

Town of Austerlitz
Town Board Meeting
December 18, 2014

Present: Robert Lagonia, Supervisor, Greg Vogler, Jon Mesick, Matthew Verenazi, Bryan Geel, Town Board Members, and Susan Haag, Town Clerk.

Robert Meehan, Highway Superintendent, absent due to illness. Highway Forman, Shawn Williams, was in attendance.

Meeting called to order at 7:00 p.m.

Moment of Silence, followed by the pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

A motion to accept the November 20, 2014 Town Board Meeting minutes was made by J. Mesick and seconded by M. Verenazi.

R. Lagonia: yes

B. Geel: yes

J. Mesick: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

G. Vogler: yes

Motion carried 5:0.

Budget Amendments/Auditing of Accounts and Claims

Budget Amendment #8-2014

General Fund

Increase A8020.11 Planning Board Clerk by \$250.00

Increase A7550.4 Celebrations by \$150.00

Increase A6772.4 Aged Programs by \$10.00

Increase A3620.11 Building Inspector Clerk by \$500.00

Increase A1910.4 Insurance by \$500.00

Increase A1620.4 Buildings by \$1050.00

Increase A1440.4 Engineer by \$1100.00

Increase A1420.4 Attorney by \$9500.00

Increase A2610 Fines and Forfeitures by \$13060.00

Highway Fund

Increase DA9010.8 Retirement by \$2253.00

Increase DA5112.2 S/A C.H.I.P.s by \$5222.54

Increase DA3501 S/A C.H.I.P.s by \$7475.54

Increase DA5142.1 Snow Removal Payroll by \$7500.00

Increase DA5110.1 General Repairs Payroll by \$16900.00

Increase DA5142.4 Snow Removal by \$16000.00
Decrease DA51401 Brush and Weeds by \$17500.00
Decrease DA5130.1 Machinery Payroll by \$6900.00
Decrease DA5110.4 General Repairs by \$16000.00

A motion to approve the above budget amendment was made by B. Geel and seconded by G. Vogler.

R. Lagonia: yes

B. Geel: yes

J. Mesick: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

G. Vogler: yes

Motion carried 5:0.

A motion to approve 2014 General Fund #397-429, in the amount of \$17976.92, and Highway Fund #233-251, in the amount of \$56248.29 was made by G. Vogler and seconded by J. Mesick.

R. Lagonia: yes

B. Geel: yes

J. Mesick: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

G. Vogler: yes

Motion carried 5:0.

Reports

Monthly Cash Disbursements and Supervisor Report

Monthly Cash Disbursements for the month of November 2014 submitted. Supervisor Lagonia noted that the numbers are somewhat skewed because the Town has not received its C.H.I.P.s reimbursement money yet. \$154,000.00 is expected soon though. As the Town has been seeing, the budget is running tight. Once all the 2014 bills have been paid, roughly mid-January, Supervisor Lagonia will have a better idea how the Town fared for the 2014 year. The budget amendments done tonight are for December bills.

Supervisor Lagonia advised that the Town still has not heard from the NYS Comptroller's Office concerning the audit that was done.

The highway truck purchased from the Town of Canaan is onsite, but not currently being used. Forman Williams does not know what Highway Superintendent Meehan's intention is for this truck.

The Town celebrated the beginning of the holidays with a Tree Lighting ceremony. Supervisor Lagonia lit the tree, the Spencertown Store provided refreshments, the Spencertown Fire Company did a great job with decorations, caroling and entertainment: Santa Claus. 62 residents participated.

It is rumored that NYS Route 203, from Big Woods Road to Chatham, will be paved in June. Supervisor Lagonia and many others wrote to the Governor concerning this issue.

Monday morning Supervisor Lagonia will be meeting with the Highway crew and clerk, Mary Davis, to bat around issues, concerns, questions, unwritten policies, etc., in an attempt that any missing pieces can be incorporated into the Organizational Meeting and a new employee policy handbook. All those wishing to attend, may do so.

Supervisor Lagonia changed the Highway Superintendent and Foreman's cell phones to Verizon instead of Sprint because of cell service issues. New cell phones have been ordered.

Supervisor Lagonia reached out to Sally Light, the Town's Historian, concerning the housing of the Town's Historical records. Currently they are housed in S. Light's home, but will be moved temporarily to the Austerlitz Historical Society until the new town hall has been renovated. Historian Light said she is fine with this.

It has come to the attention of Supervisor Lagonia that Columbia County will not be including the Zanconato demolition project in the Town of Austerlitz' warrant. The project cost will be included on B. Zanconato's tax bill though. The Town had been assured from several sources, beginning back with the Town's former attorney, and coming forward to the current regime, that the County would make the Town whole. According to Attorney for the Town, Joseph Catalano, who has researched the case law, there is no law that says the County cannot do this, and in fact has done it in the past. The County currently has decided it does not want to set any precedent so they will not have to collect this type of line item. The Town does have other options to recoup this money that will be explored if B. Zanconato does not pay his tax bill.

Columbia County

On a County level, Supervisor Lagonia advised that the Columbia County budget was just passed.

