

VILLAGE OF HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON, NEW YORK
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
REGULAR MEETING
DECEMBER 20, 2016

A Regular Meeting was held by the Board of Trustees on Tuesday, December 20, 2016 at 7:35 p.m. in the Meeting Room, Municipal Building, 7 Maple Avenue.

PRESENT: Mayor Peter Swiderski, Trustee Meg Walker, Trustee Nicola Armacost, Trustee Daniel Lemons, Trustee Walter Stugis, Village Manager Francis A. Frobels, Village Attorney Linda Whitehead, and Deputy Village Clerk Linda Loeb

CITIZENS: Nine (9).

Mayor Swiderski: Before we start with the presentation, I wanted to provide a thank you to those who have served and serve now on the Board of Assessment Review, which has now come to an end. Never a more thankless job there has been than the Board of Assessments. You basically catch it between the eyes from people who are unhappy with the way their house has been assessed, and you do it quietly behind closed doors and have done that for as long as we have had an assessment roll, which we no longer do. So thank you for those who served most recently and historically. It is very rare that a committee is ever sunset in this community. We seem to generate them, spawn them, like salmon. But when it happens it is worth noting the time, the effort, the thankless hours spent.

PRESENTATION –Parks and Recreation Commission Long-Range Plan

Mayor Swiderski: We have a presentation by the Parks and Rec Commission. They have worked with Parks and Rec Department to come up with a long-range plan. It is driven by directives from the Board as well as a need to figure out how to allocate resources. We have had the pleasure of an injection of funding as a result of the Ginsburg development on 9-A which precipitated part of the thinking around this. But more importantly, we felt it was time to ask for a look at the resources we have, which need to be redeveloped and reworked first, and in what order. A lot of work has occurred on this, in bits and pieces over the years, and been pulled together most recently. Now we'll hear the presentation of that plan.

David Downs, Parks and Rec Commission: I am a 32-year Hastings resident, a 40-year veteran of sports and sports media businesses and, maybe most importantly, an avid user of almost all of our parks and recreational facilities on a regular basis. I have also been on the Parks and Recreation Commission for the past two and a half years.

This is an exciting and critical time for the Village, and especially for the Parks and Recreation Department. Over the next five to ten years we will have the opportunity to restore or develop a significant amount of parkland, including Quarry Park, the new park that

was just referenced on 9-A next to the Lofts, and both the northern and southern areas of the waterfront. The Parks Commission over the past six months has researched, drafted and ratified a plan evaluating the state of our parks and recreational facilities and recommending future actions to better serve the needs and desires of our Village residents. You have all received the full document. Superintendent Garrison and I feel it is wise to present the key findings so that when you are facing decisions regarding our park properties over the next several years you have those findings top of mind, and you know the Parks Commission has made an effort to map out our priorities in a diligent fashion.

Before I turn it over to Kendra to take you through our parklands and facilities I want to thank you for your time tonight and add some acknowledgments. First, to the Architectural Review Board for encouraging us to undertake the study. To Trustee Stugis for working with the commission on the form and format of the document, and thanks also for your helpful comments on the early drafts. To Trustee Lemons, thank you for your insight into the condition of our crown jewel, Hillside Woods and Park. And to Mayor Swiderski and Village Manager Frobel, thank you for your comments that were incorporated into the final draft. This truly has been a collaborative effort.

Superintendent Garrison: This slide shows our acreage. First the industry standards. We currently have 170 acres of parkland, which is well above the national and state guidelines. This shows how our parkland is broken down: 129.5 acres is for passive recreation; 17.5 acres is for active recreation, which would be sports fields, baseball, soccer, anything like that; 23 acres is currently undeveloped; then we have the 5 or 6 acres of waterfront land. This slide shows the current condition of our parks. It goes from poor up to new. I will start at "poor/undeveloped" and go to "new." You have the tennis courts, Quarry Park, 9-A Park, MacEachron Park, Graham Park, waterfront north, and Lefurgy Park are "poor or undeveloped." Under the "fair" category, Hillside Park and Woods, the senior citizens park, and Kinnally Cove. Underneath "OK" Uniontown Field and the Chemka Pool. Underneath "good," Zinsser Park, Fulton Park, and Dan Rile Park. Then under "new" Reynolds playground and Riverview Park.

Trustee Armacost: How did you decide between poor and fair and OK?

Superintendent Garrison: We looked to see when they were last renovated, and also what work they will need to get them up to the good/new category.

Trustee Walker: What is Graham Park?

Superintendent Garrison: That is a piece of property as you go down Warburton on the left-hand side past Riverview Park. It is open land right now.

Trustee Walker: The one that was purchased from the Graham School, right?

Superintendent Garrison: Yes.

Mr. Downs: This is a listing of the typical types of recreational activities that an American suburban community would engage in, in ranked roughly in the order that people engage in those. I have taken the liberty of taking some of these recreational pursuits and, when they are using the same facilities, lumping them into the same sort of category. Please note that we did not do a survey of Hastings residents' activities, but we do have some empirical data on that, for instance, accounting annually for the pool and tennis permits, the number of youth soccer players that are registered, the number of Little League players that are registered. Hastings residents tend to be more active than the national average if you based it on those numbers.

As you can see from the checkmarks in the boxes to the left, most of these recreational needs are fully met or at least reasonably fully met. There are some issues with some of the facilities. But there seem to be two fairly large omissions. One is field sports and one is off-leash dog play. Off-leash dog play is at the bottom of the list simply because the surveys that create lists like this do not use that as a category. But other sources would indicate that there should be somewhere between 1,000 and 1,500 dogs in Hastings. Interestingly enough, the Town of Greenburgh has only 244 licensed to the 10706 ZIP Code, but I suspect that is a very low count. Certainly whenever I walked my dog down to the old Riverview Park when it was being used unofficially for a dog park it was packed morning, noon and night.

The issue we see is that without a dog park currently in Hastings people are walking their dogs against the leash law in various place such as Draper Park and Zinsser Park and, most notably, Hillside Woods. Trustee Lemons will tell you that while off-leash dog running is not the single biggest culprit in damage to Hillside Woods, it is one of the top three or four factors in terms of soil erosion and changing the composition of the soil. If you switch the slide, this gives you a sense of what I am talking about in terms of rectangular sports fields. Hastings has none under control of the Village in the Parks and Recreation Department, but all four of the Rivertowns villages take full use of school facilities. If you change the slide, Kendra, this does not fully tell the story. There are some fields that are not let out by the school districts for use by local youth sports teams. Also, if we add in the private school in Dobbs Ferry, as I highlighted the high-capacity turf fields that are able to accept year-round play and simply more play like when it is raining, you will see how Hastings does not contribute its fair share for these purposes. Fortunately, for a sport like youth soccer the sport is organized on a multi-village basis. The Hastings youth soccer players are 500 in number and play their games and train primarily in Ardsley, Dobbs and Irvington.

The school district, while having established or are in the process of establishing three new fields at the upper Burke Estate, have determined they will not let Reynolds Field be used by anybody outside the school including these organizations and will not let the three fields at Burke be used for casual play or pickup play. As a matter of fact, they have recently hired a private security firm that is actively patrolling the fields and running folks off. That means, for Hastings, the Rec Department has no field for rec soccer, for rec lacrosse, for rec touch football, and all the things we can do on a rectangular sports field.

We would love to address those two specific needs and others over the next five to ten years as we develop our future parks. We also know we are facing several restoration projects in this same period and, of course, all that takes capital. We are concerned we will not have enough of that without taking measures that are not currently in place. It is important to commend the Village for the policy adopted roughly 10 years ago of collecting fees in lieu of parkland or open space from developers. That has contributed funds that we hope will go to the restoration of the dilapidated tennis courts by Chemka Pool and also improvements at Uniontown Field we feel are necessary.

The problem is that that source of funds will not be enough for all our needs over the next 10 or 20 years. They are also inherently unpredictable. We do not know when they are coming and in what amounts, so it becomes very difficult to budget. We do think the Village will have to find some new source of funding. We do not know what that might be, short of raising taxes. But I should note that at the waterfront, for instance, if we were to install a high-capacity turf field it would not be uncommon for the parks and rec department in a town to lease that on a regular basis to private youth sports clubs for different sports. That could be a revenue stream akin to what we see at Chemka Pool.

Finally, the top-line conclusions. We have more than ample amounts of parkland and will have the opportunity to develop even more, which is extraordinary when you think of how small Hastings is. Almost 15 percent of our acreage is parkland in this town, which is exceptional. We are meeting most, but maybe not entirely all, our recreational needs. We do feel there is a need to pay a little more attention and take a little better care of the facilities we do have. We will need some funding in the future that is extraordinary, but this will be a marvelous opportunity over the next few years to make the parks and rec facilities of Hastings a paragon of parks and rec, if I dare say that. Finally, we will also have an opportunity with that development to shape the balance of our parkland to better serve the needs of a community that we strongly believe is more active and fit than it ever has been in the past 50 years.

Thank you for reading the plan and thank you for listening to us tonight. Kendra and I are available to answer any questions you might have now, or off-line at a later time.

Mayor Swiderski: Do your slides include, for public consumption, anything to show what the top recommendations are in the short-term?

Mr. Downs: We did not choose to address that tonight, no. We simply wanted to present the fact that there is a plan. We would be happy to do that at a later time, and certainly we will be coming to you for the following fiscal year with some specific recommendations.

