**TOWN OF DELHI**
**JOINT MEETING OF THE TOWN OF DELHI AND THE VILLAGE OF DELHI**
**Town Hall**
**September 30, 2026**
6:00PM

Present:

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| Supervisor: | Maya Boukai |
| Councilmembers: | Christina Viafore, Dan Gashler, Simon Purdy |
| Town Justice: | Mathew Burkert |
| Mayor: | Jeffrey Gearhart |
| Trustees: | Barbara Sturdevant, Ian Lamont, Jermey Fitch |
| Absent; | Councilmember Josh Morgan, Trustee Janet Tweed |
| Residents: | Margaret Baldwin |

Town Supervisor Boukai opened the meeting at 6:10pm. Leading the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance. Boukai offered privilege of the floor, there was no public comment.

At 6:13 p.m., Boukai requested a motion to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a specific purchase opportunity involving a joint municipal building. Trustee Sturdevant moved to enter into Executive Session, and Councilmember Viafore seconded the motion. The motion carried.

At 6:43 p.m., Trustee Sturdevant moved to exit Executive Session. Councilmember Viafore seconded the motion. The motion carried, and Executive Session was concluded at 6:43 p.m.

Discussion regarding the court room and its use were discussed. Boukai stated in order to get the maximum amount of funding, it has to be completely separate. But how they define separate is gray. This is not considered separate. But if we had a temporary wall and this was court, and we removed the wall when we need a larger space, then it's considered separate because there's things the justice court is not allowed to purchase because it's going to be shared by the town, and it wouldn't qualify for their grant. Trustee Sturdevant commented that the court room is like a waste of space to have this huge room, knowing it's only used on whatever day, Boukai responded two days a week.

Boukai requested that Justice Burkert speak on the court's JCAP grant and what are we missing out on because we're not a completely separate from the court. Burkert explained JCAP grant. is a grant that the court can apply for each year for equipment and furniture. Anything that, and if the intent behind the JCAP grant is to be able to modernize courts, bring them up to standards. But if something is a dual use building like this, for instance, in the courtroom, the tables that are being used, he put in for the grant for the tables. They denied it because the board uses them and the court uses them. But they were able to get all new computers. Adding if it's an area that is used specifically for the court, then they will fund it. But if it's for dual use, they don't fund dual use to fund municipalities. If the court wanted to put a door for the court entrance metal detector, they'd buy them a $10,000 - $15,000 metal detector, and they'll put it in. If the court wanted to put it at the other door where everybody comes in for the town, probably not because it's dual use. If the court has its own designated area, tables, chairs, all those things, he can put in for the grant, and he'll probably get it. Every year, he's been approved for what he's asked for, except last year, he asked for new tables, and they said, "Nope, they're dual use. We're not going to give you." It's just the way it goes. Burkert then said he put in for a virtual computer to do virtual because many of their defendants come from the city, and he told them, "Hey, if I could save somebody to drive all the way up here for court, and they can appear that way." Then he said he needed a table, and they said no. They gave the court the computer, a $5,000 computer, but they wouldn't give him the $200 table to put it on. Burkert then said Margaretville court they set it up where they have a sliding wall in the back, and what they do is say this is for the court use alone, and they close that wall. Then when they have their meetings, they open the wall and they have a table. They bring the table out, and they still use the court. But they say this is fundamentally

for the court itself. They have a separate area that then they move the sliding wall open, and then they can use both. Initially, when they funded that court, everything from the tables in the court was for the court, but the chairs were considered for the town. Then they opened that sliding wall and they had their table for their board, and they just turned the chairs around. Now they're using it. Anything that's standalone for the court, and it's up to $50,000 a year, Burkert added one year we got $30,000+, and that was for records. They did $30,000 worth of record management and put everything on digital. Those are things that the justice court can do.

Burkert added they extended the grant period for this year, but it's usually in September and they apply, if there's something that the council has as a standalone something they want to do, he can apply. They apply each year for tables, chairs, desks, and all those things. The JCAP grant did the cap bench up at the sheriff's department.

Councilmember Purdy stated Burkert was talking about supplies and equipment, is there a possibility, if the town were to build something new or move into a new place, would that be able to contribute to that part of it? Burkert answered he thinks it would be able to contribute to a standalone portion for the court. Adding he could call them tomorrow to tell them that the board is looking at building and that the two municipalities want to use for the court, what can they do. Boukai added that would be applied to construction costs, knowing that exactly, and that money is going only to the court. Burkert said he would call and ask them.

