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M I N U T E S  
OF THE MEETING  
OF THE  
PUBLIC HEARING  
INCORPORATED VILLAGE OF FLORAL PARK  
November 17, 2020  
8:00 p.m.

P R E S E N T:

- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| DOMINICK LONGOBARDI, | MAYOR                |
| KEVIN M. FITZGERALD, | DEPUTY MAYOR/TRUSTEE |
| ARCHIE T. CHENG,     | TRUSTEE              |
| DR. LYNN POMBONYO,   | TRUSTEE              |
| FRANK J. CHIARA,     | TRUSTEE              |

ALSO PRESENT:

- JOHN RYAN, ESQ. Village Attorney
- GERARD M. BAMBRICK, Village Administrator
- SUSAN E. WALSH, Village Clerk
- RENEE MARCUS, AIA, Superintendent of Buildings
- STEPHEN MCALLISTER, Police Commissioner
- JOSEPH O'GRADY, Deputy Supt. DPW

Catherine P. Murphy  
Court Reporter

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MAYOR LONGOBARDI: I want to welcome everybody. Thank you for being here and taking part in our Village Board meeting. Good evening. Unfortunately tonight, most of us are in remote locations. We unfortunately experienced at least one member of our staff who unfortunately tested positive for Covid. We want to make sure everyone is safe and secure. So, we have now gone into protocols that will allow us to do our meetings virtually. So, all of us are in a virtual locations and I want to make sure everyone is safe and again, this is what we will be doing for this meeting.

So, I ask if you are listening in to please mute your computers or your home phones or your cell phones so that we don't get any echoes in the background. That will be great. So, we will have a public hearing tonight and will discuss some of the plans that are happening with the Village right now and I will go into those in a couple of seconds.

But first and foremost as we do with every meeting, I'm going to ask Tim Cutie if he can

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1 lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance tonight,  
2 okay, Tim?

3 (Pledge of Allegiance said.)

4 MAYOR LONGOBARDI: Tim, thank you so very  
5 much. I appreciate that. As I said, tonight  
6 we will have -- we will begin with a public  
7 hearing and go to the regular board meeting.  
8 Once we have the regular board meeting, the  
9 Board will then give their reports and then we  
10 will, of course, stay and wait and hear any  
11 issues our residents may have.

12 So, with that, Miss Walsh, will you please  
13 move the public hearing.

14 MS. WALSH: Thank you, Mayor Longobardi.  
15 Legal Notice. Notice of Public Hearing,  
16 Incorporated Village of Floral Park, New York.

17 Notice if Hereby Given that the Board of  
18 Trustees of the Incorporated Village of Floral  
19 Park, New York will hold a Public Hearing at  
20 Village Hall, One Floral Boulevard, Floral  
21 Park, New York on Tuesday, November 17, 2020 at  
22 8:00 p.m. in relation to the following  
23 application:

24 The application of Dalila A. Rivera,  
25 Rivers Cafe USA, Inc, Lessee of 304 Jericho

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1 Turnpike, Floral Park, New York is made in  
2 accordance with Article II, Section 99-11 B(2)  
3 of the Zoning Ordinance of the Incorporated  
4 Village of Floral Park, New York, which  
5 requires that when a building is used to  
6 prepare, stores or sells food in B-2 District,  
7 the use may only be authorized as a special use  
8 after a public hearing.

9 The structure for which said special  
10 permit is applied is situated on the south side  
11 of Jericho Turnpike, 132.42 feet east of  
12 Plainfield Avenue and known as 304 Jericho  
13 Turnpike, Section 21, Block 70, Lot 29 on the  
14 Nassau County Land and Tax Map.

15 A copy of the application is on file in  
16 the Office of the Village Clerk, One Floral  
17 Boulevard, Floral Park, New York and may be  
18 examined by any persons interested therein  
19 during business hours Monday through Friday  
20 inclusive, except legal holidays from 8:30 a.m.  
21 to 4:30 p.m.