Trustee Walker: I want to commend you. This is a fantastic plan and study, and all the work that went into it was significant and professional. So thank you for preparing this. I wanted to point out a couple of things that are beyond recreation that parks are used for. We have been looking at the downtown for a long time, thinking about how the VFW park could be a better public space in the downtown. I would like to add it to the list of capital improvements, whether a gazebo or stage or amphitheater type seating, just making it a more comfortable space for people to be. When we think about perhaps replacing our sidewalks, it might be an opportunity to think about redesigning VFW Park. I have often thought we could get a better plaza in there if we terraced the slope. Anyway, there are a lot of different things that could be looked at. I would love to have it added to the list because it is significant in the downtown in terms of festivals, concerts, and activities that can draw people downtown.

That brings me to one other thing. Parks in this village are often used for festivals, for concerts, and for community gatherings. Sometimes the needs are different than a sports need or a soccer field. One of the questions I had is, whether you have a rectangular field for soccer or the things you mentioned that we do not have, or a Little League field, for example, at Uniontown, can they be used flexibly for outdoor concerts or other kinds of community gatherings? Do they really become off-limits if you need to preserve them for sports?

Mr. Downs: I do not think there is an issue about using those fields. On the professional level almost all the stadiums in the metropolitan area are set aside every once in awhile for a Bon Jovi concert or something like that. The field is a perfect place to have large gatherings like that, much the way they would have high school graduation on Reynolds Field. The only issue would be, given the limited number of fields we have, how constantly in use they are. That would be the barrier. I love the idea of VFW park being a better gathering place for events of a certain size. It is a little limited in size. I am hopeful for parts of the waterfront, as I am liaising on your Shoreline Committee because it is a small town and everybody is doing a little of everything. I do feel that is going to provide us an opportunity to have a band shell where we could have music on a slightly larger scale that would be comfortable for people to gather in. We have been successful with the music festival at Draper as well.

Trustee Walker: We have had great success even at MacEachron Park, when it is not under water, for outdoor events and concerts. One of the questions that comes up when we start looking at a future park on the waterfront is, if we do sports fields down there, could they be flexible and used for other purposes. But the same holds true for other sports fields in town.

Mr. Downs: Certainly the nature of sports fields permits that. The only issue would be just how constant a use they would be.

Trustee Armacost: I also want to congratulate you on a thoughtful set of ideas that are quite important for us to think about at this critical juncture in terms of where things are likely to move, particularly given some of the decisions we have already made on the waterfront and where things are likely to move, moving forward. I do want to reinforce the notion of recreation as broader than just sports. I have been involved and Meg has been involved in a number of those other non-sport activities. Of course, our children have also been very involved in the sport activities as well. But just thinking beyond that.

The other issue that is interesting is the issue of prioritization. When we see a framing of \$4.5 million needed to upgrade all the parks that do not fit into the category of good or great or excellent, if they are not maintained they will start to move back into that other place. To me, it is a question of prioritization. We hit a little jackpot recently which will allow us to do some things, and we have a strong reserve which allows us to make other choices. But we are not going to be able to put \$4.5 million in, without making a very big demand on the community. I am interested to hear a list of priorities, irrespective of where the funding comes from, and then creative ideas about ways to access that funding.

The easiest creative idea is to have a developer be forced to do development that fits into our agenda. That is obviously a way where we can cut certain costs. As soon as we lose that opportunity, the amount of money involved ratchets up. That is the next step I would like to see. I am also interested in efforts to work with the school. One of the challenges you talked about is certain fields being off-limits because the school has a set of rules. I am wondering whether as people in decision-making position shift there is more opportunity for sharing to occur. We have a spectacular boys soccer team. Those boys and girls and everyone who has been involved in that we need to celebrate. There should not be an exclusive view on the way in which the fields are used. I would like to know if you have a strategy in place, whether you are trying to work with the schools in a way that allows for more collaboration, more use of some of those fields which were recently refurbished by the school with a lot of taxpayer dollars. Everyone should be able to benefit from that.

Mr. Downs: We did meet with Dr. Montesano and the athletic director to talk about collaboration and cooperation and Parks and Rec use of the fields and, in turn, our ability to

give them things they do not have. For instance, they do not have enough tennis courts, even with the brand-new tennis courts. They desperately need us to refurbish the Hillside Park courts because they have three teams in the fall and three teams in the spring. The same goes for the fields they have just created. Unfortunately, those fields are primarily for the use of school teams. Even with Reynolds Field being used on a sporadic basis, and three fields eventually coming on line at Burke, between the lacrosse and field hockey and soccer programs, and of course modified and JV and varsity and then girls and boys, those fields are in very high use. The one or two hours each day that are not being used are immediately signed off to youth soccer teams, some of which are the teams that those stellar state championship soccer players play for, although, in fairness, most of those players play for the larger teams.

Trustee Armacost: They are on private teams.

Mr. Downs: I would say the elite teams that are more county and state based rather than the community based teams such as Rivertowns and Greenburgh United.

In terms of our understanding of passive recreation versus active recreation, we realize as a commission that we are a "parks" and recreation commission and that people enjoy wandering and strolling and smelling the flowers and looking at the beautiful views of the Hudson. But it is fair to point out that with roughly 88 percent of our current developed parkland dedicated towards passive recreation, and only 12 percent towards active recreation, and then knowing that Quarry Park is restricted in its funding to only passive recreational uses, and that Waterfront North is practically restricted by its physical constraints of where parkland would go to passive recreation, even if we were to dedicate one small portion of Waterfront South and say the park by 9-A would be for active recreation, that balance would still be roughly 85-15 and would not dramatically change. It is the feeling of the Parks and Recreation Commission that we need to do a better job meeting recreational needs in those areas. That, and the dog park.

Then finally, funding.

Trustee Armacost: Well, prioritization in relation to funding.

Mr. Downs: Yes, and we have given a fair amount of thought to that and realize that just coming to the Village and asking for a lot of money to restore parks that are completely dilapidated, or develop new pieces of property, is a big deal. But we also feel that if we have 170 acres of parkland under the auspices of the Village that we need to recognize you cannot own all that land without every 20, 25 years or so cycling through some form of reinvestment. Reynolds Field playground was just recently refurbished, but in 20 to 25 years

it will be a crying need again. Hillside Woods, the problem there is that if we do nothing in the next five years the deterioration of Hillside Woods may be so dramatic that any amount of money we throw at the problem will not solve it. I wish I could tell you we had the magic answer for how to raise these funds, but we cannot just sit on 170 acres of parkland without finding some way to continually reinvest and maintain it. You would be right to say to us, OK, Commission, your job then is to find the single most efficient way to do that so it burdens the Village the least. I think you want us on the watch of trying to figure out which lands are going to need the reinvestment.

Trustee Armacost: Absolutely. The other thing we have is an abundance of people who are interested in volunteering, particularly for Hillside Woods. And that passive-active, we happen to be very lucky we have Hillside Woods. I do not think anyone wants to turn Hillside Woods into active recreation. So that should come off the table when you are looking at the weighing of the two, in my view.

Trustee Walker: What other cities have done either with volunteers or through their parks commissions is to form a non-profit. I am sure you have probably talked about this, a parks conservancy or friends of Hastings parks organization that could raise funds the way the Hastings Education Foundation raises funds for the schools. Then come up with projects to help support, or volunteer efforts to organize, and it would be great if it was all under one umbrella. We did have a trails committee for a long time, but it has not been active recently. They were helping to prevent erosion in the trails in Hillside Woods, and also marking trails. That is what communities do when they have the assets without the capital to support it.

Mr. Downs: That is a fair point. In the restoration of Reynolds Field playground there was a massive fund-raising effort the Village did not solicit but nonetheless turned up to make that park even nicer than it could have possibly been under the budget allocated. To a lesser extent, the Friends of Riverview Park have also started a fund-raising effort to add some niceties to that park. That is wonderful but, again, it is unpredictable and unreliable.

Mayor Swiderski: It should not be something we rely on.

Trustee Walker: No, although some cities do.

Mr. Downs: My understanding is, the Village legally is not supposed to rely on that for budgeting purposes.

Mayor Swiderski: Right.

Trustee Walker: But Central Park is operated by a non-profit organization, as is Prospect Park and most of the parks in Manhattan.

Mayor Swiderski: It does have the richest people on the planet

Trustee Armacost: I think is exactly right that if there is an organizing body that is committed to a particular area, then that group can organize for certain things to happen. There are Scouts that need Eagle Scout projects. They have in the past and can continue in the future working on the trail. That is a perfect Eagle Scout project. It does not fix all the problems of the park, but there are certain things that can be done through groups of people. The Vine Squad is an absolute gift to our village; the work that Haven Colgate and Susan Harris and all those people have done. The schoolchildren contribute to that, as well. There are these groups of people and we need to organize and publicize the work they do. There is work that is happening, which does not take away from the fact that more money is needed. So how much is that, and what are the priorities, and over what period of time. That is the next stage of the plan, in my view.

Mr. Downs: Exactly. We are aware of these other organizations and ad hoc committees that are concerned about specific things within our parks. In just the past few months we have done a better job of liaising with those groups. I am meeting regularly with the Hillside Woods portion of the Conservation Commission, for instance. You will see that from us as we are more attuned to that. We are concerned, but we are also looking for solutions.

Trustee Walker: That is excellent. All these things become glaring. You get to see the needs. It is so easy to ignore them when you do not have a plan in front of you like this. So this is really helpful to have to help plan ahead.

