

Mayor's Report December 5th 2023

I would like to start tonight's report by answering three questions that were asked in public session last month by Village residents.

1-The first question was about how the Village handles interest earned on capital reserve funds.

All of the Village's capital reserve funds are in a separate bank account at First National Bank of LI. All of the interest that is generated by these funds, whether from regular bank interest or from a CD, remains in this account. Monthly, the earned interest is allocated to each capital reserved account, proportionally to its value relative to the full account.

When the Village invests in a CD it will only fund it with capital reserve money or in a separate CD for its general funds. Any CD that the Village invests in will not mix general funds and capital reserve funds. The Village follows NYS regulations on management of capital reserve funds and takes its responsibility of being a steward of the Village's tax receipts very seriously. At no time during my eleven and a half years as Mayor has any interest from the capital reserve account been withdrawn for general fund purposes. And going forward this policy will continue. Lastly, the balance of the Feasibility Study reserve account is \$376,876.64.

2-The second question concerned a Village expenditure of \$497.22 recorded under the Property Acquisition budget line item.

A beach lot in the seawall area was donated to the Village and the closing took place on April 28th 2022. The Village had a title search done on the property prior to closing and at that time there were no outstanding taxes or liens on the property for the tax year 12/1/21 to 11/30/22. Since the Village did not own the property as of March 1, 2022 taxable status date for the tax year 12/1/ 22 to 11/30/23, the property is not exempt for that year. In August of this year the Village received a notice of outstanding taxes. After consulting with Suffolk County and the Village Attorney it was determined that Asharoken had to pay the outstanding tax bill. Going forward the Village will not be charged for property taxes.

3-The third question was whether the Village could use the \$4000 in grant money from Cablevision of Huntington to fund the ability to live stream the Village meetings.

I called Cablevision and confirmed that the Village could use the grant money and my contact there gave me the name of contractor who could provide the equipment and installation required. The Village got an estimate of \$26,759.08 plus additional start-up costs of \$5950. There would also be an additional \$3000 annual fee. Lastly the Village would have to hire someone to produce the meetings. Clearly this is not within the scope of the Village budget and is not something that the Village will pursue at this time. This afternoon I met with the Village of Northport. They have a much more economical way to zoom broadcast their meetings. I have reached out to Cablevision once more to see if the grant money could pay for the equipment needed to duplicate what Northport is doing. This would include 2 laptops, 2 cameras and possibly some microphones.

During the month I wrote to Colonel Johnson at the US Army Corps of Engineers asking if they could help the Village with repairing the seawall. The Corps had previously told the Village that it was not interested in working on a project restricted to the seawall area. In an effort to leave no stone unturned, I decided

that writing to see if they might reconsider their previous decision could not hurt. Colonel Johnson wrote back and said the Corps would take the Village request under advisement.

I participated in the monthly conference call with NYS Senator Mario Mattera, Assemblyman Keith Browne, representatives from Congressman Lalota's office, Town of Huntington and Village of Northport.

I met with Jim Longworth, Deputy Supervisor of the Town of Islip, and Jim Hayduk, Principal of Hayduk engineering on November 30th. They met me at the sea wall to share their experience fixing Callahan's Beach follow tropical storm Ida. They added to the Village's growing knowledge of seawall reconstruction. I would like to thank them for taking time out of their busy schedules to come to Asharoken.

In closing I would like to remind everyone that Santa and Mrs. Claus will be visiting Village Hall on Sunday December 17th at 1:30 PM. And I wish everyone a Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!