22 Now Take Notice that all parties in  
23 interest and citizens will be given the  
24 opportunity to be heard at the aforesaid time  
25 and place.

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1           By Order of the Board of Trustees  
2           Incorporated Village of Floral Park, New York,  
3           Susan E. Walsh, Village Clerk dated October 30,  
4           2020.

5           This legal notice has been published in  
6           the official paper of the Incorporated Village  
7           of Floral Park, New York and posted according  
8           to law and sent to the Nassau County Planning  
9           Commission who recommended taking action as  
10          deemed appropriate.

11          MAYOR LONGOBARDI: Thank you, Miss Walsh.  
12          I would like to now place on the record that  
13          the applicant had previously filed an affidavit  
14          of service indicating that all neighbors within  
15          a 200 foot radius of the dwelling had been  
16          served with notice.

17          I want to take the opportunity to welcome  
18          Miss Rivera and thank you all for being here  
19          and for working with the Village of Floral  
20          Park. We are -- I understand that you have a  
21          very nice business set up. At this point, we  
22          would like to go through our regular public  
23          hearing right now. We have a number of  
24          questions for you. The Board will also be  
25          asking questions and the public has a right to

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1 ask questions as well. So we will be doing  
2 that. With all that being said, Miss Rivera,  
3 if you want to or have a representative who  
4 wishes to, if you present your application to  
5 us.

6 MS. RIVERA: Of course. Good evening  
7 everybody. I would like to thank you all for  
8 giving us the opportunity and introduce  
9 ourselves. As you heard, my name is Dalila  
10 Rivera. This is my husband Gil Lopez. We both  
11 are the owners of Rivers Cafe and this is the  
12 reason why we are here tonight, first of all,  
13 to tell you what a beautiful town we have  
14 acknowledged. It is amazing and we feel very  
15 welcome to all of your team that until now we  
16 are able to meet. It is just such a pleasure  
17 and thank you very much.

18 A few weeks ago we submitted an  
19 application for special use --

20 MR. RYAN: Can I interrupt for a second?  
21 Do they need to be sworn in? This is Kevin  
22 Fitzgerald.

23 MAYOR LONGOBARDI: Yes. If I can ask the  
24 Court Stenographer to swear them in.

25 (Whereupon, Dalila Rivera and Gilberto

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1 Lopez Mendoza were sworn in.)

2 MS. RIVERA: Dalila Rivera, 48 Carman  
3 Boulevard, Massapequa, New York 11758.

4 MR. LOPEZ MENDOZA: Gilberto Lopez  
5 Mendoza, 48 Carman Boulevard, Massapequa, New  
6 York 11758.

7 MAYOR LONGOBARDI: Thank you again. If  
8 you could, continue with your application.  
9 Thank you.

10 MS. RIVERA: As I was saying, we started  
11 this application as a request for your  
12 permission to prepare, restore and sell food  
13 and beverages in our location at 304 Jericho  
14 Turnpike in Floral Park. Rivers Cafe is a  
15 family owned business. So, we produce our own  
16 coffee. I'm from El Salvador and our coffee  
17 comes from our fathers farms and we are a  
18 distributor business two years ago. My dad has  
19 been in the farms business for a few years from  
20 now and it was basically our intention to bring  
21 our brand to the United States. Two years ago,  
22 we began, like I said, as a wholesaler. But  
23 only a year ago we decided to become the first  
24 official location here in Floral Park. The  
25 main reason was basically was to the main part

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1 in the beginning was to just do it as a  
2 wholesaler store with just tasting of coffee,  
3 but you know, like we have a few stores,  
4 grocery stores and restaurants that we are  
5 consuming our product.

6 When Covid 19 came in, most of this  
7 restaurants and clients that we had, they went  
8 down in business. They closed their  
9 restaurants. Some of them couldn't go back on  
10 track. So, we had a very rough time to  
11 actually reopen our business and that's why we  
12 decided to rearrange, you know, the main  
13 purpose of the store, bring in this idea of a  
14 walk in cafe and not just like be the  
15 wholesaler store, but also as walk in cafe. We  
16 don't have the space. Actually, the store is  
17 very small. We don't have the space for people  
18 to sit in, sadly, because we do have a lot of  
19 requests, you know, like having spaces to sit  
20 in.