Trustee Armacost: There are some groups that have a strong view about certain parts of Parks and Rec. The people at Zinsser have not necessarily collected money, but they have collected a lot of effort and in-kind commitments to what is needed in the Zinsser area; Riverview has done the same thing; the Little League has done a phenomenal job over many years in gathering money and resources to improve the situation for Little League participants. It would be useful to share this plan with all those groups so they can give comments and feedback on whether the emphasis is right. I am sure you had chit-chats with various people, but I do not know whether that kind of solicitation of input has happened.

There are projects that have been in the works for as long as I have been a Trustee and longer. So in the prioritization it is important to look at the historic crying out for help that has been going on by different groups. It would be nice if that happened in a more streamlined way and that we did not have to intervene as Trustees to make certain things

happen. I see a number of people here from the Little League. Back to your time, Jerry, there have been problems relating to when Jerry was head of the Little League. There have been problems relating to parking and various other things. None of this stuff is new concerns or complaints. We have to play a role in trying to adjudicate which concerns come forward in order to be able to allocate money effectively, as well, in a fair way in relation to how much effort people put in over a long period of time. It would be useful to have the recommendations of the Parks and Rec Commission and see how that matches up with historic complaints and demands from groups about deficiencies that exist in their view.

Mr. Downs: As you know from reading the report, the commission has recommended we invest in the Little League facilities in Uniontown, and the playground and the parking lot. That was a direct result of listening to their repeated input en masse over a long period. It is a problem that we have recognized, as a group that has existed for decades.

Trustee Lemons: To have a more comprehensive view of things is a little daunting because I do not think your figure of \$4.5 million is unrealistic. I think it is realistic, probably low, if anything. On the other hand, it is good for us to see the reality laid out in front of us so we can think about what we want to do. Some funding mechanism is going to have to be arrived at, something like the conservancy group. There are very strong neighborhood groups around Zinsser, around Riverview Park, and also the Reynolds playground. That was a little less neighborhood-y because that drew from a wider area. These parks have natural constituencies that, once they get motivated, will do a lot.

The one area that does not have, or has the wrong, natural constituency, is the Woods. That is an interesting case for us because that is the main reason we have such a high number relative to other municipalities. When we preserved the Woods, I was thrilled when that happened. That was a big effort to do that, to preserve those woods. It never crossed my mind what we were biting off when we did that, and we bit off a huge amount. Some of it would not even have been predictable at that time. We did not have the deer problem at that time. We also did not have the overrunning with kudzu and other of these non-native species that have destroyed the woods.

Those things have rolled over on us from outside that we could, in no way, have predicted. We were probably not so far off in thinking it is just natural succession of plants and trees, and it will go on in perpetuity and is that not wonderful we preserved it. But now that is not where we are, and now we are looking at the stewardship of this large tract of land for a village this size. In your listing of the cost here, a half-million for Hillside Woods, I think it is probably a few million. I think you are agreeing with me that that \$4.5 million figure is low to preserve that. That is beyond what the Village can do. So we are going to somehow find some other resource base to do that. As you said, that is something we cannot afford to

sit on. Because the longer we sit, year by year, the worse that is getting. It is very much to our credit that we do have this kind of abundance, but it also a huge effort for us then to exercise the stewardship we should.

Mr. Downs: In fairness to the estimates for the Woods, we are very early in the process, particularly on the Parks and Rec side. The Conservation Commission is ahead of us on this, but they too are being cautious in leaping to conclusions that this is the main reason the Woods are deteriorating or this is the only solution that is available. We will know much more by early summer, based on the timing of what they are doing. We are assisting them in any way, shape, or form because, ultimately, the Woods are under the operation of Parks and Rec. We are trying hard not to duplicate their efforts and they are trying hard not to duplicate ours. And we are trying to learn as fast as we can what may be out there as a solution. Allegedly there are some communities that have faced similar problems that have rebounded a bit.

Trustee Lemons: I think you mentioned this, but I will mention it again. There will be some kind of day-long, or however long it is going to be, focus on the Woods, with experts coming in the spring. We are going to know much more probably by the time that is over.

Trustee Walker: And we should point out that there are other woods, too. I forget how many acres it adds up to, but at least 10 or so: Ravensdale Woods, Lefurgy Woods, Pulvers Woods. Mr. Gonder, you are right near Pulvers Woods, and I was wondering if these woods are in as bad shape as Hillside Woods. Certainly they are overrun by deer.

Mr. Downs: Pretty fair to say they are all under the same pressure. I was surprised to see how big Graham Park is: 16 acres.

Trustee Armacost: On page 17 you have the list of potential costs. Quarry Park is not listed. That is a lot of money that is going to come from one of these places where the donor is obligated to donate that money. So it is nice money for us, meaning we do not have to raise it from taxpayers. The first two items you have here, I am imagining this is 9-A money. This is what I mean by prioritization. Is it money that exists because we have a fund, in this case from the 9-A development, or is it money that is going to come out of some other taxpayer funding source? It would be useful for us to see those details, and to include Quarry Park because that is a big part that is going to come online soon.

Mayor Swiderski: I am of a mixed opinion on that because it is the Parks and Rec Commission, not the Parks and Rec finance commission. To some degree there is an expectation of that, but I cannot say we staffed you with that in mind. It was not necessarily a skill set we looked for when we put you up to this task. You sequenced at least the work,

which to me is a proxy prioritization. The first two projects are probably the right two first projects. I am not sure we have to go much further on that prioritization. It is clear. We have courts that are rendered half inoperable right now, and a Uniontown Field which has historic issues. The shape of the solution for Uniontown Field is still wide open, but the need for the issue to be addressed is not questioned. We cannot lose months more in prioritization effort. Those two are the next ones on the table and we can safely move forward with putting those on the list of projects for 2017. The exact sequencing of work into the subsequent years, it is a dynamic world; we will be shifting all the time. But those two first projects are, at least to me, clear as a priority.

Trustee Walker: Although the amount may not be clear.

Mayor Swiderski: The amount is indicative only. I am assuming they have some basis in reality, especially a rough sense for the tennis courts. The others you can estimate, but it is under certain assumptions which will be tested as we get to the project. It may be less and it may be more, but we need to get to those projects. That will come out as we begin the design work, specifically for Uniontown. Let us at least agree up here that one of the results of this effort is that those two projects seem to be the ones we should move forward in 2017.

Trustee Armacost: I agree, but I think Quarry Park needs to be added. That is dedicated, is going to happen.

Mayor Swiderski: It should absolutely be added. It is \$1.3 million. It is a substantial addition to the portfolio here. And you deserve and we deserve, as "the Village government," the credit for what is going to happen there. So it should be absolutely added. And you are right, that is 2017.

Trustee Armacost: That has to be immediate.

Trustee Walker: We should talk about 2017 and Quarry Park?

Mayor Swiderski: Oh, we are starting work on it. We have the money now. The \$1.3 million is available now, a consent decree has been signed by all the parties.

Trustee Armacost: It is going to be a big year for you guys.

Mr. Downs: Very bright and very big. The intention of putting Quarry Park at the bottom as a footnote was simply to say this was not something we would come to you at a capital budget meeting and say you need \$250,000 from who knows what source.

Mayor Swiderski: The point is well-taken. You may.

Mr. Downs: Well, we may.

Trustee Armacost: Right. The other thing that this raises is the staffing of the Parks and Rec Department. It is our joint responsibility and interest to think about what is needed in terms of a team to maintain what is what will be, so to speak. The skill set of the people that are there, there is a very different thing. If we are saying the bulk of the parks are passive parks that are woodland areas that requires a particular type of expertise which is maybe different than parks which are soccer fields or baseball fields. Both are important, so this is another discussion we are going to have to have soon, before all these parks come online and this needs to be incorporated in the upcoming budget.

Mayor Swiderski: I totally agree.

Village Manager Frobel: What you see here tonight is what the department would present to me that would be incorporated into the capital improvement plan, which is our five-year plan. In that, I do a fiscal analysis where I indicate to you where the revenue items come from and the impact it would have on the operating budget. That is where you talk about staff and equipment. This is just the first step in the capital plan. This is what I would have received from the department, typically, over the summer months. I am still putting the capital plan together. I pull that into the full document, and it addresses public works, Parks and Rec, equipment needs, all the items that are viewed as capital improvements.

Trustee Stugis: This column of numbers represents the capital improvements and restoration of these various parks and facilities. I would suggest a number of them are a lot bigger than they needed to have been because they were not maintained over the years. There was not normal investment, and nothing was done to those tennis courts for 15 years, or for 30 years before that. So it is no surprise it is going to cost this much to totally redo them. It is the same case with a lot of these, so we have got to make sure. There is another column that is beyond restoration and capital improvement.

Trustee Armacost: Maintenance, absolutely. This makes it seem as if it is a discreet activity that happens in that year, which is not the way it is going to be. It is probably going to be, \$100,000 in year one and \$100,000 in year two. When we get to a more nuanced planning we can see how much of that is money that has to be spent in that year, how much can be generated through volunteer activity, how much comes out of a special grant. That will give us a better sense of what each year will look like. We are lucky these days because we do have a reserve fund. We have money put away in the capital fund where we can begin to think about some of those things. Chemka Pool is a serious investment in and of itself.

Village Manager Frobel: That is why we have the reserve for the pool.

Trustee Armacost: It is being moved off to 2020, but I think Kendra would say that needs to be started sooner than 2020.

