7:31 P.M.

THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIA VIDEO CONFERENCING ONLY
Pursuant to Governor's Executive Order 202.1 dated March 12, 2020

SUPERVISOR
Dana A. Levenberg

COUNCILMEMBERS
Elizabeth R. Feldman Gregory G. Meyer
Jackie G. Shaw Northern Wilcher, Jr.

I. CALL TO ORDER-PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE-ROLL CALL

The Special Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Ossining was held on March 30, 2021 via video conference, pursuant to Governor's Executive Order 202.1 dated March 12, 2020. The meeting was called to order at 7:31 p.m. by Supervisor Dana A. Levenberg. Members of the Board present were: Councilmembers Jackie G. Shaw, Elizabeth R. Feldman, Northern Wilcher, Jr., and Gregory G. Meyer. Also present were Town Counsel Christie Tomm-Addona, and Budget Officer Victoria Cafarelli.

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Supervisor Levenberg announced the following: New York State announced some very exciting news yesterday. Individuals ages 30 and older are now eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine. Eligibility will expand to all those over 16 years of age on April 6th. The number of sites offering vaccines is expanding every day. The WCC campus in Valhalla is scheduling appointments through the Westchester County Department of Health website, as opposed to the state site, at health.westchestergov.com/2019-novel-coronavirus and navigate to the "Vaccine Information" section for links to appointments for specific dates. Do not be discouraged if there are no appointments when you first log in – these dates are updated regularly with new appointments. Appointments at Open Door, the Prescription Center of Ossining, Healthsmart, Hudson Pharmacy, and other local sites can be made directly through the local businesses. Westchester County publishes a list of local allocations each week, which the Town shares on our Facebook Page. This week, it looks like health providers like CareMount Medical have received allocations, so it might be helpful to contact your primary care physician to see if and when vaccines may be available to you via your doctor's office. You can also schedule appointments through the New York State Coronavirus webpage for State-run sites like Westchester County Center or the Armory in Yonkers.

The Ossining Briarcliff COVID Angels are a group of volunteers helping seniors and homebound individuals to get appointments for the vaccine. You can contact the group at OTownVaccineAngels@gmail.com or call 914-236-4567. This group has been very inspiring and I appreciate their sense of community and their willingness to do their best to secure local and early appointments for as many as possible. If you are struggling to navigate the tangle of registration webpages, please reach out for their help.

Ossining is hiring! The Town is looking for a seasonal parks groundskeeper. The complete job description and information about how to apply is posted on the Town website. We have also shared information on our social media pages. Positions are also available for Summer Recreation positions, including

lifeguards and camp counselors. You can apply for these jobs through the Village of Ossining Recreation Department page.

April is just around the corner! The Town of Ossining’s public workshop on Sustainable Ossining, our new Comprehensive Plan, is scheduled for April 8th. Please mark your calendars and help shape the future of land use in Ossining. This workshop will give residents the space to share ideas and provide feedback on our current draft goals. Get involved with this plan by joining us on Zoom. The meeting information is available on our website and Facebook page.

April is also National Donate Life Month – a nationally recognized month focused on raising awareness for organ, eye, and tissue donation. Organ and tissue donation is such an important issue, and signing up to be a donor during this month will help give hope to the thousands of individuals waiting for a lifesaving transplant, as well as their families and friends who love and care for them. If you don’t already have the “heart” on your driver’s license, now is the time to sign up! This year’s theme is Garden of Life, which symbolizes hope, courage, and transformation. I think anyone who has ever experienced the donation journey in any way can find deep meaning in these themes. Join us this month as we plant the seeds of donation by providing education and raising awareness about this important issue. Follow @LiveOnNewYork on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram this month to learn more about donation and hear the compelling stories of those impacted by organ and tissue donation, sign up yourself or help inspire a friend or family member to do the same.

The Ossining PTA is hosting a Food Truck Fundraiser on Tuesday, April 14th in the OHS parking lot. Sign up is required so be sure to register on their website or through their Facebook page. The food trucks include some local favorites like Walter’s Hot Dogs and Wanna Empanada. Meal pick-ups are scheduled for 5:30 through 7:30 – again, on April 14th – so be sure to register now if you are interested.