21 But, we redesigned the purpose of the  
22 store making it just as a walk in cafe where  
23 you can come in grab some snacks and coffees,  
24 speciality coffees and that was basically just  
25 like the rearranging after Covid since we had

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1 everything in place. Like I said, we didn't  
2 like actually have another option. That's when  
3 we actually came to the Village and asked them  
4 for help. They had -- it was a lot to guide us  
5 through the whole process that we didn't  
6 actually know since it is our first business.  
7 There's a lot of things we are still learning  
8 throughout the way. But thanks to each of, you  
9 know, those that have been helping us on the  
10 way and leading us throughout the way.

11 So basically, we are here to ask you for  
12 that permission in order for us to continue to  
13 serve the community and we're being open for a  
14 few weeks, meeting some of the local customers  
15 and the community itself and we are really  
16 happy to -- for being here and would love to do  
17 our best to stay over and serve the community  
18 as well in Floral Park.

19 MAYOR LONGOBARDI: Great. Thank you so  
20 much. I understand that from the people that I  
21 have talked to that it is a very nice little  
22 business. But we have some questions for you  
23 if that's okay?

24 MS. RIVERA: Yes.

25 MR. LOPEZ MENDOZA: Yes.

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1           MAYOR LONGOBARDI: The first question is  
2 what, basically none of us know your business  
3 plan or what hours you are open or what you're  
4 actually serving. So, I'd like to know what  
5 time of day you are open during the week, if  
6 you are open on the weekends, how many people  
7 you have working there during the day or on the  
8 weekends and also, what are you actually  
9 serving? I understand that you are serving  
10 some coffee. But what are the other things you  
11 are serving and how do you prepare them and how  
12 do you get the merchandise there? So, if you  
13 can start with that, that will be great.

14           MS. RIVERA: Of course. First of all, our  
15 schedule at the moment are Monday to Saturday.  
16 Monday to Friday, open from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00  
17 p.m. on Saturday, open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00  
18 p.m. Sundays we are definitely closed.

19           It is my husband and I basically, we are  
20 the only employees there. We basically manage  
21 the business so we have to be president and  
22 secretary, cleaners and everything, but we love  
23 it. We love what we do.

24           What we serve at Rivers Cafe besides the  
25 regular coffee, we have a few Salvadorian

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1 bakeries that are working with us, making some  
2 of our pastries and also Italian pastries, as  
3 the cheese cake, what people pretty much want  
4 to have when they come in for a cup of coffee.  
5 It is just like lighter snacks I will say. We  
6 do not procure any of it right here because  
7 like I said, we don't have a kitchen. This is  
8 basically our office and preparation room and  
9 we have to manage the space that we have.

10 In the front side of the store, we have  
11 the snacks are just pre-packed. Once we get  
12 them in, we pre-pack them. We label the --  
13 re-label them in which is what we are going to  
14 do which we are licensed with the license 20C  
15 from Agriculture and Markets. It basically  
16 only allow us to resale food and re-pack it and  
17 at the moment, this is why we don't deal  
18 directly with the health department because we  
19 mostly apply as re-packer and re-shipper of  
20 foods. Since we don't have a kitchen in the  
21 establishment, so we are not required to have a  
22 health department inspection, but we did  
23 require to have a state inspection. We had the  
24 inspector come in January in the beginning of  
25 the year, checked out the location. And like I

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1 said, we try to follow their rules as long as  
2 repacking is all about. On drinks what we  
3 served is basically coffee and chocolate and  
4 tea. So, coffee and all the presentations that  
5 we can have, espresso, cappuccino, lattes,  
6 macchiatos, all the we can have from the coffee  
7 themselves. We try to prepare a speciality  
8 coffee in the house, just grab and go.