Trustee Walker: What about grants for some of these? I particularly think of Hillside Woods. I know a few years ago there were opportunities from the state for erosion control and dealing with sedimentation in ponds. Over the years there have been a lot of different grant opportunities.

Village Manager Frobel: There may well be. Also the forestry grant. There is an opportunity for the park there. Again, that is part of my capital improvement plan, where we have a column for grant potential. We identify them. Only half the equation is the program, the other half is the revenues. That becomes my burden to try to identify the likelihood of funding for some of that.

Trustee Walker: But I think it is out there.

Trustee Armacost: Maybe we can get Lieutenant Dosin. He is just so good at grants, maybe we could move him away from the police department to work on parks, too, since he is also focused on the Little League.

Trustee Walker: We have done pretty well with Quarry Park.

Village Manager Frobel: Except not lately, unfortunately. And with other parks, so I do think it is worth it. Especially when we have the luxury now, as Niki pointed out, in fund balance, where our match money can come from this and we can leverage it.

Trustee Walker: Right. That will be helpful.

Mayor Swiderski: So if I can recommend next steps, the two projects at the top of the list are two of the three projects, including Quarry Park for next year. That, I think, is clear. The sharpening of the pencils to come up with some better idea about how this fits into a capital plan is worked out with the Village Manager during the capital planning process over the next few months. It is going to be indicative only in the out-years. I mean, it is going to be a recommendation and no more than that. I think we understand that. This needs to be posted on the Village website, ask people to read it, and send in thoughts. You went through a process that was public and open. I have found in this village that people only become aware of a process after it is concluded. Then we hear about it. If you can post it you never know

what edits might be worthwhile to make. On those first two projects, the discussion should begin sooner than later. I would say stick it on our agenda in January, and let us queue up the process around both projects. I think of the two, Hillside tennis courts is cut and dried; there are some drainage issues there, but beyond that there is no question about the footprint changing, at least as I am aware. The other one, we have the full discussion it needs, we queue it up and do it. Let us get to work on that.

Thank you, Walter. This was Walter's kickoff project in terms of the new Trustee, and I think it shows. He has a background in strategic planning, and one of the things I found compelling here is the argument for a half soccer field would never have occurred to me. When you stick it in the context of a community's needs, and you did that analysis that very clearly checked off what is needed. Here we have a winner soccer team that is having to play away from the school to find deals. I have been thinking about these things for 16 years now, and you brought a fresh eye to that. I want to thank you for that.

Speaking of personnel, it is ignoring the elephant, or the young lady, in the room. It is hard to overstate Kendra's role in what she has done for this village around Parks and Recs. In fees and programs we probably do better than all the other villages combined. Her moving on to greener pastures is a loss to us, and we will miss you terribly. I do not want this discussion to end without acknowledging how core you have been to building a program that made other communities envious enough that they, I think, stole you from us. I cannot say I blame them because you built a hell of a rec program and we are going to miss you. I know you played a role in the development of this that was critical, and I suspect everybody on the Parks and Rec Committee feels the same way I do, as well as everybody up here.

Trustee Armacost: Yes, thank you. And one thing I think we can say is that Hillside Woods does have a bit of Dobbs Ferry in it. So I think we can drag you in, maybe, on the discussion of Hillside Woods. Thank you, though. And special thanks to David and to the commission, which put in a lot of work, and to the Little League and other groups that contributed. And also to Walter.

Trustee Walker: Yeah, thank you so much, Kendra.

Mr. Downs: Eight months going to six or seven of these meetings was a fantastic process. All the ideas bubbled up, and this prioritization is spot on based on what the people really want. The analysis taped it, my input was minimal, and I was a cheerleader mostly. I promised them this and this, this venue, so here we are.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On MOTION of Trustee Walker, SECONDED by Trustee Lemons with a voice vote of all in favor, the Minutes of the Public Hearing of November 15, 2016 and the Regular Meeting of December 6, 2016 were approved as presented.

APPROVAL OF WARRANTS

On MOTION of Trustee Walker, SECONDED by Trustee Lemons with a voice vote of all in favor, the following Warrants were approved:

Multi-Fund No. 42-2016-17 \$ 60,000.00
Multi-Fund No. 43-2016-17 \$ 199,311.14
Multi-Fund No. 44-2016-17 \$200,264.60

PUBLIC COMMENTS

John Gonder, 153 James Street: Some of the people are here on your approval on the assessments. I just found a letter dated March 25, 2010. I will not go over it. But number five says, "As considered, your complaint on real property assessment and reduce my assessment by 10 percent." It was \$7,250, and it went down to \$6,525. These are people you put on the Board, and I appreciated that. Then we went to the assessment by the Town. My assessment, preliminary, was \$546,000; 83.7 times what I was assessed from these people. I fought them, and I know I am going to lose. But I got a tentative one of \$402,000. That is only 61.6 times what my assessment was. Finally, I went over to the Town and they told me it is a tear-down and reduced it to \$364,100. Now I am going to go to court. I wish I had this letter, but my filing systems are not the greatest. To go to court it costs a lot of money: photographs, cameras. I spent several hundred dollars or more, plus my time. My time was probably over 100, 200 hours. I did not keep track of that. Why? Because this board did not want to do assessments anymore. Jeremiah Quinlan was the only Board member who said he voted against the reassessment. He said it is going to stir up a can of worms. It has, especially for me and a lot of older folks. It is just a poor way. Some place between \$7,374, when it is a tear-down according to the Town, something is wrong with these people that are in the assessment business.

Arthur Riolo, Affordable Housing Committee: Mine is a feel-good story On Saw Mill Lofts 10 of the 12 units that were affordable are inhabited now, and the other two will be by the end of the year. On 52 Washington Avenue we have closed on two of the units and hopefully will close on the third by the end of the year. So 52 Washington Avenue will be fully inhabited. On 190 Farragut, we hope to break ground in the spring.

Mayor Swiderski: That is great. That is 15 units. That is a lot of work to get those 15 units.

Trustee Armacost: What are you going to do next year? You are going to be so relaxed.

Mr. Riolo: We will be in front of you next year. We have designs on some Village-owned property that we are trying to figure out how to develop for affordable housing.

Mayor Swiderski: Terrific. Remarkable work.

Trustee Armacost: Congratulations.

Trustee Walker: You all are awesome.

Mayor Swiderski: Thank you.

Mr. Riolo: It is a team effort.

**76:16 INTERMUNICIPAL AGREEMENT WITH WESTCHESTER COUNTY FOR
ACCESS TO NETWORK/TELECOMMUNICATIONS SERVICES THROUGH
CABLEVISION LIGHTPATH**

Village Manager Frobel: This comes as a recommendation that we renew the intermunicipal agreement with Westchester County. As indicated, they negotiate a contract with Cablevision Lightpath to provide telecommunication services to a host of municipalities in Westchester. Through volume discount we benefit from this relationship. We are looking to renew that for a five-year period of time.

Trustee Armacost: Is there anything we can do to improve the service? I am being a little bit tongue in cheek, but we are giving them this exclusive right and yet we have a situation where people's cell phones do not work in various parts of the Village.

Village Manager Frobel: This is our service.

Trustee Armacost: Oh, just for the Village's cell.

Village Manager Frobel: They provide us for our phones, for our Internet service, and our video streaming. This is not a private deal, this is what the Village subscribes to.

Trustee Armacost: But it still does not work in the Community Center. No one's cell phones work in the Community Center.

Village Attorney Whitehead: It is not cell phone service.

Mayor Swiderski: This is the optic fiber that runs here.

RESOLVED: that the Mayor and Board of Trustees authorize the Village Manager to sign the Intermunicipal Agreement with Westchester County for access to network/telecommunications services through the County's renewed agreement with Cablevision Lightpath, Inc., for the term Jan. 1, 2017 through Dec. 31, 2021.

ROLL CALL VOTE	AYE	NAY
Trustee Meg Walker	X	
Trustee Nicola Armacost	X	
Trustee Daniel Lemons	X	
Trustee Walter Stugis	X	
Mayor Peter Swiderski	X	

77:16 SCHEDULE PUBLIC HEARING – PROPOSED LOCAL LAW E OF 2016 TO ESTABLISH THE ALTERNATE VETERANS EXEMPTION PURSUANT TO §458-a OF THE NEW YORK STATE REAL PROPERTY TAX LAW AND INCREASE THE MAXIMUM ALLOWABLE EXEMPTION

Village Manager Frobel: Thee Board has, over the past several years, discussed the advisability of extending the veterans exemption to veterans who served after 1983. As you know, there was a moratorium and it was closed off at that time. With joining with Greenburgh, giving up our assessing unit responsibilities, the thought was that we should also join with Greenburgh in offering the exemption to our veterans; this would be the time we would want to consider it. This would extend the exemptions to veterans who served in a uniform during certain periods of time over these intervening years. It would offer them an exemption on a portion of their property. What is important for us is to have this in place soon, if you are inclined to support it. This would not go into effect, so you would not see any of the physical impact, until the June 1, 2018 budget year. That is almost a full year to even be in place before we would see that impact on our revenues. The law was written by Attorney Whitehead. This is exactly what the Town of Greenburgh offers, and that is what is before you tonight for setting of the public hearing.

