

# LAGRANGE TOWN BOARD

## MEETING REPORT

Compiled by Dave Siegel; Secretary Lagrange Democratic Committee

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Date: September 4, 2024

Time: 7:00 PM

Meeting Called to order by: Allan Bell, Town Supervisor

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18 (An attorney for the Outside Counsel of the Town joined the Board for this meeting)

### Agenda Items

- Meeting minutes from the last Town Board meeting (8/21/2024) were approved and accepted by all.
- The Town Board accepted (with regrets) the resignation of Gerrett Uhle, Head Groundskeeper.
- Resolution: NYCLASS – “New York Cooperative Liquid Assets Securities System” offers professional management of public funds through the prudent selection of short-term investments designed to prioritize safety and provide for daily liquidity while generating competitive rates of return. Many municipalities utilize this to maximize the investment of Public Funds. The Board would like to utilize their services and accepted this contingent upon the approval of the County Comptroller.
- 2024-2025 Assessment Rolls for Special Districts; Set Public Hearing for October 2, 2024. – Accepted
- Public/Commercial Wells in the Town of Lagrange – The Town maintains that the commercial use of private wells for public water. Councilman Ryan has a large well that he wants to use to serve water to people in the town. The NYS DEC is asking for a Public Hearing on this matter.
- Town Board authorized the Town Supervisor to sign a retainer agreement with the law firm of Maker, Fragale and Di Costanzo, LLP. This relates to the claims the Board has made that Councilman Richard Ryan colluded with Hopewell Junction resident David Mashiah to post “doctored” videos of confidential Town Board Executive Session meetings on YouTube. At the direction of the Town's Ethics Board who investigated this matter further, the Town is now going to move ahead with legal proceedings against the two. Supervisor Bell asked Councilman Ryan if he wanted to resign his position prior to the legal proceedings to avoid the upcoming legal battles. The other Board members also asked for his resignation. He refused and maintains his innocence. The Town is going to spend \$400.00 an hour for this legal work. A link

to the news story on this is here→:<https://midhudsonnews.com/2024/09/05/lagrange-town-board-asks-councilman-to-resign>

- Congregation Shir Chadash request the Board to authorize the use of a DC Sherriff Deputy as needed for the upcoming Jewish "High Holy Days" from September 28 thru October 12<sup>th</sup>. Shir Chadash will be responsible for the cost. - Accepted
- Mid-Hudson Road Runners Club requests the Board to authorize the use of 2 DC Sherriff Deputies for the upcoming annual Turkey Trot to be held on November 28<sup>th</sup>. They will be located at the intersection of Dr. Fink Road and Freedom Road. - Accepted
- Current Lawsuits Town of Lagrange v. Mashiah – Currently there are 2 suits working their way through Justice Court and NYS Supreme Court. Both center around the Town wanting to stop what they feel is illegal development on land owned in name by Mashiah's wife. The Towns position is they are violating code. Mashiah's position is this is being illegally stopped by the Town an unqualified building inspector. Mashiah is now trying to get this dismissed and is potentially going to face Contempt of Court charges.
- Moratorium on Land Use Approvals for Multi-Family and Residential Mixed-Use Buildings – This is going back to a Public Hearing on September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024.

### **Town Board Comments**

- At the last meeting Councilman Rabasco suggested sending out a census asking residents in the Skidmore Road area (North of 55; East of the Taconic; West of 82) that last "Rural" area of the town according to the Councilman. He wants to ask them if they would be in favor of returning to 5-acre zoning. Each household would get 1 vote.
- Follow up – Cost to do this is \$3-400.00 – This is approved
- Follow up on the potential Vestibule work at Town Hall – Survey and Specs are underway.
- Engineering changes for the town are under consideration. We have used the same engineering firm(s) for a while and it may be prudent to have some fresh eyes come in and review all pending projects.

**Town Attorney** – No comments

### **Public Comments**

David Mashiah spoke about the Well issue which was NOT on the Agenda handed out at the meeting but was on the website's agenda and the official agenda the Board was using. After 3 minutes he had to be removed.

Jody Kevit, the Receiver of Taxes asked again to have her window fixed when the vestibule work is done. She has asked for this several times.

A member of the public spoke about the Salt Shed and said if we go ahead with the emergency repairs approved last meeting, we will void the current warranty and the Board should reconsider.



Meeting adjourned at 9:12 PM.