Boukai then stated worth checking out. She then discussed last year's local government efficiency grant, but it gives everyone an idea of what we can expect. The total maximum funding for an implementation grant is $250,000 for each local government. Adding between the two entities it would be $500,000, not to exceed 1.2 million in total. The maximum funding for a planning grant is $20,000, so $40 total for each local government, not to exceed $100,000. And the nice thing about the planning portion is that, in the event an applicant is implementing a project developed through a successfully completed planning grant funded under a previous local government efficiency grant, the original required local matching funds for the developing the plan will be refunded and applied to. But if both the town and village knew they were wanting $250,000 each, that's a half a million-dollar project. We need 10% of that. Anything that we had spent on the planning would go towards that 10% to implement, and there is no limit in terms of how many applications we can submit. Adding for example, if we did want to do the highway, garage, town, and village, and we were ready to move, on Shelton Park, we could submit two applications for two separate projects, and they could be two planning projects, so that the architecture part is part of it, or we could just go straight to implementation if we've already gone down some of the road for planning with the architects. That kind of brings up the garages, and that is something that maybe we can execute quicker because there's a lot less design and kind of moving parts to it.

Mayor Gearhart said the village still has to go a little bit further, but the program that Trustee Sturdevant and he have entered themselves into with ARC at this point, he thinks, is going to open a whole avenue of federal grants that they did not have. Boukai responded that she wasn't aware they had entered and congratulated them. Gearhart added they had their first course yesterday, and funding may open up even more for what we're looking for.

Councilmember Viafore questioned Boukai as to what was the max? Boukai said it's $250,000 each local government. The maximum of 1.2 million. Boukai said five is your maximum number of entities. Adding but like at Sheldon Park, the school has already expressed some interest in redoing their bus garage. So that would be a third. That's considered a third municipality. So now it's a $750,000 grant versus $500,000. Adding the highway department or court aren't separate. Sturdevant added that the police have a number of grants available to them too, so that's something to have them pursue, Councilmember Purdy said especially for modernization things. Gearhart responded all this just says that the potential for whatever we may be planning may be more financially realistic than what we realize. It may not be as big a bite as we had originally thought, which he is sure will make it more palatable if and when it comes to having to have a village and town vote to move forward. Purdy added on top of that, there will be properties potentially coming back onto the tax roll, which would help offset that as well.

Trustee Lamont stated so he was understanding correctly that if we combine the garages, no matter where we end up locating a joint hall, we could move forward on the merging of the garage properties. To which Sturdevant said she thinks we should look at that now. Lamont added and then that clears up potentially, if that parcel were to get sold, that frees up cash and puts something back in the tax rolls. It seems like, if we're thinking about what's one thing that we can do that moves the whole project forward, that doesn't require a major outlay of cash. Sturdevant questioned if there would be enough room where the town garage is to build a town and village building, which is something very long garage. Boukai said it has six or eight bays. She thinks there's a whole section on the other side of it. Trustee Fitch added a building could be moved back as there could be more frontage. Gearhart said there's more than enough space there for the joint village/town hall.

Boukai said thinking of all of these moving parts, if we look at phase one as combining highway garages, we look into including that our garage on the DRI map so that it would be a fundable project if that ends up being the place we decide to put stuff, because we know Sheldon Park is not fundable with the DRI, but if we expand the map, this one could be, and we know then Wickham's potentially could be, and that allows us a little flexibility as we're figuring out what we need, the steps we need to take to free Sheldon Park from park land designation. Gearhart said he still thinks that we need to investigate further as to what municipal funds might be available under the DRI grant, whether that's restricted by the boundaries. Boukai said maybe that's the question is, do the boundaries restrict municipalities? Sturdevant said she would ask the rep that the village is working with.

Purdy said that spot where the village garage is, is about what two acres; Lamont said it's just over two acres. Boukai said there is one acre here and we aren't using all of it. Lamont said to move all highway operations to the village street department area, and then we've got one acre to develop a joint village hall, between those two parcels, we might have enough. Fitch said once we want to put the village and town garage where the village garage is now because of our well and put the village and town hall here. Sturdevant said she thinks putting the garages so they're not super visible, you would want the nice town hall to be visible, not the garages. Gearhart added the well house for the water department is not moveable, it needs to stay where it is. Purdy asked if it flooded at the village garage, Fitch said if they take the berm out it won't. Sturdevant said the berm is coming out. Gashler added that area is much lower, Sturdevant said there is a large bank there too. Gearhart said he can't remember it flooding, he's asked a couple times Jay Decker and Daren Evan and they have told him that they haven't ever really dealt with any flooding back there. Purdy added there's probably grant monies out there to help with that type of environmental. And there are things that can be done even in the floodplain. It just has to be elevated more, and you could build on it, Gearhart responded.