Village Attorney Whitehead: To further explain, because it refers to the section of the real property tax law, the New York State Real Property Tax law which was adopted in 1984 for the Alternative Veterans Exemption, has three levels. The main one is 10 percent for everybody who is classified as a veteran under the description in that law. Then for combat there is an additional 15 percent. That is the reference to subsections A, B and C. Then C is if you are a disabled veteran. It gives a larger amount if you are disabled. And that is not a percentage, that is based on the disability determination by the government. The law provides that those exemptions, the percentages, are up to a maximum of X, or say \$12,000. The law also allows you to increase that maximum amount to varying levels. So the levels of \$54 thousand, \$36 thousand, and \$180 thousand are the levels Greenburgh has adopted. They are not the highest, but they are towards the higher side. When Fran and I talked about doing this law we talked about let us start the discussion with doing the same thing that Greenburgh is currently doing.

Mayor Swiderski: What are the other communities doing?

Village Manager Frobel: I think they are all with Greenburgh.

Village Attorney Whitehead: Doing the same.

Trustee Lemons: Is that what paragraphs A, B and C are, those levels?

Village Attorney Whitehead: No, they are not the levels. They are the veteran, combat veteran, and disabled.

Trustee Walker: And how do these levels work, the \$54,000 and \$36,000?

Village Attorney Whitehead: For instance, under A, which is an exemption of 15 percent for someone who meets the definition of veteran, if your property is assessed at, let us take a ridiculously easy number of \$100,000 which nothing in Hastings is because you are now at full value, the exemption would be 15 percent, or \$15,000. If your maximum was still at the 12, it would not be 15, it would be 12. So it is a cap essentially. Initially you take the percentage, then you apply the cap. It is the higher of either the percentage or the cap.

Trustee Stugis: If your 10 percent is \$39,000 but your cap is \$36,000, you only get the \$36,000 off your assessment.

Village Attorney Whitehead: Correct. The 15 percent comes off the top, then the rest is after that.

Trustee Walker: What happens to those who already have an exemption? How does that change?

Village Attorney Whitehead: Let me explain what the Village did in 1984. When that law was adopted in 1984 municipalities did not have to adopt it, it automatically went into place, although the law gave municipalities the option to opt out, which is what Hastings did. So you have a law in your code today that says you are opting out.

Trustee Armacost: So we have to repeal that.

Village Attorney Whitehead: Right. That is the first part of that, repealing that and then enacting this. So you have to repeal the part that says you do not have it anymore. In terms of what happens to the people who were getting a veterans exemption pre-1984, it is a different exemption. I would have to double check with Edye, but it still may apply because it is a whole different exemption and the category is set up differently.

Mayor Swiderski: But what happens next year to them?

Village Attorney Whitehead: This is not effective for 2017. Those are still in effect.

Mayor Swiderski: OK, what will happen '18 to them?

Village Attorney Whitehead: They will get this, and they may also still get what they are getting today. That is what we need to check.

Mayor Swiderski: That does not seem right. One category of veteran should not enjoy a double exemption.

Village Attorney Whitehead: And I am not sure if that is right. We need to check that.

Village Manager Frobel: As I indicated in my narrative, not to take away from this conversation but there are some nuances in this transition that we are experiencing. In my weekly report I gave you a summary of the meeting we held over two hours trying to sort this out with all the villages in attendance. We are having a hard time getting the exact facts of how some of this transition is going to work. For example, right now we are a little troubled by the fact that we have about 50-plus seniors who have an exemption on our current roll. We want to make certain that is going to roll forward on the new roll to reflect their taxes on June 1, 2017, and we are trying to get a straight answer on that. So there are some of these uncertainties. By accelerating our joining the group, some of these things still have to be sorted through.

Trustee Armacost: Meaning the concern is with the people who already get an exemption to make sure they are grandfathered in or transitioned in.

Village Attorney Whitehead: Transitioned. Because of the difference in the tax status dates and when the rolls are prepared sometimes in the first year you have these glitches that come from the different time frames. That is what we are trying to make sure, that those exemptions are in place.

Trustee Armacost: For this particular set of people, both seniors as well as veterans, I would say they are in a category of vulnerable people where we need to get it right.

Village Attorney Whitehead: And we are trying. We do not control it, but we are pressuring.

Village Manager Frobel: The pre-1983 veteran should not have a problem, right?

Village Attorney Whitehead: Right.

Village Manager Frobel: The seniors have to apply every year, that is the problem. The applications are in now, thinking I have to have it in by December 31.

Village Attorney Whitehead: When it really needed to be in by May 1, which was before you even made the decision to do this.

Village Manager Frobel: See the problem?

Trustee Armacost: But they have to be grandfathered in.

Village Attorney Whitehead: That is what we are working on.

Village Manager Frobel: I am going to go back to the minutes the night Edye met here. That was a question I am almost certain was asked. I have to make certain what the answer was.

Village Attorney Whitehead: Since she was the Village's assessor she had to know.

Trustee Armacost: She is wearing both hats.

Village Attorney Whitehead: For another 10 days.

Village Manager Frobel: But that is the problem, they comply every year. There is a deadline that our folks think is December 31 to qualify for the June 1 bill, and Greenburgh had a different shutoff date which was May 1.

Village Attorney Whitehead: Yes. For towns, and we talked about this a little bit when you first talked about ceasing being an assessing unit, in the first year you have a problem because the tax status dates are so different. Technically, the deadline, because their tentative roll comes out in June, is May 1. You had not even, at that point, decided you were doing this. That is where the problem of this gap comes in. She did say you do run into some problems like that in the first year because of the earlier tax status date. We are pressuring her that it has to be done.

Mayor Swiderski: It has to be, and if not we have to talk about what we must do to rectify that, whether it is a specific village law a bridge to cover some sort of payment.

Village Manager Frobel: I think Raf and I talked about it, or you and I spoke it, Linda. Some kind of a rebate or something.

Village Attorney Whitehead: Well, there are some provisions in the law. We had to do this, as I think I have told you before. We had the Village of Mamaroneck cease being an assessing unit and had problems because it is in two towns that do things two different ways. It has been three years and we still have problems. The Town of Rye had given us some incorrect figures two years in a row. There is a correction process you can go through with the county tax office that can allow you to make a correction. There are certain categories for what is considered an error that can be corrected in that sense. I can take a look at that. What we would probably end up having to do to do that is, it would get corrected in the spring, and they would have a credit on their second-half bill to address that. But I will take a look at that section of the law and see if it would apply to this case where the exemptions were mistakenly not granted, if that happens.

Village Manager Frobel: And if this law passes, Mayor and Board, we are going to have to tell our veterans they have to have it in by May 1. They have to apply, physically, in Greenburgh to get this veterans exemption for June 1, 2018.

Village Attorney Whitehead: Right, they have to apply by May 1 because May 1 is the tax status date for the 2017 roll, which is used. We are a little behind. Remember the Town tax year starts January 1. So that is why the dates for their roll are so much earlier, because they need to have that roll in place before. They are doing their budgeting now, their budgets get done in December.

Trustee Armacost: When you say they need to be there physically, do they have to physically go themselves, they cannot just send in an application by mail?

Village Manager Frobeld: I think they should have to go there because they have to show what is called the DD-214, which is their discharge papers. I think they have to show it to them and they have to copy it and stamp or something and give it back.

Trustee Armacost: It proves that they are that person.

Mayor Swiderski: But that is not the annual process. That would be one-time event?

Village Manager Frobeld: That is a one-time event.

Village Attorney Whitehead: Is that what she said?

Village Manager Frobeld: I know that personally.

Trustee Armacost: It may be that some people need help to go and fill that in.

Mayor Swiderski: We will make sure that happens.

Village Manager Frobeld: We will talk to our VFW.

Village Attorney Whitehead: They have a pretty big staff over there so, hopefully, they do help people with those things.

Mr. Gonder: Two questions. One, in regard to this 1985, if I was in the Service 1953, am I eligible? That is one thing

Village Attorney Whitehead: Did you apply prior?

Mr. Gonder: No, I did not even know it. I was working three jobs to stay in Hastings. The other thing is disability. If you have a service-connected disability, non-compensation-able, and that is what I have. In other words, it is not over 10 percent. I can go to any VA hospital for that.

Village Attorney Whitehead: There are very specific technical criteria on what classifies as a disability and how the exemption is determined based on it. I cannot answer that for you here, off the top of my head.

Trustee Stugis: We do have to help people get this opt-in done. I know in the Fire Department, Department Secretary Schnibbe does a lot of work in the first quarter getting us all to fill out our forms and getting them notarized. It is a big deal. It is an annual thing, and if we do not get it in that does not stop the Town from sending me a letter saying don't forget, three times. So the veterans and the seniors need that kind of advocacy.

Trustee Armacost: That is important. Mr. Gonder is a well-informed person and was not aware, and not everyone watches these meetings.

Mayor Swiderski: We do have two institutions in town that is probably going to be helpful.

Trustee Armacost: Exactly. More than two. We have also the Senior Citizen Advisory, we have got the American Legion, we have got the VFW. But I think we need to also tell them that this is an important role for them to play.

Village Attorney Whitehead: For the seniors who already have an exemption, they already have to apply every year. And if they are already getting the exemption the Town has their name and the Town will be sending them letters.

Trustee Armacost: Fran and I were discussing earlier that one of the curious things is that our list is not the same.

Village Attorney Whitehead: Because not everybody has applied in both.

Trustee Armacost: That is the point, though.

Village Attorney Whitehead: I think Edye has asked for our list so she could include that, but we can double-check.