9 Like I said, we don't need more than four  
10 or five people, the most, but we basically keep  
11 it at four people at a time and not more than  
12 that because the space does not allow us to  
13 have more and just to keep the six feet apart  
14 from everybody that is into the store as well.

15 MAYOR LONGOBARDI: Okay. No, that's  
16 great. I'm going to toss it over to several of  
17 my other Board members. I know they have  
18 questions as well. But it sounds like a very  
19 nice set up and system that you have set up  
20 there.

21 With that, I will go to Deputy Mayor Kevin  
22 Fitzgerald.

23 TRUSTEE FITZGERALD: Thank you, Mr. Mayor.  
24 Thank you for coming in. Sorry about the  
25 interruption in the beginning. I want to make

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1           sure it was done efficiently.

2                     You mention not going to be cooking. Are  
3           you not going to use a microwave either?

4                     MS. RIVERA: Not at the moment. We don't  
5           have anything to microwave in. I believe if we  
6           do have request to have like cold sandwich  
7           chest in the future or anything that needs to  
8           warm up, we probably have to speak first with  
9           our inspector from the New York State to see if  
10          we need to have a special, you know, or  
11          anything about to our license. To the moment,  
12          we have not done it not to the customer.  
13          There's one in the back which is for basically  
14          our personal use. We don't have anything for  
15          the customers. Anything we serve in the  
16          pastries, it is cold. We keep it in the fridge  
17          in the main fridge on the front or just a  
18          regular cold pastries you can have temperature  
19          room.

20                    TRUSTEE FITZGERALD: Will you be using the  
21          basement for anything?

22                    MS. RIVERA: No. We are not allowed to  
23          access the basement or use it at all.

24                    TRUSTEE FITZGERALD: Okay. And with  
25          regards to garbage, I would appreciate if you,

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1 when you put it out, make sure you put it out  
2 at the right time of day when the pickup is.  
3 We're trying to do our best to keep all the  
4 business districts as clean and beautiful as  
5 possible.

6 MS. RIVERA: Yes, sir.

7 TRUSTEE FITZGERALD: Mr. Mayor, that's all  
8 I have right now.

9 MAYOR LONGOBARDI: Okay. Thank you very  
10 much. We'll go to Dr. Lynn Pombonyo.

11 TRUSTEE POMBONYO: Good evening and thank  
12 you for coming in and describing your  
13 establishment for us.

14 Can you tell us a little bit about the  
15 layout of your business and what equipment you  
16 have in it?

17 MS. RIVERA: Sure. Basically the store,  
18 what we need to create a front, just basically  
19 customers have access to front side of the  
20 store. You have -- when they walk in, you have  
21 shelves in the wall. We try not to have, you  
22 know, like furniture or anything around it  
23 because it takes too much space. So where you  
24 see floating shelves in the wall to keep the  
25 bag and products to display and then you have

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1 stainless table, just creating some sort of "L"  
2 as a counter where we can actually have, you  
3 know, the distance from the customer when we  
4 are talking to them or preparing their drink as  
5 well.

6 The other equipment that we have, it is a  
7 mini fridge in the front. We have espresso  
8 machine, two mini fridge, one is for our usage  
9 to give our milks an everything we are serving  
10 to the customer and the other one is a mini  
11 fridge where we keep pastries and desserts. We  
12 try not to have the customers to -- like the  
13 reason why we prepare the product for them is  
14 because of the Covid situation. In the very  
15 beginning, we had people trying to prepare the  
16 drink. Then we decided not to do that. For  
17 health reason and sanitation reason.

18 We try to take care of the place and  
19 sanitize the place as much as we can but by not  
20 needing the customer to prepare anything or  
21 drink anything, they have to tell us exactly  
22 how they want their drink so we can do it for  
23 them. Nobody else is touching anything else in  
24 the display as much as possible.

25 TRUSTEE POMBONYO: And is everybody, your

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1 customers that come in, are all taking out  
2 their food and beverages or do any sometimes  
3 start to eat it or consume it there?

