

**VILLAGE OF TIVOLI
REGULAR BOARD MEETING MINUTES
March 18, 2015**

A meeting of the Village Board of Trustees was held on March 18, 2015 at the Historic Watts DePeyster Hall, Tivoli, NY. Mayor Cranna called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Present: Mayor Cranna, Deputy Mayor Griffith, Trustee Ezrati, Trustee Bruno, Trustee Schneider, Attorney Chale, Steven Roberts of PANDA.

Public: Virginia LaBarbera, Dave Cleaveland, Karen Cleaveland, Doc Sakal, Ralph Torchia, Gail Torchia, Thomas Crisci, Sr, Dylan Griffiths, Tony Staffiero, Mary Alice Staffiero, Corky Clark, Barbara Melinsky, Vincent Manna, Michael Leedy, and Cheryl Hilbrandt.

The Mayor asked Town of Red Hook Councilwoman Brenda Cagle to lead all present at the meeting for the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Mayor acknowledged County Executive Marc Molinaro, County Legislator Micki Strawinski, Former Village of Tivoli Deputy Mayor Mike Leedy, Former Village of Tivoli Trustee Tony Staffiero, Village of Tivoli Justices Howard Clark and John Ludwig, Town of Red Hook Councilwoman Brenda Cagle, Village of Red Hook Deputy Mayor Brent Kovalchik and former colleagues from the Dutchess County Clerk's Office.

Mayor Cranna stated that tonight's agenda would be a little different from normal board meetings. The Board of Trustees has been briefed on reports from the treasurer.

On a motion by Trustee Bruno, seconded by Deputy Mayor Griffith, the minutes for the February 18, 2015 Regular Board Meeting and the February 18, 2015 Regular Workshop were approved, all in favor.

On a motion by Deputy Mayor Griffith, seconded by Trustee Schneider, the Treasurer's Report for Abstract 10, dated March 18, 2015, in the amount of \$62,848.01 was approved, all in favor. The Treasurer's Report is posted on the Village's website each month. Trustee Schneider moved that the bills be paid as presented and Trustee Bruno seconded the motion, all in favor.

On a motion by Deputy Mayor Griffith, seconded by Trustee Schneider, Resolution 7-2015, dated March 18, 2015, Proposed Budget Modifications, was approved, all in favor. The modifications were made to increase the Library budget line for payment of expenses including heating and electric costs, a bond interest payment deficit of \$.30 and transferring funds from the water contingency line to water administration to cover the costs of the 2015 CDBG application.

Captain Watterson of the Dutchess County Sheriff's Office spoke and presented Mayor Cranna with a certificate of congratulations. County Executive Marc Molinaro also spoke.

Mayor Cranna gave a farewell address (see attached).

On a motion by Deputy Mayor Griffith and seconded by Trustee Schneider, the meeting was adjourned at 7:43 pm, all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Gonnella
Village Clerk/Treasurer

Mayor Bryan F. Cranna

Farewell Address

March 18, 2015

Members of the Village Board, Clerk Gonnella, Deputy Clerk Roff, County Executive Molinaro, Judge Clark, Mister Mayor , Legislator Strawinski, Deputy Mayor Leedy, Legislator Traudt, and my fellow residents:

I stand before you this evening with a sense of accomplishment. Four years ago, I sought the office of Mayor with a pledge to bring Tivoli back. It is my hope, that together, over the last four years we have achieved that goal, but we should realize that there is still much work to be done.

When I decided to seek the office of Mayor, I did so after much thought and consideration as to whether or not after eight years in Village government, I was the right person for the job. The decision was not made in haste nor simply made to challenge one person for the sake of running.

I did so after meeting with residents that I am proud to call neighbors and friends. People like Ginny LaBarbera, Margaret Lemon, Claude Potts, Karen Cleavland, Hildegard Edling, Barbara Rubertone and others, whose opinion and counsel I sought as I made the final decision to seek the office of Mayor. Once that decision was made, I knew that I had a responsibility to live up to the promise I made to those whose counsel I sought and to those I would represent. I will forever be grateful to those who gave me their honest advice.

As I look back over my twelve year tenure as a member of this Village government, there are memories that will last forever. Tivoli is a unique community and we have been together through good times and dark times.