Trustee Armacost: As long as we have reached out to people then we have done our part. But some people may need us, beyond us reaching out, to help them, particularly if they have to go in person. There may be people who need to be driven or supported in some way.

Village Attorney Whitehead: I think once the Board has adopted this, that is when you can really start working on that.

On MOTION of Trustee Armacost, SECONDED by Trustee Walker the following Resolution was duly adopted upon roll call vote:

RESOLVED: that the Mayor and Board of Trustees schedule a Public Hearing for Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2016 to consider the advisability of adopting Proposed Local Law E of 2016 to adopt the alternate veterans exemption pursuant to §458-a of the New York State Real Property Tax Law and Increase the Maximum Allowable Exemption.

Be it enacted by the Board of Trustees of the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson, as follows:

SECTION 1. Existing Article IV. Alternative Veterans Exemption of Chapter 260, Taxation, is hereby repealed.

SECTION 2. New Article IV. Alternative Veterans Exemption of Chapter 260, Taxation, is hereby adopted to read as follows:

Article IV. Alternative Veterans Exemption

§260-22. Purpose.

The purpose of this article is to set forth that the exemption from real property taxes pursuant to §458-a of the Real Property Tax Law of the State of New York shall apply to properties located within the Village, and to provide the percentage of the real property tax exemption provided for in §458-a of the Real Property Tax Law that is effective in the Village of Hastings-on-Hudson. All definitions, terms and conditions of such statute shall apply to this article.

§260-23. Maximum Allowable Exemption.

The maximum exemptions allowable in Paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) of Subdivision 2 of § 458-a of the Real Property Tax Law are hereby set as \$54,000, \$36,000 and \$180,000, respectively.

§260-23.1 Inconsistent Laws.

Pursuant to New York Municipal Home Rule Law § 22, the provisions of this article are intended to supersede the provisions of Real Property Tax Law § 458-a to the extent that this article and Real Property Tax Law § 458-a are inconsistent.

SECTION 3. SEVERABILITY

The invalidity or unenforceability of any section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause, provision, or phrase of the aforementioned sections, as declared by the valid judgment of any court of competent jurisdiction to be

unconstitutional, shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any other section, subsection, paragraph, sentence, clause, provision, or phrase, which shall remain in full force and effect.

SECTION 4. EFFECTIVE DATE

This local law shall take effect immediately upon filing in the office of the New York State Secretary of State in accordance with section 27 of the Municipal Home Rule Law.

ROLL CALL VOTE	AYE	NAY
Trustee Meg Walker	X	
Trustee Nicola Armacost	X	
Trustee Daniel Lemons	X	
Trustee Walter Stugis	X	
Mayor Peter Swiderski	X	

VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT

Village Manager Frobel: At the last meeting I spoke about the Quarry Trail and how we had done our specifications over the summer. We went out to bid and were very disappointed in the results, and how although I tried to negotiate, and was successful in negotiating, with the low bidder the County and legal counsel said no, you re-bid. So we will. But also, last week I reported in my weekly that we were not funded for the \$106,000 grant we were hoping for Quarry Park.

Trustee Walker: How do you mean? I thought we got it.

Village Manager Frobel: No. That was the one we applied during the summer.

Trustee Walker: What about the older one for Quarry Park?

Village Manager Frobel: We are waiting to hear if they will extend that and roll that forward. There is about \$30,000 left in that unspent.

Trustee Walker: But what about the one that was part of the trail and the park?

Village Manager Frobel: That we still have. That was the one I did for the trail.

Trustee Walker: But there was money in there for design of the park as well.

Village Manager Frobel: Well, there is a dispute in that.

Trustee Armacost: There is \$147,000, right?

Village Manager Frobel: Yes. Between the recreational trail and the environmental protection. But the state is telling us that they do not expect us to use that money at the park for the park design. That letter, I printed it with a memo and stapled it. That was the state's determination. I argue we have more than enough money to do the trail. We do not need all that money for the trail. We have wanted it for design of the park. They said no, it is to be used for the trail. I said can we modify the grant at a later time, and they never wrote back.

Trustee Walker: But now it has been a couple years since we went over this. We clearly identified these both as projects. Then they gave us two grant pots, right?

Village Manager Frobel: That is right. We did not expect.

Trustee Walker: I thought it would be more than enough to do both.

Village Manager Frobel: Right.

Trustee Armacost: I have written down in my notes that there is \$147k, which was to retain Matthews Nielsen, right? And then there was an additional \$167k grant to get the bid docs prepared by the end of the year. Then there is a third grant which you called "the legacy grant," which was \$105,000. So is that the one that has fallen through?

Village Manager Frobel: That is the one that has lapsed, with the exception of about \$30,000. We have asked for an extension, and the state has not yet written back saying they would grant that extension. They approached us saying for another extension. And we have.

Trustee Armacost: So which is the one that lapsed?

Village Manager Frobel: The one you just mentioned, the legacy.

Trustee Armacost: No, I mean the one you were just referring to a minute ago.

Village Attorney Whitehead: It did not lapse, but we did not get it.

Village Manager Frobel: It was \$106,500 to cover final design and specialized engineering services for drainage. This was going to get us up to the bid document and was not funded.

Trustee Armacost: But which is different than the \$167k. So what is that one for?

Village Manager Frobelt: That is for the trail completion.

Trustee Armacost: And that one we still have.

Village Manager Frobelt: We still have it.

Trustee Armacost: So sequencing the steps, do we have money to move to the next step? Or is there a critical pot of money that is missing?

Village Manager Frobelt: What is missing is the money for the final design for Quarry Park. We do not have that money, that grant did not happen.

Trustee Armacost: But we cannot take that out of the money from ...

Mayor Swiderski: You certainly can.

Village Manager Frobelt: Could.

Mayor Swiderski: That is just the first thing we would do anyway.

Village Manager Frobelt: Our goal was to use the grant money and leverage some of our own money from that Building 52 money. Now that opportunity is not there. What I am telling you tonight is, I am going to come up with a plan where the recommendation might lead to access the \$1.3 million for this final design for the Quarry Park.

Trustee Lemons: Would it make sense also that I assume there is not an unlimited bunch of opportunities to get funding like this to go for further funding and do it for other parks since we do have a committed amount of money for Quarry?

Village Manager Frobelt: You mean in the future, the next round of grants?

Trustee Lemons: In the future, in the next round.

Village Manager Frobelt: Oh, sure. I am sure there are. You heard tonight some of their needs. We could look for that. Hillside Woods may be poised at that time to make application for a grant. We may be in good shape then. I mean, it is a disappointment. If you look at the amount the governor distributed it was very heavy towards programs that were

going to hire a lot of people. The focus was economic development, hiring people, job creation. Our grant we knew was weak because we were hiring a landscape architect and some engineers. It did not score as well as others, and that is truly what I think was the reflection of that. It was not a lack of progress, and it was a good program. The staff at the state level liked it, it was exciting. We completed that phase of the work, but it was not philosophically lined up with what the governor wanted.

Mayor Swiderski: Right. The risk that we have is chewing it to the \$1.3 million, which is already tight. It leaves us vulnerable, and that being sufficient to create whatever it is, that portion we chew into, funds in terms of landscape architecture. We may not have a choice, but the landscape architect will have to work within the constraints of what we have.

Trustee Walker: I wondered about the cost of the design. So much of it is just fill. How did Matthews Nielsen come up with their fee?

Village Manager Frobel: I do not know.

Trustee Walker: Because if it is just based on 10 percent of the construction cost it seems way more than it should be. It is not a lot of detailed construction documents, it is very simple construction. Most of it is fill and seeding.

Trustee Lemons: What about drainage? Is that a big deal?

Trustee Walker: The drainage is a big part of it, and grading. But the engineer is going to do most of that, those kinds of drawings. I do not know what the landscape architects are going to do. They will choose some plants and some grass seeds and work with the engineer, but there is not much being built there.

Village Manager Frobel: Over the summer and into fall I met with Matthews Nielsen and argued that point. I told them we are at a point where we'll re-bid it, your services are too rich for our blood, I think we should go out and get the pricing. Oh, no, no, we're the best in the industry, we've been with you on this project from the beginning. Our committee likes them, we know that our committee likes them.

Trustee Walker: I know. They are very good. They are excellent landscape architects, but do we need the highest caliber? Like one of the best firms in the country to do Quarry Park?

Village Manager Frobel: I will meet with our committee and pose that question: It looks like we are going to the grants, we are paying some out of our pocket, let us see if we can get some wiggle room here to find someone else who can help us with this next phase.

Trustee Armacost: On the legacy grant, everyone uses different words for all these grants so I cannot tell whether there are millions of them. I cannot tell whether all the money is there or not, but on that legacy grant if that comes through can that be used for this purpose?

Village Manager Frobels: Yes.

Trustee Walker: The design?

Village Manager Frobels: Yes.

Trustee Armacost: So can we not focus our efforts then on what do we need to do to have that money released to us.

Village Manager Frobels: Simply get the state to say you can have another extension. It expired in 2014. The \$35,000 was not enough to retain Matthews Nielsen to do more work. They had done everything they could for the money we had allocated for the pre-design.

Trustee Armacost: Can the committee lobby? What is the most effective strategy and tactic to get that money released back to us?

Village Manager Frobels: Chris Lomolino has been in contact with them. Matthews Nielsen called on our behalf. And I asked the landscape architect for Quarry Trail to make a phone call on our behalf to get that money extended. They all did, and we are waiting to hear now.

