**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**OF THE VILLAGE OF FREDONIA**

**SPECIAL MEETING**

**9-11 Church Street**

**Fredonia, NY 14063**

**December 22, 2023**

**6 PM**

At a special meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Village of Fredonia, duly called and held on the 22nd day of December at 6 PM. in the Trustee Room, second floor, Village Hall in Fredonia, New York and public notice of the time and place of this meeting has been given to the news media and conspicuously posted in one or more designated public locations in accordance with Section 104 of the Open Meetings Law.

**A**. **CALL TO ORDER-**

Roll Call of Trustees: Trustees present: Lynden, Bird, Espersen, Siracuse and Twichell

**B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE-**

**C. APPROVAL OF MEETING-**

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Lynden and seconded by Trustee Twichell, the following resolution was unanimously approved:

WHEREAS notice of this meeting was given to the Board of Trustees and the news media as required by law, now, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that a special meeting of this Board of Trustees be held at this

time and place, for the Board to discuss information regarding the LaBella & Associates Water System Evaluation and comments received during the Public Hearing on December 18, 2023 and any other relevant information considering same.

**D. PUBLIC PORTION-**

Public comment on this topic was previously received during the public hearing on December 18, 2023.

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Twichell and seconded by Trustee Lynden, the Board passed a resolution to let the public be heard by a 3 – 2 vote.

David Fridmann stood and addressed the Board regarding the direction of the water study by the Fredonia Board. He wanted to make public the questions the Board had for LaBella as well as the answers. He believes the improvements to the existing plant is the best option. He also believes the timing of the public hearing and subsequent meetings is inconvenient. Marsha Johnson, Clark Street, Fredonia, stood to address the Board regarding the LaBella Water Study and the Public Hearing held on December 18, 2023. Richard Ketchum stood and addressed the Board regarding the LaBella report and whether LaBella reached any conclusions in the report, it did not give conclusions. He strongly urges option 3. Jim Sedota stood to address the Board regarding the direction the Village should take regarding our water plant and reservoir. In October he received a copy of a grant from the Army Corps of Engineers which is specific to high-risk dams, a 35% low interest loan. Possible 5-year deferment from completion of construction. Bob Scott of Pulaski St. stood to address the Board regarding the water quality report from the Village of Fredonia for 2022 and average user amounts. He suggested a phased in approach for a connection to Dunkirk. The sooner the better. Mark Twichell stood to address the Board regarding providing Dunkirk water on a regional basis and LaBella building a storage tank at the Vineyard Dr. pump station. He is concerned that the Board has not done a SEQR on this option. The Mayor closed the public portion.

Trustee Twichell reminded the Board that O’Brien and Gere did a study about building a 500k gallon water tank at the Vineyard Drive station. Trustee Espersen asked our treasurer to provide him numbers from the last 5 years of how much it costs us to produce water, the increase in costs to produce water and how much we lost in revenue.

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**BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**OF THE VILLAGE OF FREDONIA**

**SPECIAL MEETING**

**DECEMBER 22, 2023**

**CONTINUED**

Our expense to produce water have gone up over 30%. He concludes that it will be less expensive to buy water than to produce it. Trustee Siracuse stated that she spoke with our Treasurer regarding the cost to our end users. The difference is not enough to make a clear decision.

To her it will come down to what alternative can we use to get grants to help us.

She asked Michael Cocquyt to speak on available grants.

Michael Cocquyt stated that they have plenty of personnel to cover our needs for funding needs. Option 3 has the most funding available, it all has to be balanced with the cost difference. The Village has to come up with some priorities first. Given the fact that we are a regional provider will help with any grant application. Mayor Essek reminded the Board that during the Dec 18 Public Hearing he suggested a hybrid option (continue use of reservoir and to connect to Dunkirk as well) the connection would be a redundant water source for both the VOF and Dunkirk. He would like to get an idea on the exact amount of water leaving the plant and to meters for personal home use be on the same page. He would like to see the interconnect be included in all options before the Board.

Trustee Siracuse stated that exploring the groundwater option would significantly cut costs down the road. She would be ready for a resolution to explore groundwater (wells) options on Tuesday December 26, 2024. The exploration phase will set the Village back $100-$150k dollars that we oud have to pay for up front. Trustee Bird offered to second a resolution regarding well water.

Attorney Beardsley stated that the Board was given a legal memo explaining that there are very specific things that require a mandatory referendum and permissive referendum. They have not found a basis for a mandatory or permissive referendum for this decision. Trustee Espersen commented on the reason for the meetings and the dates for them.

The decision was made to have all 3 options on the agenda and vote on all 3. Trustee Bird questioned why there would not be a vote tonight. All 5 Trustee members agreed to having all four resolutions on Tuesday’s agenda.

Upon motion duly made by Trustee Twichell and seconded by Trustee Siracuse and carried unanimously the Board adjourned the Special Meeting.

ANNEMARIE JOHNSTON

VILLAGE CLERK

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