

**VILLAGE OF SOUTH BLOOMING
GROVE
PUBLIC HEARING
Monday
October 12, 2021
8:03 P.M.**

➤ **Call to order**

- Mayor Kalaj called to order the Public Hearing regarding extending the terms of Mayor and Trustees from two (2) year terms to four (4) year terms at 8:03 p.m. on October 12, 2021, via Zoom Webinar 893 4760 7014 for the South Blooming Grove located at 811 State Route 208, within the Village of South Blooming Grove, and having a mailing address of Monroe, New York.

➤ **Roll call**

The following persons were present:

- George Kalaj- Mayor
- Yitzchok Feldman – Trustee
- Asher Guttman – Trustee
- Zalmon Rosner - Trustee
- Kerry Dougherty – Village Clerk
- Scott B. Ugell, Esq. – Village Attorney
- Alfred Fusco, Village Engineer
- Isaac Ekstein – Legislative Aide
- Joel Stern – Confidential Assistant

➤ **Absent**

- Abraham Weiss – Deputy Mayor

➤ **Public Comments**

- **Bonnie Rum** asked what is permissive referendum and asked Village Attorney Ugell to explain. Attorney Ugell advised that it means that if there were people who do not want this to occur they would have the right to take course to technically no agree with such a decision. She asked what the course was, what has to be done if people disagree with this proposal. Attorney Ugell advised that he cannot give legal advice and it is up to people to make their own determination. He advised that she speak to her own attorney and do her own homework. She advised she did do her homework and people have to file petitions, certain number of people have to sign those petitions and get them in within a certain time frame; it's a short time frame but it can be done.
- **Sue Anne Vogelsberg** prefers that we keep the two-year terms that we have now for the Trustees and the Mayor. She thinks it affords the residents more accountability with our elected officials. The size of the Village doesn't warrant having, in her opinion, four-year terms. If someone is doing a good job, we can always vote them back in, but if they are doing a crummy job, a two-year term allows us a better check on their conduct and a quicker removal from office, if needed, thank you.
- **Dawn Salka** she was wondering when the board met during a work session to discuss these extensions of terms of office, that was not open to the public, when did you meet to make this decision? She feels they had a workshop to decide it and proposed it and made a resolution, so when did you meet? It is supposed to be made public when you make these decisions.
- Naomi Fingerhut in the original village charter, it stated that it would have to be changed via a referendum, no where did it state that it could be done by resolution. Permissive referendum means that the people that oppose this have to get together, and she believes it has to be 10% of

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the electors in the Village that would have to sign a petition, is that correct? In the original charter it does not state that this could be done by resolution, and she wants to know when that was changed. Trustee Feldman, this is open to a referendum.

- **Shiela McGroddy** she does not live in the village so she would not be able to participate in a permissive referendum, she does think as an area resident that it is better to have shorter terms in order to give other people opportunity to run for office as well as if there is someone that is not doing a good job. In terms of the permissive referendum, she said that it is troubling that the attorney for the village is unable to explain how this works to the members of the public. The village attorney should represent the entire village not just the board. Obviously the village residents are paying this village attorney's rates and fees through their taxes. As an area resident it is a little disturbing and disappointing to see that people's questions are not able to be answered.
- **Mike Killeen** agrees with the people who spoke before me that a two-term is probably better for the village. If someone is doing a good job we can reelect them that would be their reward for doing a good job. He thinks you should keep it at two term now so that someone isn't doing a good job, we can find someone who can. He is disappointed that the village attorney hasn't been able to answer more than one residents question about the process to challenge this resolution. Thank you.
- **Bill McPeck** he resides just outside of the village but he agrees with shorter term limits for anyone in office and absolutely as a system of checks and balances, especially in a village where we have very little recourse. When you have a majority of like minded individuals they will make decisions that may be based on a select few. I agree wholeheartedly that this should stay two years and to all of the residents I absolutely pledge financial assistance to fight this.

➤ **Adjournment**

- Motion to close the public hearing at 8:11 p.m. by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Guttman. 4 Ayes, Mayor Kalaj, Trustee Feldman, Trustee Rosner and Trustee Guttman; 1 absent – Deputy Mayor Weiss.

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Kerry Dougherty, Village Clerk