As Mayor, you are never "off duty". Bad news is never delayed during the cover of night. For those who have called me during those hours to deliver grim news, I will forever remember the compassion and strength I heard on the other end of the line.

I have been honored to have worked with many dedicated emergency service professionals, such as Tommy Crisci, Sr., Marc and Patrick Hildenbrand, Tom Crisci, Jr, Cheryl Hilbrandt, and of course the

members of the Dutchess County Sheriff's Office, Paul Piastro, John Watterson, Kirk Imperati, all under the leadership of our Sheriff Adrian Butch Anderson.

As I discuss those in Emergency Management, I would be remiss if I did not address the tragedies that our small Village has seen over the course of recent years. With more than ten fatalities caused by accidents in just four years, this Village has seen far too much sadness in recent years. The dedicated men and women of our emergency departments on the local, county, and the state level have earned a lasting place in my memory as Mayor. I am grateful for the bravery and compassion that so many have shown during those horrible times.

This Village grieved, during a dark hour in January of 2011, with Bard College. The strength shown by the Bard College community under the leadership of President Botstein, during and immediately following that incident proved that Bard, like Tivoli is a unique community, one in which relationships are strong, and strengthened when tested. While the Bard administration and I may not have always agreed on certain issues, I believe our relationship and friendship was proven during that time, and I will forever admire President Botstein for his leadership during that hour.

In addition to the tragedies we faced, Mother Nature also was a force to be reckoned with during my tenure. Not one, but two hurricanes brought flooding to our Village. A major summer storm dropped nearly a half a foot of water down on our Village in only a few hours. With sections of roads washed out, basements flooded, and much damage to yards, fields, and other structures, under the leadership of our Public Works Superintendent James Simmons, Tivoli made it through those storms, and I am grateful and impressed by the style in which our DPW handled those crisis and without complaint, worked to ensure the Village would be safe and taken care of. I also want to thank the Dutchess County Department of Emergency Response under the leadership of Dana Smith for their continuous efforts to lend support and or advice during those trying times.

We talked as a community, when I became Mayor, about the need to improve our infrastructure within the Village. This Village made a commitment to do just that. Over the course of four years, drainage along Montgomery Street, Spring Street, and Broadway, has been improved. Today, new sidewalks have been laid along Broadway, and Washburn. Plans are being developed as we speak for a new sidewalk that would allow access to Tivoli's waterfront. A major redesign and improvement project took place this fall at the Village's main intersection, welcoming residents and visitors into our village through a newly redesigned

intersection, yet still maintaining the historic feel of our Village. My sincere thanks to our Superintendent Jim Simmons, to our former Village Engineer Ron Evangelista and to the entire team at Morris Associates for their work on those projects. I am very pleased that we kept our commitment and the results are obvious.

As the Village's representatives, we as elected officials have a responsibility to ensure that those who placed us in office have their voices heard. Residents should not feel that those who are casting votes or making decisions on their behalf are doing so without the input of the constituency. I'm proud that we have taken steps to open the dialogue and communication between residents and the village hall. Today, residents have an opportunity to address the board on agenda items at the beginning of meetings, rather than pointlessly at the end of a meeting when a vote has already been cast. A quarterly newsletter has kept residents abreast of various issues, events, and information. Social media is used linking the village with newspapers and other media outlets throughout the Hudson Valley, New York State, and nationally. The "conversations with the Mayor" series proved to be successful, as well as routine email communications. In addition, I am honored that the local newspapers and media outlets, including the Bard Free Press routinely asked for sit down interviews to discuss the state of the village on an array of topics. Tivoli is, no longer, the best kept secret.

In 2009, then Assemblyman Marc Molinaro, former Senator Steven Saland, and I called upon the New York State Department of Transportation to place a flashing caution light at the intersection of 9G and Broadway. That request was denied. Following another tragic death at the same intersection, we again called upon the DOT to at the very least conduct a traffic study. That request, as you know, was denied. While New York State did make some changes, it was the opinion of this government and community that more changes were necessary. Five years later, with a public campaign, fact based letters, and with an entire community pushing, the NYS Department of Transportation finally heard our call. Today, a traffic device sits at that most dangerous intersection. I want to thank those who worked tirelessly to lend their support to this effort -former Trustee Vince Manna, Bard College, Supervisor Sue Crane, Dutchess County, former Senator Steve Saland, and the hundreds of people who signed an on-line petition and sent their own letters to the NYS Department of Transportation. This truly was a community wide effort.