4 MS. RIVERA: No. We are not allowing  
5 anybody to eat anything indoors. We ask all  
6 the customers and we specify that over because  
7 first -- because we know most of the time we  
8 have people waiting, so we try to get everybody  
9 as soon as possible out of the store so we can  
10 keep on bringing people in and not having that,  
11 you know, like consuming people inside. It is  
12 just like grab what you need and then you can  
13 enjoy it outside or in your car or outside the  
14 store. Because of the space, we cannot allow  
15 that.

16 TRUSTEE POMBONYO: Okay. So, your  
17 customers are not generating any garbage  
18 themselves because they're taking everything  
19 out?

20 MS. RIVERA: Yes. Only thing, we give  
21 them samples. Like let's say we have daily  
22 juices, fruit juices that we repair in the  
23 house. We have our garbage can next to them,  
24 but you're talking like this size of cup that  
25 they can put it there in disposal right away.

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1 So, we take care of taking that garbage out  
2 every single day so they don't have to. Most  
3 of them, they drive by, park in and they go.  
4 So they're not actually maintaining the garbage  
5 in.

6 TRUSTEE POMBONYO: Thank you.

7 MS. RIVERA: You're welcome.

8 MAYOR LONGOBARDI: Great. Thank you, Dr.  
9 Lynn. Trustee Cheng?

10 TRUSTEE CHENG: Thank you and welcome to  
11 Floral Park.

12 Do you plan to continue to run your  
13 wholesale business out of the premises?

14 MS. RIVERA: We do since basically it is  
15 our main line I will say because our license,  
16 that's what we got the license for. And just  
17 at the moment, we actually don't have the same  
18 amount, like I said, the same amount of  
19 customers that we used to. We're trying to,  
20 you know, get back to our new line of customers  
21 that we can actually grab in. But it's been  
22 very hard because you know business right now,  
23 since our coffee it is very easy for them to  
24 just go somewhere else and get a cheaper  
25 coffee. Our coffee is imported. We cannot

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1 actually discuss too much on the pricing with  
2 them and that's why we are waiting for things  
3 to cool down so we can go back on track on the  
4 wholesale line.

5 But yeah, pretty much right now the only  
6 thing we are packing up and wrapping up is for  
7 the customers that we have to sell on line.  
8 But yes, we do it here in the store. After the  
9 hours with the customers, we stay one or two  
10 hours later cleaning up the store and getting  
11 it ready for the next day and also preparing  
12 some fresh coffee for the next day and we have  
13 to pack any coffee for the customers or the two  
14 or three stores that we have left then we have  
15 to do it overnight.

16 TRUSTEE CHENG: Very good. That's it,  
17 Mayor.

18 MAYOR LONGOBARDI: Thank you, Archie.  
19 Trustee Frank Chiara?

20 TRUSTEE CHIARA: Once again, welcome to  
21 the Village. We appreciate you coming in here.

22 MS. RIVERA: Thank you.

23 TRUSTEE CHIARA: You said you get products  
24 coming in from bakeries and re-package that.  
25 Where do you do that in the store?

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1 MS. RIVERA: What we do, it's when I say  
2 that we bring it in, we don't bring large  
3 amounts. Let's say we bring like if we have  
4 cookies, we have 10, 15 cookies at a time  
5 because of the space we have in the store. We  
6 cannot actually bring too much stuff in. So,  
7 when we bring the product, most of the -- we  
8 just deal with two bakeries, one in Hempstead  
9 and the other one is in Farmingdale. We don't  
10 have the space here to, you know, like do  
11 anything. So, we try to have them re-package  
12 and put the label in and to put the label, I do  
13 that in the morning, so an hour prior to the  
14 opening we can just re-label everything and put  
15 it on the shelves making sure that the -- they  
16 have the expiration date and everything. If  
17 anything needs to be done, then we do in the  
18 back area. We have like a small section table  
19 over here that we work and there is like  
20 basically, that's the multi use table for  
21 repacking or grinding coffee since we have the  
22 coffee grinding as well in here.

