

Mayor Gifford called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

PRESENT: Trustee Cook, Trustee Gray, Trustee Rizzo, Trustee Solotruck, and Mayor Gifford

Mayor Gifford called for a moment of silence in memory a Jan Warner; a pillar and friend of the Village of Scotia.

PRVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Mayor Gifford opened the privilege of the floor at 7:05pm

Michael Barbieri of 214 Alexander Ave; Entire working career has been in the private sector; has learned to stay within budget at all times. Concerned the Village is facing the same budget overage that has been faced for the past 4 years. Two firefighters are retiring; consideration should be given to eliminating these positions to close the budget gap. Concerned there is a conflict of interest with the Mayor and the Fire Department since the Mayor is a volunteer firefighter. Does not feel that a village of our size needs a paid fire department; filed a FOIL in 2019 and the average number of calls was 5 per day. Phase out of the elimination of the paid fire department should begin now with the elimination of the two firefighter spots. Encouraged everyone in the room to email Jim Tedisco and let him know your thoughts on the fiscal mess and encourage him to have the state come in and audit the books of the Village of Scotia. Time to go to the voting booth and put people in place that will stay under budget.

Mayor Gifford closed the privilege of the floor at 7:09pm

LOCAL LAW 2022-A AUTHORIZING A POSSIBLE PROPERTY TAX LEVY IN EXCESS OF THE LIMIT ESTABLISHED IN GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW §3-C

a) Public Hearing

Mayor Gifford opened the public hearing at 7:10pm

Amanda Gonzales-Barone of 6 No Holmes Street; Resided in Village for 5 years and is here on behalf of over 150 residents to express concern regarding repetitive tax increases each year which surpass the tax cap as a means to offset any increases to village costs with no perceptible improvement to Village services. Prices will continue to increase over time; there must be a plan to offset the increases beyond hiking taxes each year for the residents. There is no visible effort being made to pursue other alternatives such as development of the business corridor. Residents are being asked to pay more and more for less and less in return. Financial increases such as inflation and health care are something each municipality is experiencing; however not all of these towns, villages and cities are choosing to continually surpass the tax limit. Some are finding ways by cutting back in other areas through grant programs, shared services and other financial plans that reduce the financial impact on its residents. It seems as though the only plan the current administration has is to push rising costs directly onto taxpayers; continuing to raise taxes in this way is unsustainable and will eventually make Scotia an impossible place to live financially. If the boards only solutions to rising costs is to push them directly onto tax payers, there needs to be significant budget reform. From an economic perspective, this is the time to restructure. There is no transparency as to why it is necessary to surpass the tax cap; the only announcement of this vote was a village email that was sent out five days before the vote. Meeting minutes and meeting videos are not posted in a timely manner to inform residents of these critical issues. Per New York State Open Meetings

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Law Section 106.3, minutes must be posted within two weeks of the meeting; this is currently not being followed. Presented the board with a petition with over 150 residents' signatures requesting that the tax cap vote is delayed until the Village is able to provide details as to why surpassing the tax cap is necessary and how future tax dollars will be spent and holds a public forum to present the findings.

In addition to the petition, has received multiple phone calls and emails and messages with concern regarding lack of Village leadership. There needs to be a change which starts with transparency of our government, a solid plan to revitalize Scotia that does not rely on unaffordable tax increases each year and for the residents of Scotia to be heard. Presented the board with the signatures the list of names of residents that signed the petition that read as follows:

Dear Village of Scotia Village Board of Trustees,

I am a resident of the Village of Scotia and require more information about the Village's proposed use of future tax dollars before supporting another vote to surpass the annual tax cap.

I am requesting that the Village Board:

1. Delay the tax cap vote planned for Wednesday, February 9, 2022
2. Makes publicly-available the specific details regarding why surpassing the tax cap is necessary, including how future tax dollars will be spent
3. Holds a Village-wide public forum to present the findings in #2 above

Thank you for your consideration.

Sue Torelli of 26 Sunnyside Road; Has spoke at several of the meetings over the last few years, message is similar to what has just been said. This is a repeated problem that is not going away; disappointed that there has been no action by this administration to look into possibilities to decrease costs. Budget has already been trimmed; need to start looking at big ticket items such as not filling the spots of the two firefighter positions. Noticed that combining Park and DPW was discussed at previous meetings; need to continue these discussions into Police and Fire services. Residents enjoys these services, which are great services but with rising costs need to look at compromises of what could be done differently. Board needs to listen to the residents and not just have their own opinion regarding services. Each year a budget presentation shows increasing costs which is not stopping; the Village is built-out and the only means to cover these increasing costs is taxing the residents. Residents are upset that the tax cap has been exceeded with large tax increases over the recent years. Village needs to start looking at how services can be tapered to compromise with the costs. Instead of doing this, more money has been spent on studies for a new fire house. Cannot support voting for a fire house when the Village is not able to get the budget under control. Will continue to speak at future public hearings regarding these issues.