They discussed where both entities get their salt, Boukai added the town does not use much salt as they use grit. Gearhart discussed issues with the village's salt shed, adding it needed to be moved due to its proximity to their wells. Boukai stated the next step would for them to talk to Daren and see if this would be a possibility. Gearhart stated he's briefly looked and said theoretically this could all fit.

Lamont again stated we're talking about moving town shed to village shed property, and then developing what is now the town shed into a joint facility. Purdy added honestly that seems like the most parsimonious solution. It's two properties that are already owned. Boukia added if Wickham's comes up or some of these other things that could potentially come up we can still see. Fitch said we are still selling two of the two buildings, adding them back to the tax roll.

Sturdevant asked what would be the first step; does somebody have to go measure? Because we're going to have to include the police department too for their storage of cars. Fitch said the lot on Sherwood would allow for storage of the village police vehicles. Gearhart added he would just say that if we were going to do that, that the current village street building would need to be torn down because it's in pretty bad shape as it is, and then build a joint town, village, street garage, and then build the storage for the vehicles in the back there. And there might be enough room then.

Purdy then stated it should definitely be something we could all walk and kind of look at some of the realities of this, maybe the next meeting. Gearhart added the current facilities are old and falling down. Purdy agreed, adding he thinks that his referendum should have a two-phase, we start with the garages first, figure out

what needs to happen over there. A big sheet metal building with perhaps better insulation or something like that for heating costs. Lamont said they would only need one building with some office space. Boukai added luckily, Daren knows everything that would be needed and potentially how to even lay it out in a way that's efficient.

Gearhart said from what he would envision is that in that back lot, once you build something out in front, next to where the current well house is, is that you could put two buildings if you wanted to down towards the river this way. From this would be the original, then two, and that should be more than adequate for. Purdy added he would actually be in favor of even doing some kind of little recreational strip there, right by the river. Sturdevant added she just was trying to find a way to be able to use the building to save money. Purdy added the garage has six bays in it he isn't sure how many the village has in there's. Gearhart said they don't have any vehicle storage beyond what the village garage is at this point, other than what's down at the wastewater treatment plant. Purdy said he thinks the combination would have to require a larger facility for sure. Gearhart added the vehicles and equipment that aren't used during the winter are stored down in the garage at the wastewater treatment plant. Things that aren't used during the summer are stored down there. This would be a big benefit to the village for having all that all professionally located Purdy stated.

Boukai asked if Gearhart could go into a little bit of detail on what the next steps would potentially be for Sheldon Park? For Sheldon Park, the I have emailed most of you about Burr Hubble. He had come in talked to him after he had taken a look at the original deed. There are, as he had said in that email, he has questions because the original deed was for over 300 acres, which incorporated, based upon what we could see, everything from what is now Murray Hill out past the hospital. The same parameters were still in effect at that time, how all that came to be built and subdivided and constructed, we don't know. Burr doesn't quite have a handle on it. Gearhart was given information from Kim Shepherd (the Reporter) that, according to her research that she had done, all of that was done, or most of it was done under the auspices of Bruce McKeegan's father (attorney). He had found a workaround, so Burr was going to talk to Bruce and see if Bruce understood or knew what had happened there. There was a revision clause in there, but apparently the time limits on that have expired. Anything that might have been done has passed. Also, there's only one individual in Rhode Island, he thinks, who might qualify for that, and they had no interest in pressing the issue. The part that Courtney (?) weighed in on, which was that you can take park property, and this is apparently done more frequently than you might think, but you have to get a one of the either assemblymen or senators to sponsor a bill to allow that to occur, that it could be used for a number of things, he guesses, and then it has to go through that process to be accepted, voted on, and then the governor sign it, and then you can build on it. At least that's what's been presented to him at this point. It might take a little time to go through that process. Courtney (?) didn't really have a handle on how long that might take, but Gearhart stated he did talk to Chris Tague, and he was more than willing to participate in that process, that's a potential avenue as well.

Sturdevant was not happy with the Sheldon Park location she felt it wasn't "walkable," Purdy stated we had been asked us to put together some pros and cons for each of these, and he thinks the pro is the village owns the property. Building there would be more engineering, more effort because you're right into a hillside, and there's lots more that you'd be building in a nice flat spot that's already built on. And not to mention, he's a big fan of park space, and he would like that as a park.