Trustee Walker: How about one of our representatives?

Village Manager Frobels: Sure. I mean, I did not think of that.

Trustee Armacost: This would be useful because if this money can compensate for the money that was lost it is almost exactly the same amount of money. To me, it was confusing because it just sounded exactly the same.

Village Manager Frobels: It is only \$35,000. That is all we have left in the legacy grant.

Trustee Armacost: Oh. You said \$105,000. I see, it is \$35k left.

Village Manager Frobels: That is all that is left. That is why it was not enough to extend Matthews Nielsen's work at Quarry Park. There was no more work they could do for that so

that is why we made application for the \$106,000 to see if we could leverage it and get it done.

Trustee Walker: Now it really might not be.

Village Manager Frobel: Let me contact some of our elected officials and see if they can help us in this effort to extend that grant.

Trustee Armacost: But that is not going to help us. It is only \$55,000.

Village Manager Frobel: Well, it is going to relieve the \$1.3 million dependency. We are always trying to find money.

Trustee Armacost: Yes, it is nice but it is not really going to pay for it.

Village Manager Frobel: It is not significant enough to make any difference. Then let me meet with our committee to explain to them our situation.

Trustee Walker: I also think Matthews Nielsen could give us a breakdown of their fee. It does not have to be a straight 10 percent of construction cost. I could be completely off, but it is worth asking them to show the hours they are going to spend on this. Where is all this money going? I just do not see it. I know there is engineering.

Village Manager Frobel: Well, they are estimates, what she gives me. I should contact her.

Trustee Walker: More specific than an estimate now because that is what you use to go after the grant. Now that we are going to have to pay for it out of pocket it is important to know what it consists of.

Village Manager Frobel: I will contact her, as well, but I wanted to make sure the Board read the note and we discussed it before I contacted anyone further. Let me do that and report to at the next meeting as to where we are. We will know better then.

Trustee Stugis: Some folks on the committee said they are glad you want to meet with them. They said they are wanting to help find somebody else. They are starting to explore other ...

Trustee Armacost: "Other," yes contractors. Because you have one successful bid.

Village Manager Frobel: For the trail.

Trustee Armacost: For the trail. That is what you meant, right?

Trustee Stugis: I think for the park.

Trustee Armacost: Chris was disappointed because the only bidder, who happened to be the successful one, that was not considered a broad enough set of bids. It was rejected by the state.

Village Manager Frobels: Oh, no. It is just that the two bids we got were dramatically over our estimate.

Trustee Stugis: Double the estimate.

Village Manager Frobels: Double the estimate. So the fact was that in meeting with the low bidder and the high bidder the low bidder was able to reduce his price by \$40,000. He did that because he wanted his guys working this winter; We are not doing any concrete work, it is all grubbing, clearing; As long as there's not a foot of snow on the ground we get this work done. I had to call him back and say thanks for your effort, but we are going to have to re-bid it. He said I only shot you that price because I wanted to keep the crew busy over the holiday.

Trustee Walker: But you said it was because the state requires us to re-bid it.

Trustee Armacost: But my understanding is that they are going to be more active in trying to solicit more bids rather than let it be such a passive process. But maybe you were talking about something else, Walter.

Trustee Stugis: No, the same thing.

Village Manager Frobels: It was not passive. We mailed it out, unsolicited, to 15 bidders. We held on-site visits, we did our advertisements in local papers, so there was interest. And there is also a professional journal that contacts us to get the specs to distribute to their members. So it was very aggressive. We attribute it to the fact, as we had thought going in, that the economy is very strong and a job like this is not that big a job.

Trustee Armacost: So less interesting.

Village Manager Frobels: Less interesting for the contractors, yes.

The only other item was, there were some e-mails from Farmers' Market. I thought they might formalize their request. I thought there was some interest to hold the market this Saturday. Is the Board inclined to support it?

Mayor Swiderski: The Board's guidance was to the Downtown Advocate that she verify there were a couple of merchants that have concern on this issue, that they are OK with it. She did. The concern came back that it has to be done by noon. I was there when the Downtown Advocate emphasized that to the Farmers' Market. As long as they are done by noon and advertise out, where they mention this market the people should try to park down at the Zinsser parking lot, we are OK. With all that said and done, they are not sure they can pull it off on three days' notice. So it may be a scramble for no reason. We will try to accommodate. It took a few hours, the better part of a day, to get everybody's input.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND COMMENTS

1. Legal Representation for the Village in Discussions with BP on Site Disposition

Mayor Swiderski: This will be a resolution at the next meeting. We would like to formalize a relationship with Gary Rosenberg. Gary Rosenberg is a resident in Hastings, one of the two partners in Rosenberg and Estis, arguably one of the best and most well-known real estate lawyers and development lawyers in New York City, who happens to live here in Hastings and is offering to support our discussions with BP on a pro bono basis. He had a pass at this apple in the '80s, when this first development was proposed, and gave the Village assistance back then. He is back here. We have had several meetings with BP, and Mr. Rosenberg's assistance has been invaluable. We want to formalize that into an agreement that we are in the process of crafting, and would like permission of the Board for me to sign with Gary at the next meeting. I just wanted to raise this. It is hard to get advice paid, least of all pro bono. So we are lucky to have his input.

Trustee Armacost: So do you need a resolution?

Village Attorney Whitehead: We are working on the agreement.

2. Looking Back, Looking Forward: Review of This Year's Activities and What We See for Next Year

Mayor Swiderski: We do not do this, and we should. I want to take a few minutes, since this is the last meeting of the year, to look back. We get lost in the noise of these meetings, the day-to-day drudge of the meetings, and sometimes forget what happens in the course of a

year. This year, in retrospect, may have been one of the most remarkable in terms of achievements and successes in the eight years I have been up here. I want to step through these accomplishments because they involved work of everybody up here.

On the waterfront, we completed the consent decree. Building 52, the demolition permit was approved. Two huge steps forward after years of negotiation. Jerry Quinlan, who is not here, deserves credit for assisting me on that, and it was huge as to the attorneys and engineers who helped as well. On the sustainability front, we did an enormous amount. Here, both Trustees Lemons and Armacost were instrumental, with the Village in full support mode. Fran helped to ensure we have full LED coverage of the street light list changed. We cut the Village over to green power effectively so we are now essentially powered by green energy and saving people money in the course of doing that. My calculation shows it is about a quarter of a million dollars a year if you make certain assumptions about next year, and that is not chicken feed. That is a quarter of a million dollars that did not go into Con Ed's pockets. And we cannot forget that 60 homes now support solar panels.

Trustee Lemons: We are over 80, we are maybe closer to 90 probably.

Mayor Swiderski: Did that happen this year?

Trustee Armacost: Yes.

Mayor Swiderski: For that, it is a Solarize effort, it is Buddy bending backwards to permit all these people, and then in the end the installation firm for pulling it off. It is quite remarkable.

On the financial stability front, a couple milestones this year. We exceeded 10 percent in our reserves and, yet again, kept ourselves at two percent. We created a capital reserve fund for later in the year, which we will finally fund with not insubstantial monies. And the reassessment process ran its course and we folded our assessment roll into the Town's rolls. We all know how important Niki's role is on this, but also Fran and Raf and the Village ensured all this happened. And, arguably, we have not been in this sort of financial shape in 20 or 30 years, if ever. We have been waiting for this moment, we are declaiming the 10 percent. We did it, we finally did it.

Infrastructure renewal. There is an overhaul on Reynolds playground, overhaul of Riverview. We have a five-year plan for the streets finally. We finally see curbs being replaced for the first time and a new sidewalk on Hillside. We can now begin to talk about bigger plans, moving forward. That is due to the financial health of the Village. And on this,

the thanks go to the community groups that helped us, the Parks and Rec Department that rallied to pull this off and, again, Fran, you and your efforts on the sidewalk and curbing, pulling this all off. I think one of the few things that has ever bothered me up here in the 15 years I have sat is the feeling that things are shabbier than they should be. It is nice to begin to see that trend. It feels like we are trending in the right direction.

The downtown. Again, I have here the menu for Bread and Brine, which opens tomorrow. We have Boro6. We have got a dollhouse store, we have got a Penny Lick. In the last year what has happened in the downtown is real. People questioned whether the monies for a downtown advocate were worthwhile. Ask any one of those store owners. Their attitude toward the Village is 100 percent different than it would have been 10 years ago. They view us as a partner, they are positive, they will approach us and shake our hands. I came out of Bread and Brine today and he made a point of saying Buddy bent backwards to get him his permit in time. Buddy knocked himself out to get there, several times, last minute so he could open on time.

Trustee Lemons: And over the weekend.

Trustee Walker: Wow.

Mayor Swiderski: Over the weekend.

Mayor Swiderski: You know, there is a sense that things are turning around. And we see it in the Friday Night Live events, which Meg originally kicked off and has now become institutionalized. People love it. They attend these things. The Crawl people loved, and other communities do not do this stuff. Kids go up to school, to college, and mention it in passing and others look at them like, What? We never did that. And that is a real sense of community that we fostered and we are seeing.

Trustee Armacost: Foodtown is also important. Foodtown has contributed to the Village in so many ways.

Mayor Swiderski: Foodtown is core. They are a partner to the community. You look at where we were a year ago. There was no Foodtown, there were empty storefronts, all but Chelsea's. Amjo's is going into Manor Market, Hastings House is in contract, every major empty storefront other than the old Chelsea's the change is palpable. We won the street sweeper grant so a lingering irritation will ultimately be addressed next year. And the downtown streets are tangibly cleaner. They could be better, but absolutely cleaner. I walk them every day, and there is no question. It is persistence, it is painful, it is not terribly rewarding, but there are significant positive developments.

