

**VILLAGE OF ALTAMONT**

**SPECIAL BOARD MEETING**

August 24, 2010

Mayor James M. Gaughan  
Trustee William F. Aylward  
Trustee Kerry Dineen  
Trustee Christine Marshall  
Trustee Dean Whalen

Patty Blackwood, Clerk  
Timothy McIntyre, Supt. of Public Works  
Donald Cropsey, Jr., Building Inspector  
Anthony Salerno, Commissioner Public Safety

Guests: 37

7:30 p.m.

Mayor Gaughan called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Trustee Aylward made a motion seconded by Trustee Dineen to approve of supporting the Capital District Scottish Games 5K race to be held on Sunday, September 5, 2010.

**Roll Call: All in favor**

**Public Comment:**

Harvey Vlahos, Main Street, inquired if it was legal for Mayor to also be Public Safety Commissioner. Mayor Gaughan stated it isn't legal to hold two positions and he would not be Public Safety Commissioner. Mayor Gaughan stated he would be supervising the Police Department.

Pat Spohr, Sand Street, stated heating and ventilating unit at Altamont Elementary School has been running 24 hours a day and she is concerned about the noise. Trustee Whalen stated the firm he works for designed the heating and ventilating unit and he will bring this to their attention.

Trustee Dineen reported appointment of Jamie Taluto, part-time police officer, is a replacement of Jason Helwig, part-time police officer who had resigned. Ms. Taluto has experience with Amber Alert and has worked for Division of Criminal Justice Services.

Trustee Dineen reported on proposal she and Trustee Marshall prepared to maintain integrity of the police department, safety of the Village, community policing along with complying with Civil Service. One year ago Village applied for 211 waiver from Civil Service for Commissioner Salerno. At that time Civil Service asked Village to do a recruitment to find a non-retiree for the Commissioner of Public Safety position before the 211 waiver could be granted. The recruitment resulted in no applicants applying for the position and 211 waiver was granted. This year Civil Service created test for Altamont's Public Safety Commissioner. Test was given and top three applicants on list declined the position creating a non-mandatory list. At June Board meeting, residents asked the Board to do what it takes to keep Commissioner Salerno and Altamont Police Department. Village could do another recruitment and keep hiring provisionally. If retirees take the position, however, if a 211 waiver is granted, it will be limited and Village will have to keep applying and keep recruiting. Village's request for making the Police Commissioner's position exempt in 2009 was not granted by State Civil Service. Trustee Dineen and Trustee Marshall's proposal is to restructure police department by not filling the Commissioner's position at this time, and have part-time police officers within

a team structure. This arrangement will help to maintain public safety and community policing while complying with Albany County and NYS Civil Service rules. Police department would go to a team approach. All police officers would be part-time with Anthony Salerno working a fixed 20 hours per week. Mr. Salerno's salary would work within the current Village budget. Trustee Marshall stated this plan allows the Village to keep a very experienced officer on staff.

Trustee Aylward inquired how Trustee Dineen and Trustee Marshall came up with a salary of \$29,900 for Anthony Salerno. Trustee Dineen stated years ago there was a similar position, without any police officer certification, in the police department that paid just over \$19,000 a year. That salary was taken into consideration along with experience and longevity from Mr. Salerno to come up with a fair salary of \$29,900.

Mayor Gaughan stated he is personally happy that the current Commissioner is willing to help Village through this transition. Given the current status of Civil Service rules and requirements, Mayor Gaughan stated NYS Civil Service doesn't always fit well with a small municipality. Village will go back to Albany County Civil Service to seek Commissioner of Public Safety position as an exempt position for Village of Altamont. Mayor Gaughan stated he feels the structure described by Trustee Dineen should be given a chance.

Harvey Vlahos, Main Street, inquired if Village could get a retired individual for the Public Safety Commissioner position. Mayor Gaughan reported Village could have retiree but if salary is above \$30,000 a 211 waiver is needed from NYS Civil Service. Mr. Vlahos inquired if all four applicants were contacted, if Captain Riley was interviewed. Mayor Gaughan stated all four applicants were contacted and Captain Riley was not interviewed at this time.

John Tashijan, Western Avenue, stated he would have been an asset to Altamont Police Department. Mr. Tashijan stated he would be interested in any openings in the future and will submit an application with the police dept, so that he could maintain his police certification by working at least 8 hours a month.

Anthony Salerno, Public Safety Commissioner, stated several people have applied for part-time police officer position.

Kate Provencher, Thatcher Drive, stated she is thrilled with the work the Village Board has been doing. Ms. Provencher stated she has been able to go to Commissioner Salerno when she has needed assistance and he was helpful and discreet.

Trustee Aylward inquired if resident Harvey Vlahos is against the plan for the police department. Mr. Vlahos stated he has reservations with the restructuring plan of the police department and has concern over liability and supervision of the department.

Steve Reinemann, Main Street, stated police department is working well and Anthony Salerno is doing a good job.

Debbie Hext, Whipple Way, thanked Village Board for keeping Anthony Salerno and thanked Mr. Salerno for all that he has had to put up with.

Linda Cure, Grand Street, stated Altamont Free Library Board appreciates all the work done by Altamont Police Department and Anthony Salerno.

Paul Betancourt, Lincoln Avenue, stated he supports Altamont Police. Mr. Betancourt inquired if there were other options that the Village had regarding the position of Public Safety Commissioner. Mr. Betancourt stated while people do support the police department they would have liked to see a more permanent plan of trying to find a full time Public Safety Commissioner. Mr. Betancourt thanked Altamont Police Department and Anthony Salerno for their service and noted all Village residents should have opportunity to contribute and support each other and respect each other's opinions in the Village.

David Grapka, Euclid Avenue, stated he supports Anthony Salerno.

Mary Heidinger, Grand Street, stated for the past 8-9 years there has been solid protection by the Altamont Police Department. Ms. Heidinger thanked Altamont Police Department.

Trustee Dineen made a motion seconded by Trustee Aylward to approve appointment of Jamie Taluto to part-time police officer position, not to exceed 20 hours per week, effective August 24, 2010 at a salary of \$15.00 per hour per recommendation of Public Safety Commissioner, Anthony Salerno. Position is probationary for a period of up to one year. **Roll Call: All in favor**

Trustee Marshall made a motion seconded by Trustee Dineen to approve removing Anthony Salerno from the position of Public Safety Commissioner as required by Section 65(3) of the Civil Service Law. **Roll Call: All in favor**

Trustee Dineen made a motion seconded by Trustee Marshall to approve permanent appointment of Anthony Salerno to part-time police officer position, at 20 hours per week, effective August 24, 2010 at an annual salary of \$29,900. **Roll Call: All in favor**

Trustee Marshall made a motion seconded by Trustee Whalen to approve of Board Minutes for July 6, 2010. **All in favor**

Trustee Dineen made a motion seconded by Trustee Marshall to adjourn at 8:39 p.m.  
**All in favor**

Respectfully Submitted,

Patty Blackwood  
Clerk