Boukai stated she thinks then that we'll just look at it as phase one, and we take our garage and move it to the village's property and see if we can get things together for this round of funding that'll come out in like November, December. Gearhart added the only part of that would be we do that simply as a shared service type of project with no other obligation on that part because the rest of it's going to have whatever plans we have will have to go in front of the residents of both the town and the village for approval. Anything beyond that that we do. Lamont asked what that meant, Gearhart said if we want to build a joint town hall, village hall, that has to go up for a vote because we would have to at least bond for a portion of whatever. Fitch asked about the garage, Gearhart responded he knows that the rest of it would have to. He thinks if we do it as a joint project, he's not sure. Boukai said we should just a planning grant this time. She doesn't think we look at an implementation grant. We have to do 50% each, if the village gets 20, we get 20. That means it's $80,000 going towards planning, and

that should theoretically, hopefully, design the space to accommodate both village and town, and then we can go back for the next round of efficiency planning and local government efficiency planning, and do an implementation grant based on what the planning grant. Adding that is probably the best step forward because we can't do planning implementation at some time, obviously.

Fitch said if we don't think we have enough room for a village garage currently, we still have that one whole side down there that leads out to the range that you could build the joint garage down there to that is already owned by the village. Gearhart added there's the property on Sherwood that town owns, dividing it up is what we're really looking for. The more we can keep it unified. Boukai said she thinks the planning grant would be because she's in agreement, if we can't put it all on the one property, she thinks that's what the planning grant will determine for us. And then if we can't, then she guesses we're out 20 grand each. But at least then we're not going down a path that we can't. That's not going to fulfill our goals. Boukai added and we do have Sherwood. We use it for overflow materials and things. that's never going to be something that it's all in the floodplain. It'll never be sold. Adding she doesn't think we should go into it banking on using that as a solution. Gearhart added he doesn't know how much equipment the town has that needs to be accommodated. And in his conversation with Evans, he wasn't sure that it could accommodate all of it. He said a good portion of it could certainly be accommodated down there. I think it would be a matter of logistics as to how the garages were set up to maximize their usage because still, we still have to have a fairly large area for the equipment to operate in, it's just getting in and out of there.

Gearhart said the first thing we need to look at would be to get some actual measurements and begin to take a look at how it could be set up and if it's feasible.

Viafore said didn't we talk about something like a drive-through garage at one point, how you could put the bays on both sides, so you don't have to worry about turning around. You can just pull through. Might be from the town. We don't have that many pieces of equipment that we need to drive through anything.

Boukai then asked Sturdevant and Gearhart to let the town know about what the DRA grant says because she does think that is a huge amount of funding that we could. And that's like a five-year timeline. Gerhart added the money doesn't worry him that much, only because we have so many different sources to draw from at this point, he has contacted NYCOM and they say there's a state agency specifically dedicated to joint service funding that we would be able to avail ourselves of. We also have the O'Connor Foundation, who is very generous when it comes to community activities, we have the DRI grant. Potentially, we have some, what he believes, federal grants that he thinks will be opening to us. He thinks the funding part of it may, in large part, take care of itself.

Sturdevant said the other thing is, we were asking their liaison, if we applied for this grant for this project, does that mean that we can't apply for other things for the same projects? She said no, layer them. Boukai said that's exactly what we did for the pool. It's like four different funding streams, and it's a lot of moving parts. Gearhart said feasibility is really the biggest point at this juncture, anyway. If it's feasible, then we can move forward with that. Adding, at this point, he would say because all of a sudden, the E-Center stuff has gone very quiet, very quiet. We have no idea where that's going. Who knows what's going to come on the Page Avenue Bridge Street eventually once that hotel is up. But he thinks we just need to focus on what we know now that we can move forward on. If this is where everyone wants us to focus our efforts, this is the direction we'll go. Both village and town officials agreed this was the best option. Purdy stated it's a field trip; we don't have to worry about a meeting. We can all just go together and look at the space without having to call a meeting first, having Evans meet them at the locations. Boukai stated as long as we are not discussing plans, just looking. Gearhart added at this point, one of the things that we can ask Daren for is an inventory of equipment that would need to be housed, both for the town and village.

Mayor Gearhart made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:20pm with Councilmember Viafore seconding. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted, *Elsa Schmitz,* Elsa Schmitz, Town Clerk, Town of Delhi