Tammi Luckhurst of 134 Albermarle Rd; Wanted to share similar statements of previous speakers; has signed the petition. Feels as if issues that are presented to the board have fallen on deaf ears; board does not follow through with requirements that they have in place for residents or businesses. Frustrated as a tax payer to keep having to pay more and more money without seeing a lot coming from the board with their understanding of things that effect the residents of the Village.

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Mayor Gifford closed the public hearing at 7:25pm

b) Action

Tabled until work session to be held on Monday, February 21st.

LOCAL LAW 2022-B RELATED TO ENCUMBRANCES ON STREETS AND SIDEWALKS-POD AMENDMENT

a) Public Hearing

Mayor Gifford opened the public hearing at 7:25pm

No one wished to speak.

Mayor Gifford closed the public hearing at 7:26pm

b) Action

MOVED by Trustee Solotruck, seconded by Trustee Rizzo that

Whereas, a public hearing was held, this night, February 9, 2022 on proposed Local Law 2022-B relating to Portable Storage Units, now therefore be it resolved that the Board of Trustees adopts proposed Local Law 2022-B.

Ayes: Trustee Gray, Cook, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

PROMOTION OF DAVID WOOD TO CHIEF

MOVED by Trustee Gray, seconded by Trustee Rizzo that

Whereas, Chief Almy will be retiring from the Scotia Fire Department effective March 12, 2022, and

Whereas, interviews have been conducted to fill the position, and

Whereas, the interview committee has recommended that Captain David Wood be promoted to the position of Chief, now therefore

Be it Resolved, that Captain David Wood be promoted to the position of Chief of the Scotia Fire Department effective March 12, 2022, contingent upon the retirement of Ken Almy.

Ayes: Trustee Gray, Cook, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

PROMOTION OF KEITH PHILLIPS TO CAPTAIN

MOVED by Trustee Solotruck, seconded by Trustee Cook that

Whereas, Captain David Wood is being promoted to the position of Chief of the Scotia Fire Department effective March 12, 2022, and

Whereas, interviews have been conducted to fill the Captain position, and

Whereas, the interview committee has recommended that Lieutenant Keith Phillips be promoted to the position of Captain, now therefore

Be it Resolved, that Lieutenant Keith Phillips be promoted to Captain of the Scotia Fire Department effective March 12, 2022, contingent upon the promotion of David Wood to Chief.

Ayes: Trustee Gray, Cook, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

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PROMOTION OF ADAM HENERY TO LIEUTENANT

MOVED by Trustee Rizzo, seconded by Trustee Gray that

Whereas, Lieutenant Keith Phillips is being promoted to the position of Captain of the Scotia Fire Department effective March 12, 2022, and

Whereas, interviews have been duly conducted for the position of Lieutenant, now therefore

Be it Resolved, that the Board of Trustees hereby appoints Firefighter Adam Henery to the position of Lieutenant of the Scotia Fire Department effective March 12, 2022 contingent upon the promotion of Keith Phillips to Captain.

Ayes: Trustee Gray, Cook, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

APPOINTMENT OF FIREFIGHTER LIAM HILT

MOVED by Trustee Solotruck, seconded by Trustee Rizzo that

Whereas, the Village of Scotia Fire Department has an open position for firefighter, and

Whereas, interviews have been duly conducted, now therefore

Be it Resolved, that the Board of Trustees hereby appoints Liam Hilt to the position of Firefighter effective March 14, 2022 contingent upon the promotion of Adam Henery.

Ayes: Trustee Gray, Cook, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

APPOINTMENT OF FIREFIGHTER ADAM WALL

MOVED by Trustee Cook, seconded by Trustee Gray that

Whereas, the Village of Scotia Fire Department has an open position for firefighter, and

Whereas, interviews have been duly conducted, now therefore

Be it Resolved, that the Board of Trustees hereby appoints Adam Wall to the position of Firefighter effective March 28, 2022.

