

**Village Board of Trustees
Special Meeting
Tuesday, October 8, 2020**

MAYOR TRAVER CALLED THE MEETING TO ORDER AT 6:00 PM.

Roll Call	Trustee Boucher	Trustee Carpenter	Trustee Cutler	Trustee Williams
Public	Peter C. Amorosi	Justin Derway	Dean Watkins	Andrew Bluman
Public	Michael Squires	Joseph DeAngelo		

SPECIAL MEETING- Police Department Concerns

Motion by Trustee **Cutler**. SECONDED BY Trustee **Carpenter** to adjourn into executive session at 6:02 PM. *ALL AYES. MOTION CARRIED.*

The Fort Edward PBA met with the Police Committee weeks ago to voice their concerns that the department has. Scheduling has become a major problem with such short staffing. Vacation time will be non-existent because of the manpower shortage. There used to be six shifts per day but scheduling issues has dictated that they resort to 4 ten hour shifts. With the decrease in the number of shifts and available manpower, there are multiple shifts where the patrolman is working alone on his shift and this has become a safety issue. There will be no way to avoid the increase in overtime with Patrolman Squires resigning. This will only get worse with the department consisting of the Chief, Sergeant, 2 full time patrolmen and very limited part-time help available.

Patrolman Andy Bluman mentioned that there are several hot spots (113 Broadway, 182 Broadway, 215 Broadway, 3 Washington Street, 24 Wing Street) in the Village where the officers have to deal with domestics, drug dealing, and possession of weapons. Safety concerns are a major issue for the police department and the officers on duty will not go there alone. There was an incident on Broadway where Sergeant Watkins had to deal with a group of individuals and members from the Fort Edward Fire Department had to come to his assistance and the nearest backup was ten minutes away. This is scary and should not have ever happened. Mayor Traver admitted that the pay rate for part time patrolmen is too low and need to be adjusted. The low pay rate may partially explain why the Police Department cannot get anyone interested. The Police Department feels that there is a lack of support from the Village Board and that is one of the major reasons for the low morale. It was mentioned that the PBA and the police committee should meet more regularly to discuss any issues. Sergeant Dean Watkins feels that the Village should go back to having six full time patrolman so an officer will not be alone on any shift.

The continuing problems with the Spring Motor Inn at 215 Broadway needs to be addressed. There is a drug dealing operation at the motel and various weapons are on the premises. Even if there is a moratorium on evictions, the Village needs to start pulling certificate of occupancies on numerous residences. We have a point system in place to help enforce this issue. This may not solve all the problems, but hopefully, this will slow the ever occurring incidents at these places.

Chief Justin Derway mentioned that one of the problems with staffing is that once training is finished, there is no loyalty to stay where you are working. If this does not change, officers will be switching to other departments non-stop which will hurt the smaller departments even more. There are 2 full-time positions that will have to be filled if we go to 6 full-time patrolmen. The priority is filling the 5th position as soon as possible. Unfortunately, we will have to try to invade other departments to fill this position.

Chief Derway reported that there is an executive order from Governor Cuomo requiring all local government entities to establish a police reform and reinvention collaborative by April 1, 2021. This committee will consist of individuals from the community from diverse backgrounds. The resolution adopted by the Governor will be attached to these minutes.

Motion by Trustee **Boucher**. SECONDED BY Trustee **Williams** to adjourn from executive session at 8:19 PM. *ALL AYES. MOTION CARRIED.*

Motion to adjourn at 8:20 PM by Trustee **Carpenter**. SECONDED BY Trustee **Cutler**. *ALL AYES. MOTION CARRIED.*

Respectfully Submitted,

Peter C. Amorosi Clerk

Dated: October 20, 2020