In 2009, the NYS Comptroller released a critical statement of Tivoli's finances. The Comptroller expressed caution and cited several areas in which the Village was lacking oversight in its bookkeeping and financial structure. Village residents were concerned about their tax dollars and its oversight. When I sought the office of Mayor, I pledged that by working with the Treasurer and Village Board, together we would strengthen our financial structure.

Just weeks ago, for the second year in a row, the NYS Comptroller released a statement that there is no fiscal stress detected for the Village of Tivoli. In fact, Tivoli not only rates lower than Villages throughout the Hudson Valley for detection of fiscal stress, we are lower than Villages throughout the entire state of New York. We have built up our water and sewer funds dramatically. In 2012, the fund balance for the water line was \$39,000, today it is close to the \$70,000. In 2012, the sewer line was \$31,000, today, that same line is close to \$100,000. Hearing the concerns of residents, we took steps to ensure that residents were aware of every penny being spent. Today, each month, under my direction the monthly finances of the village are placed on line for all to review. Budget workshops were open to the public and all information was made available in real time, allowing residents to be part of the process.

I want to sincerely thank my right hand person during each and every budget - our Clerk and Treasurer Linda Gonnella, who takes her responsibilities seriously and professionally as custodian of the resident's finances, and is one of the most dedicated public servants I have ever had the honor to work with. I also want to acknowledge our bookkeeper, Michele Zagorski who also brings a sense of professionalism to the financial aspect of our government. Together, Linda and Michele have worked tirelessly to strengthen the Village's financial structure, and the results have been obvious. Please join me in acknowledging our financial team.

Over the last four years, we have made significant necessary repairs to the Village Hall and other government buildings as well as addressing major legal and financial issues that we faced upon taking office.

Roof repairs and preventative maintenance to the village hall have taken place. The elevator here at the Village Hall was repaired following damage caused by heavy rains and flooding. We updated smoke and fire alarms throughout the Village Hall. We have made lighting improvements at the Tivoli Fire House as well as replacing gutters at the Tivoli Fire House.

Under the leadership of Trustee Bruno, we invested over \$100,000 into our park. Thank you Former Legislator Traudt for your support to make the park handicapped accessible for children with disabilities. And despite the criticisms of some that we were too drastically changing the appearance of the park, we redesigned the entire park to make it wheelchair accessible which includes a wheelchair accessible swing. Tivoli's park stands as a community center for all.

We also committed to reinstate Tivoli's summer rec program, and like the park project, under Trustee Bruno's leadership, today Tivoli is about to begin its fifth year as a summer camp for its children, in their own park.

We also made a commitment four years ago (and kept it) that the Village, in an effort to offset costs and reduce the need of tax dollars, would seek grant funding opportunities. I am proud to say that since 2011, the Village of Tivoli has secured over \$300,000 in grant funding.

We took dramatic steps to pay longstanding debt. This included debt to vendors that had been allowed to pile up as well as several large bonds.

Village legal matters that had been sitting on my desk on the day I became Mayor have been closed out. An updated lease agreement with the Tivoli Free Library and the Village has been signed, protecting both the Library and the Village, strengthening the relationship between both parties. A long lasting property issue that dated back to several of my predecessors was finally addressed

We rewrote policies, protecting the Village, with the guidance of Trustee Ezrati and Planner Michele Greig. We changed our zoning codes to fit in with the character of our ever evolving Village, and will continue to update the codes to reflect the Village as it stands today.

Despite much negative and false information, we took the unpopular steps to protect the liability of the Village when an individual put the village at a significant risk. I want to thank my Deputy Mayor Joel Griffith for his advice on that issue.

We have worked to strengthen the relationship between the Village and our business community by forming an alliance between both. Spearheaded by Trustee Schneider, this alliance will work to make Tivoli a destination stop for our ever growing unique business community.

As a community we realized that we needed to do more to honor the brave souls of Tivoli that defended our freedoms. As part of our efforts to strengthen the relationship between the Village and the Harris Smith American Legion post, we worked together to erect new monuments on Monument Hill that recognized all the Tivolians that have worn the American flag on their shoulder. We joined with the boy scouts and girl scouts for Veterans Day and Memorial Day and introduced young children to Tivoli's heroes right here in our Village. I am so proud of the relationship that exists between the American Legion Post and the Village. The members of the Post will always have a lasting spot in my heart.