Ayes: Trustee Gray, Cook, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

PERMANENT APPOINTMENT OF RYAN KEDZIOR

MOVED by Trustee Solotruck, seconded by Trustee Gray that

Whereas, Ryan Kedzior was provisionally appointed to the position of Superintendent of Public Works, and

Whereas, Ryan Kedzior has met all civil service requirements for permanent appointment, now therefore

Be it Resolved, that Ryan Kedzior be permanently appointed to Superintendent of Public Works effective immediately.

Ayes: Trustee Gray, Cook, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

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APPOINTMENT OF NICK NORMINGTON TO POSITION OF LABORER

MOVED by Trustee Gray, seconded by Trustee Rizzo that

Whereas, Nick Normington was provisionally appointed Laborer in the Department of Public Works, and

Whereas, all civil service requirements have been met, now therefore

Be it Resolved that the Board of Trustees permanently appoints Nick Normington to the position of Laborer effective immediately.

Ayes: Trustee Gray, Cook, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

SCHENECTADY COUNTY HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN FOR THE VILLAGE OF SCOTIA

MOVED by Trustee Solotruck, seconded by Trustee Cook that

Whereas, Village of Scotia with the assistance from Schenectady County has gathered information and prepared the Schenectady County Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Village; and Whereas, the Schenectady County Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Village has been prepared in accordance with the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000; and

Whereas, Village of Scotia is a local unit of government that has afforded the citizens an opportunity to commend and provide input in the Plan and the actions in the Plan; and

Whereas, Village of Scotia have reviewed the Plan and affirms that the Plan will be updated no less than every five years.

Now therefore, Be it Resolved by Board of Trustees that Village of Scotia adopts the Schenectady County Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Village as this jurisdiction's Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan, and resolves to execute the actions in the Plan.

Ayes: Trustee Gray, Cook, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

2022 STOP-DWI AGREEMENT WITH SCHENECTADY COUNTY

MOVED by Trustee Rizzo, seconded by Trustee Solotruck to authorize the Mayor to execute the 2022-Stop-DWI Program Agreement with Schenectady County.

Ayes: Trustee Gray, Cook, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

BUDGET AMENDMENT

MOVED by Trustee Solotruck, seconded by Trustee Rizzo to Amend Fiscal Year 21-22 Budget as follows:

Increase G.8120.4550 by \$32,112.00; offset by a decrease to G Fund Balance for Emergency Sewer Main and Road Repairs on Sacandaga Road.

Ayes: Trustee Gray, Cook, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

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PAYMENT TO BELLAMY CONSTRUCTION FOR SEWER MAIN EMERGENCY WORK

MOVED by Trustee Solotruck, seconded by Trustee Rizzo that

Whereas, on December 22nd a sewer main collapse was discovered on Sacandaga Road between First Street and Second Street, and

Whereas, immediate repair was required and an emergency was declared by the Mayor and the Superintendent of Public Works, and

Whereas, Bellamy Construction was qualified and able to forthwith address the repair, and

Whereas, Bellamy Construction has requested payment #1 for work completed, now therefore

Be it Resolved, that the Board of Trustees authorizes payment #1 to Bellamy Construction in the amount of \$118,889.90 for sewer main and partial road repairs on Sacandaga Road between First Street and Second Street.

Ayes: Trustee Gray, Cook, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

MAYOR'S COMMENTS TO THE BOARD

Congratulated Police Chief on dismissal of lawsuit Village was named in. Received a phone call from a resident looking for a safe place to skate on the lake; Parks Department plowed off an area of the lake where the water is shallow. Attended ribbon cutting for library addition; library is open and thanked County for doing a nice job. County did a free covid test give away at the library past weekend; Village assisted with no parking signage. Thanked Department of Public Works for cleaning up of a difficult storm. Mayor announced that he will not be running for Mayor in fall; County will be announcing succession plan tomorrow.

CORRESPONDENCE, LIAISON AND SPECIAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Trustee Cook – Zoning Board; no meeting held.

Congratulated Ryan Kedzior on his appointment and leadership in the department.

