

**VILLAGE OF SOUTH BLOOMING
GROVE
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
PUBLIC HEARING
AND REGULAR MEETING
MONDAY
JULY 14, 2025
8:00PM**

➤ **Call to order**

Mayor Kalaj called to order the Village Board Public Hearings at 8:05 pm on July 14, 2025, for the Village of 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
- Abraham Weiss – Deputy Mayor
- Asher Guttman - Trustee
- Zalmon Rosner – Trustee
- Scott Ugell Esq. – Village Attorney
- Joel Stern – Confidential Assistant to the Mayor
- Brian Smith – Fusco Engineering
- Kerry Dougherty – Village Clerk
- **Absent** – Yitzchok Feldman – Trustee
- **Absent** – Al Fusco – Village Engineer
- **Absent** – Isaac Ekstein – Legislative Aide to Mayor

PUBLIC HEARING

- **Mayor Kalaj** makes a motion to open the Public Hearing regarding water sewer rates. A motion was made by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Rosner – 3 Ayes.

➤ **Public Comment**

- **Joel Stern** – Obviously with the explosive growth in the village and new projects coming up we need to have a better handling on the water billing. I would say based on the findings of the village staff and Mr. Smith from DPW we have over 50% of water meters are defunct, 40-50% are over 60 years some that are not functioning which is one of the primary reasons we are not accurate with the billing and collecting the funds that really need to operate the water system. We scheduled a public meeting to reevaluate to see if we should raise the rates for the water system for water usage. I think that maybe we should first wait to implement the new water meters and then see what change even if we are not going to have a full implementation and see how that changes from our estimated reads and then if eventually if it's really necessary. Mr. Smith is working diligently with the contract with the new water meters supplier digital water meters as well as the installer probably going to be the

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same company. It would also be much more efficient for the village staff. They are not going to have to drive around and read the meters. It's going to be read wirelessly. We are going to be able to see everything in the office. I would suggest that maybe while this is open maybe we shouldn't make a decision tonight and wait for 100 meters to be installed and then reevaluate whether we should raise the rates. I would say if we get into contract and we start the meter installation. We have a total of between 700-800 meter addresses. We will have 400 meters to install. We will obviously start with the meters where we know there are estimated reads. We will tackle those first. I would like to ask Mr. Smith in terms of the transfer can we finalize the deal and when do you think the meters will be installed and operational. **Mr. Smith** stated 6 months and that's being on the conservative side. He also stated they are dissecting the water/sewer budget. During the budget process so we will see if there are gaps in revenue also. The two will be going parallel the meter system will be going in and we are going to be revamping your water and sewer budget to your rates also. Mr. Smith said they are still working with the vendor. We will put out our notice like we typically do and it will be the vendors responsibility to make the appointments at the home. Temporarily we have the device to read the radio read not by tower but by driving by. So all the new homes going in, they are all getting the new style meter that we are going to be putting in. We just did our first quarterly billing with the handheld unit. It went fine it's just a different read file. There's an old read file and a new read file. There's parts of the system in other municipalities where the homeowner has full access to their reading so they can see everything. Some of the meters that we are going to put in the larger meters have pressure sensing devices now so if there is a drop in pressure which is their key for finding water main breaks. **Mayor Kalaj** asked how long is vendor responsible to make warranty after the install. **Mr. Smith** states typically the warranty is not very long 6 months maybe a year. He has to warranty them. The municipality owns the meter so as the meter needs to be changed the municipality incurs that cost. One meter is around \$190 plus the reader \$250 right around there. All new buildings that are going in are getting new meters.

- **Joel Stern** - Progress with private property owners for drilling wells. The Capitol Hill well which is 350 gpm. We are moving forward with being able to own that piece of land with the well. There's another property owner on state Route 208 that has successfully 2 wells each are each 130 + GPM. Then right adjacent to it there's another property owner that is also making positive developments in the past couple of weeks. **Mayor Kalaj** asked how much progress is being made with the DOH and the DEC. **Mr. Stern** says that is part of a challenge. With an owner of course we have a 72 hour test, the sanitary test and then we have to go thru the process of approvals which is taking time with the county. Some are on private property the county is very specific what they would and wouldn't allow to use them. Whether it's a 30 day lease or a per month lease or whether they require ownership and we are working with the county almost every day with that.

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➤ **Adjournment**

- Motion to close the public hearing at 8:15 pm by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Deputy Mayor Weiss. *4 Ayes – Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Guttman, and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent - Trustee Feldman*

REGULAR MEETING

➤ **Call to order**

- Mayor Kalaj called to order the Village Board Meeting at 8:20 pm on July 14, 2025, for the Village of 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.

➤ **Mayor's Comments**

- Only concern is the summer months drive carefully. Children are playing use extra caution.

➤ **Business**

- **Resolution No. (054)** Resolution of the Village Board of the Village of South Blooming Grove rescheduling a Public Hearing pursuant to EDPL 201 against a portion of land owned by the County of Orange. Motion to accept by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Deputy Mayor Weiss. *4 Ayes – Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Guttman and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent Trustee Feldman.*
- **Joel Stern** – We would like to vote for eminent domain proceedings get that piece of land from the county and put it back to public use. Special counsel Monaco Cooper they investigated whether eminent domain proceeding will have standing against another municipality. If the eminent domain land proceeding for land to be used for public use and the land which is being contested is for public use already then the case has standing. In this case Gonzaga Park which is the parcel in question is a public used facility public use lands. What we are trying to do is to be able to reopen up that road and have the people of South Blooming Grove and the people of the Town of Blooming Grove to be able to access the park which is a public used facility. They have to drive into the town of Monroe to access the park which is a detour sometimes of 15 minutes and it's a dangerous detour creates congestion and life safety issues. The village has already authorized special counsel to start the proceedings we have to schedule a public hearing to start the process.

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➤ **Abstract**

- Motion to accept the Abstract by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Rosner, 4 Ayes – *Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Guttman, and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent Trustee Feldman.*

➤ **Adjournment**

- Motion to close the meeting at 8:27pm by Mayor Kalaj, seconded by Trustee Guttman. 4 Ayes – *Mayor Kalaj, Deputy Mayor Weiss, Trustee Guttman, and Trustee Rosner. 1 Absent Trustee Feldman*

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Kerry Dougherty, Village Clerk