Bids for the sale of Pine Haven were opened and they came in higher than expected.

Town Clerk Report for the month of November 2014 submitted.

Highway Superintendent Report

Highway Superintendent Meehan was absent due to illness, but a highway report was given by Forman Shawn Williams. Forman Williams noted that the dirt roads are not good, soft due to warm weather and rain. The Highway Crew has been fixing potholes, but they just can't keep up with them. Over the last 4 weeks, each member of the highway crew has probably logged in about 80 hours of overtime.

Supervisor Lagonia noted that the Highway Department lost a man 3-4 months ago. During budget discussion the Town Board and Highway Superintendent Meehan talked about whether or not to replace this employee. R. Meehan wanted to keep this position open and make sure it was filled because come winter, the extra man would be needed to plow. Forman Williams feels it would be much easier on the current crew if there was an additional employee, but no one has

been hired to date. When a storm hits and the highway crew is continually plowing, and they are behind on clearing the roads by the end of the day because the routes are longer for each driver.

Town Board Member Geel asked how many trucks are currently being used and Forman Williams noted that they are using 3 large trucks, one small one, and then R. Meehan's. S. Williams explained the designated routes, which trucks are used on which routes and why. The truck that was just purchased from Canaan has not been used yet, but S. Williams is not sure why. The Town Board would have to talk with Highway Superintendent Meehan concerning this. But, being down a man, there isn't anyone to put in the truck anyway. The truck should be ready to go in case of a breakdown.

Supervisor Lagonia asked if there was a weekly plan of work at the highway garage. Forman Williams advised there was not, but that Highway Superintendent Meehan knows what he would like to have done each day and each morning alerts the crew to work orders.

Supervisor Lagonia advised the Town Board that he received 2 calls from residents concerning the condition of Reed Road and that he called the Highway Garage. Since R. Meehan was not available, R. Lagonia asked S. Williams to send someone out to fix the issues on Reed Road. S. Williams sent R. Miller who filled in the potholes.

Forman Williams noted that plowing during and after storms, storm clean-up, equipment breakdowns, etc. change what work R. Meehan would like to accomplish from time to time.

Supervisor Lagonia asked what the policy is when a tree is down and blocking a Town roadway. Forman Williams noted that there is no policy, but if someone from emergency services call R. Meehan gets the first call and if he is not available, S. Williams get the second call. When questioning service issues with Sprint, S. Williams noted there are issues.

rob new grader has shawn played with it? shawn no because he is not the grader guy, duane is the grader guy. shawn said duane did try out, and said it was easier than he thought it would be, but will take some time to get used to.

rich nesbitt came before the town board the last storm taconic hills called rich because bus couldn't get up roads, 2 hr delay, roads still not plowed. also county 11 school bus accident, other town roads still not plowed. after accident, roads still not plowed. 11:15 westhill was plowed. in the past roads needed to be plowed quicker especially for emergency services. taconic hills can never reach bobby. rich wants better communication with schools, roads plowed earlier. today's storm was better.

shawn addressed rich's concerned. dirt roads were sanded not plowed per bobby because roads were soft. blacktopped roads were done bryarcliff in particular by 6:00-6:15 that morning. the 11:00 am plowing was the 3rd time bryarcliff was plowed. shawn's route was discussed.

matt talked to bobby about plowing dirt roads and plowing makes worse. beansy agrees that if you plow dirt makes a monster.

communication, down a man, bus routes these are the issues. shawn is out doing out what he is told. rob asked steve to write letter, come to board meeting, etc. same with taconic. rob wants to move forward and make this better, so let's get these people together and work this out.

greg asked short a guy, is shawn doing extra because we are short a guy? shawn said that another guy would only save time at the end of the day.

bryan blacktop is different from dirt. discussed dirt and salt different.

rob shawn has been here 15 years and can make certain decisions on his own...why is bobby making them all. because bobby is in charge and it is his call. shawn in name only for foreman position.

meeting on monday,, get issues and move forward.

discussed potholes and fixing them. roads never got done because of grader issue. washboard roads a lot lately. noticed that maintenance has not been done like in the pass. rob-bridge work, etc. but no planning is being done. can't wing it.

rich, taxpayer's don't mind spending money for new equipment, but only if there is being used.

discussed budget issues and available money. rob the goal is to make things better.

rich and rob thank shawn.

Planning Board Report for the month of November 2014 submitted.

No Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee Report for the month of November 2014 submitted. Results from the Hamlet survey were submitted for review.

Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Report for the month of November 2014 submitted.

Justice Cassuto Justice Court Report for the month of November 2014 submitted.

Justice Grubin Justice Court Report for the month of November 2014 submitted.

Dog Control Report for the months of August, September, October and November 2014 submitted.

A motion to accept the above reports was made by J. Mesick and seconded by M. Verenazi.

R. Lagonia: yes
B. Geel: yes
J. Mesick: yes
M. Verenazi: yes
G. Vogler: yes
Motion carried 5:0.

Correspondence

Bryan and Susan Geel: Thank you for flowers.