Police Dept; Significant events this month; officers that also work as detectives were able to apprehend an arson suspect which was also quickly responded to by the Fire Department; investigation is ongoing. Chief Harrigan and Scotia Police Department remain committed to implementing community policing initiative; continues to meet with community partners. Chief Harrigan attended the Business Improvement District meeting to connect with local businesses to be sure their needs are met. Chief met with local pastors to discuss community related issues; especially relating to youth. Continuing to work on Community Resource Officer position which will allow the Village to have a dedicated officer interacting with youth. Received a shared service contract from S-G School District; the Community Resource Officer will be very active in the schools and in the community. The contract will bring in approximately \$42,000 each year to subsidize the cost of Community Resource Officer position. Schenectady County provided the Village with over \$20,000 through bail reform monies. Cordico Grant received will help provide physical and mental health well-being to officers. Officers are wearing green ribbons for the month as a sign of support for a resident's daughter that has a rare form of bile duct cancer. Board approved STOP-DWI agreement with Schenectady County. Chief Harrigan continues to work on Schenectady County Discovery Grant; leverages grants to help offset cost of services provided. Another significant event that occurred was an attempted abduction; girls safely returned to their home; Village officers responded quickly, within a few hours New York

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State Task Force arrived and an emergency command post had already been set up; example of close proximity policing. Police Chief working on preparing the annual budget for the department.

BID – Thanked board for considering an agreement for assistance with snow services; help keep district walkable. Discussions on holding free outdoor movies to attract people to the downtown area; will be done in collaboration with Scotia Cinema and Schenectady County. Discussing holding a Farmers Market in the downtown area this coming summer; will continue work on this with Trustee Gray.

Trustee Gray – Looking forward to bringing back the Farmers Market; discussing with BID, thanked Cathy Gatta for meeting. Looking for community input on potential vendors, etc; please contact if interested. Attended ribbon cutting for library; community room a great addition.

Town of Glenville – Attended several meetings with Supervisor Koetzle; discussed possible youth program for Scotia and Glenville residents. Regarding comments of lack of shared services; has been engaged with Supervisor Koetzle for three years regarding opportunities for more shared services – thanked Supervisor Koetzle for his time.

Fire Department – Thanked Chief Almy and Captain Wood for meeting. Facilities project is continuing with public forums to be held soon. Air filtrations system has been installed in Fire Department; thanked board for their support in getting this completed quickly. Thanked Chief Almy and the entire fire department for all the work they do for the Village. Last month there were 164 calls which is 2nd highest month; thanked all the firefighters for their service.

Police Reform Committee and Traffic Safety Committee meetings will be held next month.

Thanked Mayor Gifford for all his efforts and work he has done for the Village.

Trustee Rizzo – Special Events Committee will be meeting to discuss Car Show. Has been in contact with Waterford Visitor Center; brings pamphlets each year to promote the Villages docks and Freedom Park Summer Series. The Village docks bring people to the Village to shop and spend money within the Village. Casino will be putting in docks this year to hold larger boats.

Clerk's Office – Collection of water and sewer bills is ongoing this month.

Trustee Solotruck – Thanked Governor Hochul for changing the masking plan; will continue mask mandate at Village Hall until the end of February due to collection of water and sewer bills. Historian provided board with report for 2021; continues to grow broom corn and hops plants, which are native to the Village. Works on community garden; great space to visit in the summer. Board was able to look at an opportunity of combining services with DPW and Park; will continue as other opportunities arise while maintaining the Village as we have known it to be in previous years. Finances continue to be challenging; board will continue to look into all opportunities. Several issues are contractual such as the garbage contract with the City of Schenectady which increases \$12,000 each year; this is approx. \$14-\$15 a month per household which includes regular garbage pickup, recycling and one non-hazardous bulk item per week; these are things that would not be received with a private contractor.

Planning Board – Continue to have monthly activity; this month the Mobil Station, another long time Village business is going through renovations. Several businesses have gone through renovations over the past few years such as Citgo on Sacandaga Rd, Cumberland Farms, CVS, and Stewart's; welcome Village business that continue to invest in the Village.

Budget is a challenging time that the board takes very seriously. Supports the Village services as a resident and as a Trustee; board does listen to the residents, as was proven tonight. Thanked Amanda for collecting the petition and for following the process that actually brings these residents questions into formal note and allows the board to act on. Supports career Fire

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Department, Police Department and Department of Public Works; board tries to engage in cost saving measure when available. Tax Cap is not a determining factor of failure or a determining fiscal irresponsibility; the cap is not designed for small municipalities to have services to stand on their own. The tax cap is designed to eliminate smaller municipalities and remove their voice. The minutes are approved formally at the following months meeting and then posted to the website; will look into the Open Meetings Law.

DEPARTMENTAL REPORTS

MOVED by Trustee Rizzo, seconded by Trustee Solotruck that the January Departmental reports be accepted as presented with thanks.

