

Town of Austerlitz
Town Board Meeting
August 18, 2016

Present: Robert Lagonia, Supervisor, Greg Vogler, Jere Wrightsman, Nansi Friedman and Matthew Verenazi, Town Board Members, Robert Meehan Highway Superintendent, and Susan Haag, Town Clerk.

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

Moment of Silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes

A motion to accept the July 21, 2016 Town Board Meeting minutes was made by J. Wrightsman and seconded by N. Friedman.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

N. Friedman: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 5:0.

Auditing of Accounts and Claims

A motion to pay General Fund, #238-263, in the amount of \$20966.81, and Highway Fund, #126-140, in the amount of \$30956.80 was made by G. Vogler and seconded by N. Friedman.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

N. Friedman: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 5:0.

Reports

Monthly Cash Disbursement and Supervisor Report

Monthly Cash Disbursement for the Month of July 2016 submitted. Supervisor Lagonia noted the amounts in each account totaling roughly 1.4 million. With almost 8 months completed, the appropriations and revenue lines are in order with no big red flags. In another month or so Supervisor Lagonia will start to look at highway numbers to see where the Town is and what can be spent. Some oil and stone will be put down in September on certain roads.

Supervisor's Report: Supervisor Lagonia met with Jack Shear and Joe Iuviene at the new Town Hall to discuss plans for going forward with the renovations, looking at all the last minute details before a bid package is put out. J. Shear would like to keep the outside brick on the foundation, looked at window samples and discussed inside plans. Funding for the project was discussed in lieu of timing. Mechanical drawings should be complete next week. The bid package should go

out in September, with bids due in October and a projected begin date of November. Funding should co-inside with the construction schedule. Putting in the new foundation will be done first.

Supervisor Lagonia met with Nick VanAlstyne concerning the condition of the Spencertown Academy, repairs sited to be done and the financial status. Discussed how the projected bidding was done noting that this is a Town owned building so bidding must be done in compliance with Town law. After speaking with Attorney for the Town, Joseph Catalano, it was noted the lease was done 'a little funky' for the time. The NYS Comptroller's Office and Attorney Catalano are looking into how to be in compliance with the bidding. Waiting on an answer at this point.

Supervisor Lagonia advised that the 2017 budgeting process has begun. Supervisor Lagonia and Town Board Member Vogler have already put in a good amount of time and the Tentative Budget is just about done. The Town is still waiting on health insurance and liability figures. For 2017, the tax cap is .06% which is nothing. Supervisor Lagonia and Member Vogler are looking into areas where changes can be made to find cost savings. This process is ahead of schedule and Supervisor Lagonia is anticipating to give the 2017 Tentative Budget to the Town Clerk before the September Town Board meeting. The Town is in good shape financially.

R. Lagonia noted that all budget requests were looked over and considered. Town Board Member Wrightsman asked what was decided for the Court. R. Lagonia noted that decisions were made that he believes are fair, but to keep in mind that the final decisions for all figures in any line item lay with the Town Board as a whole.

The Town Highway Garage bond will be paid off in 2017 and the intent is to go back out with a new bond for needed items such as a new salt shed, but this will need to be discussed with money being set aside in 2017 for the cost of the new bonding. Town Board Member Friedman questioned what bonds are currently in place and the respective payments. Discussed current levels of interest and principle and possible ones for the future.

Additionally, it was noted that extra money will have to be put aside for repair work for the Spencertown Academy in case the Town needs to take on more of the responsibility here.

The intent is to keep the same health care benefits for the Highway Employees at no cost for 2017, but Supervisor Lagonia needs to see the figures first to be sure.

On a County level, local fire company memberships are way down and the cost involved to keep these going is getting higher and higher. A subcommittee has been formed on a County level to see what can be done to attract membership and participation in local fire companies. Consolidation is a consideration. Equipment issues are a problem as well. EMT services are also a consideration on a County level. Supervisor Lagonia is getting a better feel for where the increasing costs are coming from. The County is talking about including all EMT services in charge back items for taxing purposes.

Town Board Member Wrightsman advised the Town Board that training for the new employee manual was completed last month with the Highway Crew.

Highway Superintendent Report

Highway Superintendent Meehan reported that ditching is being done on Crossroads. The Highway Crew helped the Town of Canaan with an oil and stone project. Punsit Road and Rigor Hill will be oiled and stoned in September. Auctions International sold 4 old trucks: An International Dump Truck for \$1025.00, a Ford F550 for \$1525.00, an Oshkosh for \$1525.00 and a Chevy Dump Truck for \$790.00. Town Board Member Friedman asked if these trucks are off our insurance and Highway Superintendent Meehan advised yes.