Association of Towns of New York State: Resolutions Committee Report regarding proposed amendments to the Association of Towns' operating Constitution and Bylaws.

Unfinished Business

Town Park: Supervisor Lagonia advised that Jack Shear is looking at the plans for the Town Park renovation and bids will be put out in the Spring.

Parker Property: Attorney for the Town Catalano has reviewed the contract submitted by William Better, Mr. Parker's Attorney, and it was sent back for a couple of revisions in the provision for closing costs. Once changes are made, the contract will be forwarded to Supervisor Lagonia for a signature.

2015 Health and Dental Insurance:

12% increase in health ins. rob went over specific numbers of what employees pay and what town pays. Compared to wages in other towns in county we are low and most towns pay full insurance costs. basically 4200.00 difference between paying completely or not. only for 2015 year. new hires will pay something. if we pay, we have enough in 2015 budget to do this.

bryan notes that the town needs a written policy. should always pay 100% of employee , but family plans are expensive.

rob health benefits hold a lot of people in their jobs. boost moral...

beansy pick this up for a year.

questions arose that rob discuss with steve

a motion to pay 100% health benefits, dropping deductible bit, as long as the town can do this legally do xyz...sue put im question beansy matt carried.

Dog Shelter Agreement: no vet has dog shelter, no other option only columbia greene.

Discussed contract. can change law in new year to cover additional fees if the town board wants

to. has to have a designative place per ag and market law. there may be a possible contract with pineview, but this is slim.

a motion for rob to sign contract by rob and bryan. carried.

Grader:

2 proposals,,one from nortrax and one from milton cat. sue put in 'bids'. town board discussed the difference between the two machines. 3500 lbs heavier, joy sticks, emission system more better. discussed with cat dealer....

service was discussed.

next steps were discussed. credit and payment schedule, etc.

rob spoke to bobby today, and he was very open to either machine.

town board looked over an analysis between the two machines. over 7 years roughly a 22000.00 savings with a cat.

a motion to pursue purchasing cat, talk to the accountant about numbers and length of time for lease, sign contract in beginning of year...beansy, matt carried.

New Business

Pay Scale Highway Employees

Supervisor Lagonia advised the Town Board of the hourly wage for the 2015 year for each of the Highway employees. This amount needs to be approved before January because the first payroll will be before the Organizational meeting and the accountant needs to have everything in order.

A motion to approve the submitted hourly wage figures for each Highway employee for the 2015 year was made by B. Geel and seconded by J. Mesick.

R. Lagonia: yes

B. Geel: yes

J. Mesick: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

G. Vogler: yes

Motion carried 5:0.

Early Visa Payment: sue explain bill payment schedule with town board timing. this month rob said to just pay this. will still get voucher.

a motion to pay this earlier than a board meeting matt john carried.

Code Enforcement Shared Services Agreement: changes with joe and rob. some minor changes were made. rob and rick talked about hrs by lee for additional job. rick said separate.

discussed taking cc payments, will discuss in future.

canaan in charge and working out well.

greg need log to account for his time. rob can work on internal issues that is separate from contract. lee is responsive and changes have been made.

Resolution #49-2014, 2015 Code Enforcement Shared Service Agreement

A motion to adopt Resolution #49-2014, 2015 Code Enforcement Shared Service Agreement was made by J. Mesick and seconded by G. Vogler.

R. Lagonia: yes

B. Geel: yes

J. Mesick: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

G. Vogler: yes

Motion carried 5:0.

WHEREAS, the Towns of Austerlitz, Canaan, and Hillsdale entered into a shared services agreement for a Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer in July, 2010, pursuant to section 119-o of the General Municipal Law; and

WHEREAS, this agreement has been renewed on an annual basis and amended in January, 2014, and

WHEREAS, the agreement is up for renewal and the Towns that are parties to the agreement have proposed a second amendment to the agreement;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town Board of the Town of Austerlitz hereby approves the renewal of the above-described Shared Building Inspector and Code Enforcement Services Agreement and the second amendment proposed to said Agreement and authorizes the Town Supervisor to execute the Second Amendment to said Agreement as presented.

2015 Organizational Meeting

Supervisor Lagonia asked that the Town Board review last year's Organizational Meeting Resolutions in preparation for this year. If there are any concerns, changes, additions, etc, please let Supervisor Lagonia know ahead of time.

Public Comments

None

Executive Session

A motion to enter into Executive Session for a personnel issue was made by M. Verenazi and seconded by R. Lagonia.

R. Lagonia: yes

B. Geel: yes

J. Mesick: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

G. Vogler: yes

Motion carried 5:0. Executive Session entered at 8:55 p.m.

A motion to exit Executive Session was made by R. lagonia and seconded by G. Vogler

R. Lagonia: yes

B. Geel: yes

J. Mesick: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

G. Vogler: yes

Motion carried 5:0. Executive Session exited at 9:16 p.m.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by R. Lagonia and seconded by B. Geel.

R. Lagonia: yes

B. Geel: yes

J. Mesick: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

G. Vogler: yes

Motion carried 5:0. Meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan A. Haag, Town Clerk