Realizing that we are living in an unprecedented fiscally challenged time, and needing to think outside the box to ensure services, Tivoli partnered with the Town of Red Hook and the Village of Red Hook to apply for a \$79,000 grant to study the feasibility of sharing services and/or consolidating our highway departments. With the Town of Red Hook as the lead agency, we are working with a superb consulting team of Tim Weidman and Peter Meriwether (who is here tonight). Peter- thank you. The team is reviewing several areas in which all three municipalities can share serves, equipment, personnel, and ensure that the vital infrastructure needs of our community are met and that services can actually be increased without relying on an increase in the tax base. I'm pleased to work with the municipal leaders within the Town and Village of Red Hook and my colleague Trustee Schneider on this project. We are grateful to County Executive Marc Molinaro for his insight to provide such funding to local communities.

When I first sought public office in Tivoli, I said at the time, there is no Republican or Democrat way to fix a road, no Republican or Democrat way to fill a pot hole, no Republican or Democrat way to build a park - there is simply the right way. That being said, I would caution those in Village and Town government to be cognizant of the fact that Tivoli prides itself on its non partisan style of governing.

In all six of my successful elections, I was honored to have had the support of residents with various political affiliations. I have appointed more individuals to serve in official capacities that do not share my political affiliation than do.

In Tivoli, and across New York State this evening, Villages are holding elections for Mayors, Trustees, and Justices. There are those who have spoken of partisan politics in this historic building and in village halls across New York State. They surely do not know that the cornerstone of any community is a resident who chooses to give back selflessly - not for political gain. Tivoli residents are certainly wise to those who have chosen to blur the lines and I believe the results will be evident tonight in the vote tallies.

I have been honored to work with a superb team within this government. Our Fire Department and Rescue Squad is second to none. Bravery, compassion, dedication, defines these fine men and women.

Our justice system under the leadership of the Honorable Howard Clark is a fair and just courtroom. Your honor, you are certainly an able jurist, and Tivoli has been served well by you and your department sir.

To our DPW, with Superintendent Simmons at the helm, these men, no matter the condition outside, respond to the needs of our residents and Jim's institutional knowledge of our water and sewer system is priceless.

Bonny Corrado of the Tivoli Free Library- you stand as a welcoming center to our young children, our families, and all within this Village. Your dedication for learning is obvious, recognized and admirable.

For those who serve on various board and committees, your volunteerism and dedication to the community you call home is very much appreciated, and your efforts have helped to move this village forward.

Deputy Mayor Griffith, it is with near certainty that I say you will assume this office in the coming weeks. Please know that you have an entire village pulling for you and wishing you nothing but success.

To the Board of Trustees and former Trustees, it has been honor to serve side by side with you over these last years, together we made a great team, and Tivoli is better for it.

To my predecessor and dearest of friends, Marc Molinaro, Marc your guidance, counsel, but most importantly your friendship has been invaluable to me, and I am forever grateful to you for introducing me to this wonderful community.

To my counsel Christine Chale who exemplifies the word professionalism, I continue to be impressed by your intelligence, knowledge and understanding of the law. I thank you for your counsel and foresight.

To my amazing administrative team, Linda Gonnella, and Claire Roff, I said four years ago I couldn't do this job without you and I know that any success we, as a community have seen, it is because you were always in my corner and doing what was right for the village. I will forever be grateful.

To my parents who have supported me for so many years, not just within my public life, but through everything, the ups and downs, I stand here today because of you.

To Kristin, your love and support these last few months have made me stronger and I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

To my sons Kieran and Shane who have scarified so much for their father to do what he loves to do because he felt it was right, you make me proud every day.

To this village and its residents, thank you for the honor you bestowed upon me. I will forever be humbled by the support and confidence you showed to me. Together, we made a difference, and today, Tivoli stands as community that cares, and as a place we are proud to call home.

So tonight I end where I left off four years ago when I was first sworn in as your mayor. I made this village a promise that I would not let you down and that I would make you proud. It is my sincere hope that you feel that I kept that promise. May God bless you, and may he continue to look down and bless this village we so proudly call home.

I bid you a very heartfelt good night.