23 TRUSTEE CHIARA: All deliveries, where do  
24 they come through, the front of the store?

25 MS. RIVERA: They have to come through the

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1 front of the store because the store doesn't  
2 have -- I don't have access to the back door  
3 since it is a building and they have two  
4 apartments upstairs and one apartment in the  
5 back. So, the only entrance that we have is  
6 basically the main store. That's the only door  
7 that we can have access to products or  
8 deliveries.

9 TRUSTEE CHIARA: I read great reviews of  
10 your coffee and your cakes, so I will stop by.  
11 Good luck.

12 MS. RIVERA: I'll wait for you. Thank  
13 you.

14 MAYOR LONGOBARDI: That's great. Thank  
15 you. I'm thinking about the Italian pastries  
16 she was talking about.

17 At this point, since we're all done with  
18 our questions right now, we may have a couple  
19 more after, so if anybody has a question, I ask  
20 that you please post it in the chat room and we  
21 will give you an opportunity to ask it. Okay.  
22 So, does any member of the public have any  
23 questions for our applicant? I'm looking at  
24 the chat room myself. If you don't, if you  
25 don't know how to use the chat room, you can

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1 please unmute yourself and definitely say hello  
2 to us if you have a question. All right. I  
3 think unless, Darlene, I am missing anything I  
4 don't think we have anything.

5 MS. LANZA: I don't see any hands raised  
6 or anything in the chat room.

7 MAYOR LONGOBARDI: Just one more time,  
8 does the Board have any questions?

9 TRUSTEE FITZGERALD: It is more of a  
10 favor. If you can, when you become successful  
11 and are looking to expand if you can if you  
12 have ideas about expanding, if you can give the  
13 building department a call when you start  
14 thinking of ideas so you can ahead of it. Make  
15 sure the process runs as smooth as possible and  
16 quick as possible for you.

17 MS. RIVERA: Believe me, the last time we  
18 need to. No, but thank you. We want to thank  
19 you, Renee --

20 TRUSTEE FITZGERALD: Best of luck.

21 MS. RIVERA: -- for all the help. Thank  
22 you Renee for guiding us through.

23 MS. MARCUS: You're welcome.

24 MAYOR LONGOBARDI: That's great and thank  
25 you again for choosing Floral Park. We are

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1           thankful to have good solid businesses here and  
2           wish you all the best and major success and  
3           hopefully it is just the beginning of a very  
4           small place and you find another bigger  
5           building in Floral Park that you might need.

6                        So with that, I am going to actually to  
7           ask for a motion to close the public hearing  
8           and reserve decision.

9                        TRUSTEE FITZGERALD: So moved.

10                      TRUSTEE POMBONYO: Second.

11                      MAYOR LONGOBARDI: Miss Walsh, will you  
12           please poll the Board.

13                      MS. WALSH: Trustee Fitzgerald?

14                      TRUSTEE FITZGERALD: Aye.

15                      MS. WALSH: Trustee Pombonyo?

16                      TRUSTEE POMBONYO: Aye.

17                      MS. WALSH: Trustee Cheng?

18                      TRUSTEE CHENG: Aye.

19                      MS. WALSH: Trustee Chiara?

20                      TRUSTEE CHIARA: Aye.

21                      MS. WALSH: And Mayor Longobardi?

22                      MAYOR LONGOBARDI: Aye. Okay. Thank you  
23           Miss Walsh. That closes our public hearing.

24                      Again, we wish you all the best of success  
25           in the future. You don't have to stick around

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1 to hear the rest of the Board Meeting if you  
2 have work to do. You are more than welcome to  
3 cut off now. Thank you again so much for being  
4 part of this and doing the things you have to  
5 do in doing the business you have to do in  
6 Floral Park. Have a good night.

7 MS. RIVERA: I will wait for you to try  
8 the coffee. Have a good night.

9 MAYOR LONGOBARDI: Take care. Thank you  
10 so much.

11  
12 Certified to be a true and  
13 accurate transcript of the proceedings.

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15 \_\_\_\_\_  
16 CATHERINE P. MURPHY  
17 Court Reporter  
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