

**VILLAGE OF HASTINGS-ON-HUDSON, NEW YORK  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
REGULAR MEETING  
NOVEMBER 21, 2000**

A Regular Meeting was held by the Board of Trustees on Tuesday, November 21, 2000 at 8:10 p.m. in the Meeting Room, Municipal Building, 7 Maple Avenue.

**PRESENT:** Mayor Wm. Lee Kinnally, Jr., Trustee Elsa C. DeVita, Trustee Michael Holdstein, Trustee David Walrath, Trustee Bruce Jennings, Village Manager Neil P. Hess, Village Attorney Brian Murphy, and Village Clerk Susan Maggiotto.

**CITIZENS:** Eighteen (18)

**APPOINTMENTS**

**Mayor Kinnally:** I have two appointments to announce this evening: Mary Mantos to the LWRP, and David Brainin to the Police Commission. I thank both of them for volunteering their time.

**PROCLAMATION**

**Mayor Kinnally:** We have a proclamation for Arbor Day; it will be Friday, April 25, 2001. A copy has been filed with the Clerk.

**APPROVAL OF WARRANTS**

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

Multi-Fund No. 48-2000-01 \$ 37,177.22  
Multi-Fund No. 49-2000-01 \$193,311.23  
Multi-Fund No. 50-2000-01 \$105,170.24

**94:00 PUBLIC HEARING - SENIOR CITIZEN TAX EXEMPTION INCOME LEVELS**

**Village Manager Hess:** The Board has information on the state law which became effective August 16, 2000 relative to increasing the income limits by \$1,000; it is on a sliding scale from a 50% exemption to 5%. This would provide for a public hearing December 5 to consider proposed Local Law No. 6.

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

**RESOLVED:** that the Mayor and Board of Trustees hereby schedule a Public Hearing for December 5, 2000 at 8:00 p.m. or shortly thereafter to consider the advisability of adopting Proposed Local Law No. 6 of 2000 to increase the eligibility income amounts for senior citizen tax exemptions.

<b>ROLL CALL VOTE</b>	<b>AYE</b>	<b>NAY</b>
Trustee Elsa C. DeVita	X	
Trustee Michael Holdstein	X	
Trustee David Walrath	X	
Trustee Bruce Jennings	X	
Mayor Wm. Lee Kinnally, Jr.	X	

### **VILLAGE MANAGER'S REPORT**

**Village Manager Hess:** We received the signed contracts on the \$40,000 grant on the police communication system.

We are receiving \$25,000 through the Community Enhancement Program, which can be used for the preliminary feasibility studies for renovation of the Community Center; funding for that renovation project will not come to us until the 2002 county fiscal year.

We have hired a contractor to clean the catch basins. We could not do our spring program because the county had put in tablets for mosquito control. We expect they are going to do the same thing next spring, so we will be restricted to once a year until such time as the county no longer does that.

Regarding Melrose's removal of the pavers and the stamped concrete in the downtown, approximately 30% of the work had to be removed and redone. We removed their subcontractor from the job in front of VFW Park. The work there was done by the Bomanite people who did the work on Southside Avenue to match the work in front of this building. We have renegotiated the price with Melrose. The price will be reduced from \$12.50/ square foot to \$10/square foot because of noncompliance with the contract. We have a retainage on this project. Final inspection is next week.

We received notice that we are receiving community design awards on Dec. 6 from AIA on the Municipal Building renovation project and also on the Riverpointe project.

## **BOARD DISCUSSION AND COMMENTS**

### **1. Update on the Waterfront**

**Mayor Kinnally:** We will be meeting this evening with counsel to discuss land acquisition on the waterfront. We are in receipt of the risk inventory from ARCO on the waterfront. A multi-volume set has been delivered to the Village. This is a prelude to the PRAP that will be issued in the spring by the DEC, after which hearings will be held in the Village under the aegis of the DEC on the cleanup plan.

### **2. Library Renovations**

**Dan Frank, President, Library Board of Trustees:** I am here to present the cost estimates for the renovation to the Hastings Public Library first proposed to the Village Board and the community last January. I want to recount the rationale for this project as well as describe how we have proceeded over the last 10 months.

Foremost in our concerns was the deteriorating 35-year-old building: ceilings and lighting that need to be replaced; bathrooms in disrepair and failing to meet ADA compliance; a front hall entrance and vestibule that not only do not meet ADA standards but are challenges to any able-bodied citizens on windy days.

Secondly, there is the issue of a structure designed to hold 40,000 items. Our collection consists of 60,000 catalogued items, and more than a dozen computers for which there was never proper planning or wiring.