As I wrap up my announcements, I want to share another bit of exciting news. The Green Ossining Earth Day Festival will not take place at the river this year, but instead has expanded to a weeklong extravaganza. Local businesses will be offering discounts, events will be available in our parks, and there will even be live music. The Town will be hosting a Lunch and Learn program on Monday, April 19 at 12noon via Zoom about the Ossining semester of Cornell’s Climate-adaptive Design Studio. Join us to learn more about this exciting program that Ossining hosted in the fall of 2019 and how it can inspire us to re-envision our waterfront for a more sustainable future. Check out the full calendar of events on the Green Ossining website.

III. BOARD RESOLUTIONS

A. Resolution Ratifying Village of Ossining Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative

Councilmember Wilcher moved and it was seconded by Councilmember Shaw that the following resolution be approved.

Whereas, the Governor issued Executive Order 203 on June 12, 2021 entitled “New York State Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative,” and

Whereas, Executive Order 203 was issued in recognition that “urgent and immediate action is needed to eliminate racial inequities in policing, to modify and modernize policing strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, and to develop practices to better address the particular needs of communities of color to promote public safety, improve community engagement, and foster trust;” and

Whereas, Executive Order 203 directed “[e]ach local government entity which has a police agency operating with police officers under 1.20 of the criminal procedure law . . . [to] perform a comprehensive review of its current police force deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, and develop a plan to improve such deployments, strategies, policies, procedures, and practices, for the purposes of addressing the particular needs of the communities served by such police agency and promote community engagement to foster trust, fairness, and legitimacy, and to address any racial bias and disproportionate policing of communities of color;” and

Whereas, Executive Order 203 directed such plan be adopted by April 1, 2021 as a potential condition to receipt of future appropriated state or federal funds; and

Whereas, the Town could not undertake this review because it has not had “a police agency operating with police officers” since 2011 and currently contracts with the Village of Ossining to provide police services to the Town; and

Whereas, the Village has engaged in the process required by Executive Order 203 and the Town Board has been involved in the process as Town Board member Jackie Shaw sat on the Working Committee for the plan and the Town Board members were provided with the draft plan; and

Whereas, the Village Board adopted the Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative Plan at its March 24, 2021 meeting; and

Whereas, the Town Board wishes to recognize the importance of the issues raised in Executive Order 203, the members of the public for their involvement in this very important process, as well as the efforts of the Village Board, Village Staff, the Ossining Police Department, and the members of the Working Committee in developing this plan; and

Now therefore,

Be it Resolved, the Town Board hereby ratifies the Police Reform and Reinvention Collaborative Plan adopted by the Village Board.

Supervisor Levenberg said the following: As the resolution stated, Governor Cuomo tasked communities across the state with the very important job of developing a plan for reforming their police departments in light of recent police-involved deaths of people of color and calls for social reform. The Town of Ossining has not been a “local government which has a police agency operating with police officers” for about 10 years, and was therefore not able to undertake this process directly. However, the Town contracts with the Village of Ossining for police services currently and the Village did take up this planning process over the past several months. Councilmember Shaw sat on the Working Committee as a representative from the Town Board, and the Town Board, along with other members of the public, have had an opportunity to review the plan in draft forms and participate in outreach sessions and surveys. With the looming deadline of April 1 for this Executive Order, the Town Board decided to take up a resolution to ratify the Village’s plan in an abundance of caution to be sure we are in compliance with this directive from the Governor. We are appreciative of the Village for their efforts to undertake this complex process, and hope our community will be better for it in the future.

Councilmember Shaw said the following: I would like to thank the Police Reform and Reinvention Committee for all their hard work and countless hours of meetings, subcommittee meetings and document reviews. The document is not perfect but I believe it is the best product we could collectively produce given the constraints we had and the limited timeframe we were

working under. I know that the Village, the Town, OPD and the community working together can create a better more equitable Ossining.

Motion: Carried

IV. ADJOURNMENT

At 7:44 P.M., Councilmember Wilcher motioned to adjourn to Executive Session for advice of counsel and Councilmember Feldman seconded.

Motion Carried: Unanimously

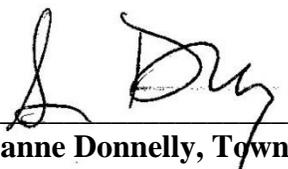
At 8:38 P.M., Councilmember Wilcher motioned to leave Executive Session and Councilmember Feldman seconded.

Motion Carried: Unanimously

At 8:39 P.M., Councilmember Feldman motioned to adjourn the Special Meeting and Councilmember Wilcher seconded.

Motion Carried: Unanimously

Approved:



Susanne Donnelly, Town Clerk