In terms of other activity, we have got a Transportation Working Group that has hit the ground running. They have come up with tangible projects that are not pie in the sky stuff, but very practical things we are doing and we see the results of.

Trustee Lemons: They just dropped this off, Peter.

Mayor Swiderski: OK. I did not plan this. The Slow Down Rivertowns effort, that was coordinated with them, the signage, the crosswalk control freshly painted, practical ideas.

Trustee Armacost: Inexpensive and effective.

Mayor Swiderski: And they are thoughtful and it is terrific.

Finally, we are in our third year of the deer contraception program, and at that threshold where we are likely to see results next year. We do not know yet if this program is a success, but persistence and flexibility has resulted in something that is also moving forward.

Trustee Armacost: Can we just add one more, which we heard today, which was the affordable housing success? That is huge.

Mayor Swiderski: Fifteen units. You are absolutely right. There are other items here which I am not even mentioning. We got the grant for the 9-A study. This is not a complete list, and this is this year. It is a credit to everybody on this board and the Village and the committees. It is a Village that pulls forward and it shows, the sheer number of successes.

Next year, there are a couple of major items on our agenda. We heard from Parks and Rec about further work on infrastructure, including at Quarry Park, and the rehabilitation of both the tennis courts and Uniontown. It is not going to be confined to that. We have the money and we have the desire to continue to push on infrastructure. We are going to see more curbs, more asphalt laid, the possibility now of a sidewalk on Broadway which we have long envisioned. We all want to see that move forward because we all share that desire to see the Village sparkle better.

We will be kicking off, at the beginning of next year, the rezoning of the waterfront. BP is moving ahead with their engineering design and also considerations of what to do with the property. We have absolutely got to get ahead of them and begin the rezoning process before they catch up with us. We do not want to head into that process on the tail of development. We want to have the community thinking hard about these issues now. That will start in January. We will begin to start laying out a timetable for that.

Trustee Walker: And funding, because that will require consultants as well.

Mayor Swiderski: You know, maybe.

Trustee Walker: Maybe?

Mayor Swiderski: We have got \$350,000 sitting in an account from BP.

Village Attorney Whitehead: Maybe planning, not maybe the consultants.

Mayor Swiderski: Definitely the consultant, but I do not think the issue will be for us to fund it. BP will fund that. I think it is critical.

Then finally, Meg has been waiting for this moment. It is too bad she departs just when we get to it, but we are going to begin an informal process of redoing the downtown: the sidewalks, the street furniture, the things that will make it match what it is becoming.

Trustee Walker: I am not going to be around to see the fruits of my labor.

Mayor Swiderski: Well, that is not true.

Trustee Armacost: You can check out anytime, but you can never leave.

Mayor Swiderski: And the rezoning I do not want to leave behind. The water's edge, the work that, Meg, your team is doing, it is more and more clear that the timing is perfect because we need to have that vision in place before developers show up. It is going to fold over the first half of this year, and we all know it is no longer theoretic, it is the real thing.

It is all hugely exciting. I wanted to thank everybody up here for work done when I iterate through this. It is hard to believe it is all one year. The year has felt very long at times, but a lot got done. Meg, it sounds like a good segue to the Shoreline Committee.

Trustee Lemons: Peter, could I insert a couple more things? Niki and I went up and received an award for the Village because we inched up to third in Westchester County on recycling. We are back up to like 28 percent of our total trash is recycled. And we did the large tracts rezoning.

Mayor Swiderski: That is 15 years. That is the crazy thing, major projects like that which we have been thinking about for years. It is off my list, I missed that one.

Trustee Stugis: There is stuff that is not as visible as the sidewalk, like what is going on in our senior program. The metrics that are accelerating. Ninety-six people showed up for Thanksgiving. The St. Patrick's Day launch. I drop into these things, and during the steam table there are 70 or 80 people. They are going to the casino, they are going to the Bronx Botanical Garden. It is unbelievably energetic, and it is this wonderful cross-section of community. It is rich elders, just getting by elders, it is from every political and socioeconomic persuasion and 96 of them show up and have a blast. Really, they are doing an amazing thing. That is the stuff that keeps percolating we do as a matter of course.

Mayor Swiderski: It falls on the side of we do not mention it, but we do it as a matter of course. We run a set of programs.

Trustee Stugis: The Fire Department will have an unbelievable convention. It is like a year of work, a year of titles work, seminars for all the other villages.

Trustee Armacost: Last night Meg and I ran into the Village Arts Commission having their end-of-year party. They are another group that quietly, behind the scenes, has done incredible things.

Mayor Swiderski: We have programs every three or four months.

Trustee Armacost: Exactly. So we could probably add many things to your list.

Mayor Swiderski: And it happens because people want to do these things, and they can here.

Trustee Armacost: Exactly. The other group that gets completely unsung, so to speak, unsung heroes, are the Beautification Committee. That group is unbelievably dynamic, and it creates real beauty for all of us to enjoy. I think people take it a bit for granted. They do not realize that it is a group of people who make that difference.

Mayor Swiderski: Right, it is true. These are not magical fairies.

Trustee Armacost: They are ultimately lovely fairies.

Mayor Swiderski: I am embarrassed I missed some of these things, but there are many others.

Trustee Walker: It is sometimes hard to live in a small town because we do not have a big staff, we do not have a big budget, we do not have the Central Park Conservancy raising

millions in money. But what we have are amazing volunteers, so the fact that we are small encourages people because you can make a tangible difference and, in the process, you can have a good time. For a lot of people it is part of their social life to be involved in these committees and volunteer groups.

Speaking of which, the Shoreline Committee is chugging along. You have probably seen our ad in *The Enterprise*. We sent out a notice telling people we are going to have this forum on January 18 from 7 to 9 at the Community Center. It will be a very dynamic meeting. We will be sending out some more fliers and notices. We would like people to RSVP just to let us know they are interested in coming. We do have an e-mail address, which is shoreline@hastingsgov.org. We are also asking for people to send in, particularly, pictures and sketches of elements or features or recreational facilities they have seen at other waterfronts they would like to see in Hastings, or sketch something they would like to see in Hastings. Words are OK, but pictures are worth a thousand words in this case.

Also, I am talking to Scenic Hudson about doing an educational presentation the week before. This would be around the January 9. Do you think that is too early? The reason we want to do this is, we cannot spend a lot of time doing an educational presentation at the forum at the one we have on January 18 because it is really an opportunity for the public to brainstorm. Our landscape architect has a terrific agenda set up, and we are excited because it will be very dynamic, and will get a lot of ideas out of people and a lot of discussion. We do not want to spend a lot of time talking about sea level in Brazilian shorelines and shoreline stabilization and all these technical things which will be of interest to this community the closer we get to having this waterfront. It is important that we understand a lot of this. Both Scenic Hudson and the DEC Estuary program could come and give us an informative presentation to prepare for the forum. We could do that on the Sunday before, We could do it an evening the week before. I am wondering what you all think, because it is all getting squeezed in to the beginning of January. We are doing that because we have a deadline. We want to get this done as quickly as possible.

Trustee Lemons: The week before is Martin Luther King weekend, the 15th.

Trustee Walker: The 15th is not a great time. That weekend before is probably not a great time. So maybe a weeknight before, so I will talk to folks about what venue is available and what night works. It could be the library or the Community Center. Maybe we do it in the library for a change of pace. I will get in contact with the library. You will see this coming, and we will just have to do a lot of announcements at the very beginning of January because everybody's heads will not be on straight. We need to build this up and get a lot of people to come out. That is what we are working on. We also had a tour of the waterfront. BP took us on a tour so the committee and the consultants got to see the site. That was good.

Mayor Swiderski: That is always interesting, right? That is amazing being out on it.

Trustee Walker: One of the things that was most remarkable is, when you are at the northwest corner and you realize it is going to go out another 50 or maybe 100 feet, you could be right in the river looking up and down. It is just incredible. That is an amazing spot. We are thinking about the coves and how they be utilized. We also heard from BP that they are going to have to do mitigation and do not know exactly how much fill they are going to be putting in the river and what the edge is going to look like. But they know that the DEC is asking them for on-site mitigation, and it will probably be twice what they put in the river. So there is going to be approximately an acre and a half of some kind of habitat that will need to be created on our waterfront. It could be a tidal wetland area, so we have to have those conversations. Perhaps that can be part of what our consultant is already excited about, thinking that that could be part of their design. We will talk to the DEC about it.

Mayor Swiderski: Does it have to be on-site?

Trustee Walker: It is supposed to be on-site. We look at it as an opportunity and something that could be pretty interesting. Since there has to be so much of this sloped shoreline we might as well make something of it into something exciting.

Mayor Swiderski: Fran, do you need an executive session for matters of personnel?

Village Manager Frobel: Yes, Mayor.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On MOTION of Trustee Armacost, SECONDED by Trustee Walker, with a voice vote of all in favor the Board scheduled an Executive Session immediately following the Regular Meeting to discuss matters of personnel.

ADJOURNMENT

On MOTION of Trustee Walker , SECONDED by Trustee Armacost, with a voice vote of all in favor Mayor Swiderski adjourned the Regular Meeting at 9:40 p.m.