Thirdly, we saw the renovation as an opportunity to create additional space not only for library programs but also for the community and for Village programs and functions.

Last January, the Village Board encouraged us to pursue plans for renovation and to solicit community feedback. The Library Board held a public meeting in April. It was an opportunity for Hastings residents to hear Jim Lothrop, the architect, present plans and for residents to respond. In every issue of the Village newsletter we not only sent copies of the plan but gave updates and progress reports as well as encouraged feedback. We displayed the plans at the front of the library and encouraged everyone who walked into the library to give us feedback. We had considerable feedback, all positive so far as I know. We

incorporated many of the suggestions in an attempt to address the needs of as many as possible in the community.

The estimated cost of the renovation after revisions is \$1.1 million. This estimate includes a 10% design contingency and is based on an early 2001 start. We will require a bond for a greater amount given the probability of cost overruns.

Several of you have raised the question of other sources for funds. Whatever funds New York State and the Westchester library system have at their disposal are wholly inadequate. Regardless of what you decide, the library over the next few years will be facing a series of major capital expenditures: bathrooms, rewiring, downstairs ceiling, further internal planning as more computers are added and upgraded, and as various collections— audios, videos, DVD's, CD-ROMs—are expanded.

In January you made clear your preference to address both the necessary renovations and the possibility of creating new community space as a single project; to break the renovation into bits and pieces would be penny-wise but pound-foolish. The library is a victim of its own success. Circulation for the year ending June 30, 2000 was 107,000 items. The summer children's reading program had an enrollment of 800 children. For the first four months of this year circulation is up over 15% from last year.

I urge the Village Board to approve this renovation for an institution as essential as any I know in our Village. The improvement of the library means an improvement in the library's ability to serve our community, and that will benefit every resident—child and adult alike—in Hastings.

**Mayor Kinnally:** Can you bring us up-to-date on what has happened so far?

**Mr. Frank:** Work began November 5 on the replacement of the ceiling upstairs and the new lighting fixtures. The library was closed that week, and it went fairly expeditiously.

**Stephen Underberg, Library Trustee:** The ceiling is about 85% finished, and it will be finished within the next few days. The lights are partially permanently finished, and the rest are temporarily finished. We have ordered round fixtures for the two side areas of the building, and they will take eight weeks to come in. Temporary fluorescents have been placed and look permanent, but they are not. The long electrical fluorescent fixtures are permanent and are an improvement over the old, and they are finished. We are reaching the end of this project.

**Mayor Kinnally:** Has the scope of the project, the square footage and the additional space on the south side of the building utilizing the footprint that exists downstairs and the additional space upstairs, changed?

**Mr. Frank:** Not from the plans presented in January. The suggestions at the public meeting and from others involved more money: expansive views so as much window space as possible, technology improvements including sound equipment. We tried to incorporate the requests that were sensible and not luxury items. The intent for that additional space is to keep it open with very little furniture so it would be multi-functional.

**Trustee Holdstein:** We talked about leveling off the land behind the library to give a glass exposure to the west. Was that implemented?

**Mr. Frank:** That was implemented. It is a high window.

**Trustee Jennings:** What period of time will it take to fill the additional space? How many years of growth are we planning for?

**Mr. Frank:** One of the things that the library does periodically is winnow out its book collection. We have been able to stabilize the book collection at between 50 and 52 thousand items. The nature of the library has changed, however. We also provide DVD's, CD-ROMS, and audio. We want to create spaces for them that allow for growth. Each time Sue does a budget she forecasts 10 or 15% growth in these collections that now number 600 or 700 items.

I cannot give you a strict answer as to how many years it would be, but for a community of 8,000 this library gets an extraordinary amount of usage. Ten or 12 items are taken out per household per year by this community. Because we are part of a larger library system we can bring in items that we do not have from other branches. We feel that we are a community of 8,000 and we don't want to have a library that has room for 120,000. We want space for an additional 20%, perhaps. We do not have these fantastic growth plans, where we are going to add a third floor to the library.

**Trustee Holdstein:** But are we going to run into a problem that in seven years you are back here again and it is filled up even further?

**Ms. Feir:** We are a public library, not an archive; you do not want your library collection to grow infinitely. You talk about coming back in seven years; this is the first time in 40 years.

We are trying to make the building handle public demand now and into the foreseeable future.

**Trustee Walrath:** When this was presented I suggested getting rid of the descending staircase by having the elevator go to the roof for access to the mechanical room.