Ayes: Trustee Cook, Gray, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

BUDGET ADJUSTMENTS

MOVED by Trustee Cook, seconded by Trustee Rizzo to approve the Budget Adjustments for the month of January.

Ayes: Trustee Cook, Gray, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

AUDIT OF CLAIMS

MOVED by Trustee Rizzo, seconded by Trustee Cook that be it resolved that all claims against the Village dated February 9, 2022 be allowed and ordered paid in full in the amount of \$229,887.36 charged to the following funds:

A-General Fund	\$ 188,404.45
F-Water Fund	\$ 5,461.82
G-Sewer Fund	\$ 36,021.09

Further the Clerk/Treasurer is hereby authorized to draw checks in the claimants' favor and in the full amount listed and charge the same to the funds listed therein.

Ayes: Trustee Cook, Gray, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING HELD JANUARY 12, 2022

MOVED by Trustee Cook, seconded by Trustee Gray that the minutes of the January 12, 2022 Village of Scotia, Board of Trustees meeting are hereby approved.

Ayes: Trustee Cook, Gray, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD JANUARY 17, 2022

MOVED by Trustee Gray, seconded by Trustee Rizzo that the minutes of the January 17, 2022 Village of Scotia, Board of Trustees meeting are hereby approved.

Ayes: Trustee Cook, Gray, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

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Abstentions: None

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING HELD FEBRUARY 1, 2022

MOVED by Trustee Cook, seconded by Trustee Gray that the minutes of the February 1, 2022 Village of Scotia, Board of Trustees meeting are hereby approved.

Ayes: Trustee Cook, Gray, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

NEW BUSINESS

INTERMUNICIPAL AGREEMENT WITH THE TOWN OF GLENVILLE FOR BROAD STREET SIDEWALK

MOVED by Trustee Gray, seconded by Trustee Solotruck that

Whereas, the Town of Glenville is a recipient of a Climate Smart Grant (aka Safe Way to Schools) that the Town secured through the State of New York to construct a sidewalk on Broad Street, and

Whereas, said grant will partially fund the construction of a sidewalk on Broad Street in the Town of Glenville, with a small portion being within the Village, providing a sidewalk for children attending Sacandaga Elementary School and other nearby schools, and

Whereas, children who are residents of the Village of Scotia will also use the sidewalk walking to school, and

Whereas, the Village is agreeable to contributing \$21,429.07 toward the cost of the sidewalk as it will benefit Village residents, and

Whereas, an inter-municipal agreement is authorized under General Municipal Law Section 119-o and is entered into pursuant thereto, now therefore

Be it Resolved, that the Board of Trustees authorizes the Mayor to enter into an Intermunicipal Agreement with the Town of Glenville for the construction of sidewalks along Broad Street in a form acceptable to the Village Attorney and Mayor in the amount of \$21,429.07.

Ayes: Trustee Cook, Gray, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

Trustee Solotruck stated that there was not a formal Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Glenville and the Village of Scotia regarding this project; no formal discussion on the specifics regarding maintenance of the sidewalk and no formal involvement of the Village of Scotia by the Town of Glenville in the BID process or the start of construction. There is a combined desire by the Village of Scotia and the Town of Glenville to have a safe passage to schools, which this will allow for. Although the agreement is after the fact; the Village has agreed to pay 25% of project cost.

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Trustee Cook stated to ensure efficiency in government; would like the Village to have formal communication with the Glenville Town Board in case they may not necessarily be aware but with projects like this in the future being able to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding before the work takes place will avoid a lot of the confusion that has taken place surrounding this project. As a Village, the Mayor is not authorized to make payment without a resolution from the Board of Trustees; for the board not to have that Memorandum of Understanding is problematic. Would like to be sure this gets resolved prior to entering into any future Intermunicipal Agreements.

MASK MANDATE FOR VILLAGE OF SCOTIA FACILITIES

MOVED by Trustee Solotruck, seconded by Trustee Gray to extend the mask mandate for Village of Scotia Facilities through February 28th.

Ayes: Trustee Cook, Gray, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

ADJOURNMENT

MOVED by Trustee Rizzo, seconded by Trustee Solotruck to adjourn the meeting at 8:15p.m.

Ayes: Trustee Cook, Gray, Rizzo, Solotruck and Mayor Gifford

Noes: None

Abstentions: None

Respectfully submitted,

Maria A. Schmitz

Clerk to the Village Board of Trustees