**Mr. Underberg:** The elevator will not be able to go to the roof. The elevator is designed to go between the first floor and the lower level. The roof is not a whole roof. We will have a staircase where the current staircase is going down, but it will be wider because we will be able to get rid of the dumb waiter. We will continue to have to use the staircase that pulls down from the ceiling for roof access.

**Village Manager Hess:** Has the technology in the addition and the main building been run by Rafael? Has he had a chance to review any of that with either the architect or with Sue?

**Mr. Frank:** No.

**Village Manager Hess:** I would suggest that within the next several weeks we can get together with Lothrop and Rafael and plan for the future.

The estimate of \$1.1 million is only on construction; the architect's fees will probably run 9-10% to prepare the plans and specs and get us to the point of bidding out the project. Inspection fees would be another 10%. This would be an additional \$200,000. We have to look at the cost of furniture, etc. If the overall estimate is \$1.35 million then the bond that we get authorization for should be in the range of \$1.5 to 1.6 million because of cost overruns.

**Mayor Kinnally:** I applaud the Library Board for moving ahead on this. Certainly, it is about money. But money does not come up with the idea, and the imagination and creativity, that has been shown here. The fact that we have gotten 35 plus years out of the building says a lot for the administration in the building. We want to plan for the future: not just growth, but anticipation of the additional uses that the building is going to be put to. The Orr Room is an under-utilized public space; to the extent that we could get a larger and more flexible space, it takes pressure off the other buildings in the community for meeting space and reception areas. Who would have anticipated 20 years ago that we would have the collections of computers and the CD's and everything else that we have? We will look at these numbers.

**Miriam Budin:** I am here as president of the Friends of the Library and as a citizen. I am very impressed with this plan. I have seen a lot of library renovation and addition plans, and this is extraordinarily well-conceived and relatively modest, considering what we are getting.

The meeting space: when we have meetings sometimes we do not have room for everybody in the Orr Room and there are people standing out in the lobby. An elevator so that people with physical disabilities have access to the building in a dignified and appropriate manner. A new space for children's programs so the people are not negotiating that narrow stairway with babies in strollers. That space is so versatile it could be used for small-group meetings, people working on school projects, anybody who needs a quiet room for a small meeting. The glass room in the northwest corner of the library for adults who do not want to hear children when they are trying to work. And the capacity for wiring for computers: people bringing in their own laptops, using the library computers.

**Judy Kaiser:** I am a patron of the library, an employee of the library, and treasurer of the Board of the Friends of the Library. As an employee, the reaction when I am behind the desk— to have a project proposed where I have not heard one negative comment—has got to be some kind of record in Hastings. All of our patrons are so much in favor of it, and the need is so desperate. Many patrons are not from Hastings, and say they come here because we are the best library in the area. This renovation needs to go through.

**Dan Billet:** When I first moved to Hastings 40 years ago the library was up here, next door. Due to the generosity of Mrs. Benedict we now have a wonderful building. It is a community treasure, and I think the Board should look upon this renovation positively.

**Joy Dryfoos:** The library is non-controversial. It is not like land issues or school issues, and so we rarely hear anything about it. Because it is invisible in terms of community uproar we tend to not pay much attention to it. And yet we use it all the time, so I would strongly urge that you be very responsive to this modest request to upgrade and expand an institution that is so well-used. We have a unique staff, and it is important to recognize that. I hope you will support it.

**Mayor Kinnally:** We will be discussing it among ourselves, looking at some of the numbers. Neil is going to take a look at the financing for it. And we will be working closely with you. I cannot give you a timetable, but a number of items have been identified tonight. We will follow up on them.

### **3. Other**

**Village Manager Hess:** We have an award winner sitting with us tonight. Rafael Zaratian got an award from the U.S. Department of Commerce for all his work on Census 2000.

**Mayor Kinnally:** Congratulations, Raf. Thank you.

**Trustee Walrath:** We had over 70 people turn out for the Rowley Brook trail cleanup, and I want to indicate particular thanks to Fred Hubbard, who did a fantastic job of pulling all this together. I hope it is the beginning of a long period of volunteerism to keep the trails going. I hope we will be able to do something like this once or twice a year. We have trails all over that need it, and this was a wonderful start.

We will continue talking with the people in the neighborhood because of the extension of the trail. We definitely will be back in touch with that neighborhood.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On MOTION of Trustee Holdstein, SECONDED by Trustee Walrath with a voice vote of all in favor, the Board scheduled an Executive Session immediately following the Regular Meeting to consider litigation, land acquisition, and personnel.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

On MOTION of Trustee Holdstein, SECONDED by Trustee DeVita with a voice vote of all in favor, Mayor Kinnally adjourned the Regular Meeting at 8:55 p.m.