R. Meehan will be meeting with Engineer for the Town, Ray Jurkowski to go over Town projects.

Superintendent Meehan advised that ditching for Fire Hill Road really needs to get done. Supervisor Lagonia noted that according to our Attorney, the Town owns 30 feet from the center of the road. R. Meehan advised that it will probably take \$10000-15000.00 to fix this road. Town Board Member Verenazi does not want to see any money put in this road because it is a steep, rough road that has already been classified as seasonal. M. Verenazi would just like to see ditching put in. Superintendent Meehan notes it needs to be made passable for emergency vehicles. It was noted that emergency vehicles do have access to both ends of the road and the road is in better shape than it used to be many years ago. There is only a 400 foot section that is deemed seasonal.

Supervisor Lagonia would like to see a dialog opened with the Pintos to see where we are and discuss the need for ditches to be put in for the runoff water. Supervisor Lagonia will make the call.

Highway Superintendent Meehan took the wording for the new park sign down to the County and will check on it this month. Garbage pails also need to be bought. R. Meehan would like to purchase cement ones, but they are expensive. Wood and plastic ones are available. Superintendent Meehan will check the catalog and get back to the Town Board.

Town Clerk Report for the month of July 2016 submitted.

Planning Board Report for the month of July 2016 submitted.

Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee Report for the month of July submitted. Member Vogler advised that the committee is also working on a law to manage solar because the Town really needs to get out of ahead of this. The road law is still be updated, but reaching competition. The ridge line law is finished and waiting to be given to the Town Board, but it was decided to give a package to the Town Board at once. The next law to be considered and looked at is wind turbines.

Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Report for the month of July 2016 submitted.

Justice Grubin Justice Court Report for the month of July 2016 submitted.

Justice Cassuto Court Report for the month of July 2016 submitted.

Dog Report for the month of July 2016 submitted.

A motion to accept the above reports was made by G. Vogler and seconded by N. Friedman.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

N. Friedman: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 5:0.

Correspondence

Letter from an Anonymous Tax payer concerning ambulance service coverage by the Chatham Rescue Squad.

NYS Department of Taxation and Finance: Town of Austerlitz final equalization rate is 100%. Supervisor Lagonia advised the Town Board that Town Assessor, Pam Cook, has noted that at some point soon the Town needs to do a Town-wide reassessment. This has not been done in quite a few years and P. Cook is looking into costs and options for completing next year. Using the County resources is the less expensive way to go. Even though the Town as a whole is at 100%, there are properties that are above that and below that rate.

Unfinished Business

Ray Jurkowski, Engineer for the Town, sent an email concerning the status of several Town projects.

The Town Park: Demolition of existing building: R. Jurkowski will be meeting with Robert Meehan in the upcoming week to discuss the demolition of the existing pavilion at the Town Park.

R. Jurkowski's office will also set corner stakes for the new building as well as grade stakes for R. Meehan use in grading the area in preparation of the new building.

R. Jurkowski will also provide the proposed location of the utility trench for the installation of the Electrical service conduit.

New Pavilion Construction: The contractor has estimated that he will be onsite the second week of September to begin construction.

Prior to the end of August, R. Jurkowski will have a preconstruction meeting with the contractor and R. Meehan, to coordinate the work, and also have a contract signing.

East Hill Bridge: R. Jurkowski's office has completed the Deed research at the County Clerk's office, and the Initial field survey work was completed August 17, 2016.

The proposed schedule for the project is as follows:

Surveying:	Deed Research and Field Work Completed August 17, 2016
Mapping:	August 31, 2016
Preliminary Design:	September 1 – September 30, 2016

NYSDEC Permitting:	October 1 - December 31, 2016
Obtain Temporary Easements:	November 2016 – January 2017
Bidding:	February - March 2017
Construction:	April – August 2017

R. Jurkowski is also in the process of prepare “Bridge New York” grant application. Application is due by September 9th.

Schoolhouse Road Culvert Repair: R. Jurkowski’ s office was out surveying the area to confirm the proposed culvert replacement layout, grades, slope and topography. He will be meeting with R. Meehan within the next two weeks to review proposed layout and to finalize the RFP for the fabrication of the new box culvert, with the anticipation that the culvert will be installed by Town forces with the assistance of neighboring Town Highway Departments.

Norton: On August 9, R. Jurkowski received an updated map with a new location for the proposed turn around. He has contacted Rory McCreesh and has requested a site meeting, so that both R. Meehan and himself may meet with R. McCreesh to discuss the proposed new location of the roadway turn around, as well as the next steps, including but not limited to; design plans, construction, inspections, and roadway dedication. R. Jurkowski would also recommend that the Town Attorney prepare an escrow agreement with the property owner, so that all fees associated with the proposed project are paid for by the applicant.

Fire Hill Road: R. Jurkowski had the opportunity of visiting the area along Fire Hill Road that in the past has been considered a seasonal roadway. This section of roadway is very narrow (12 feet wide) and has constraints on along each edge that severely limits travel way and there are no roadway shoulders in this area. R. Jurkowski has concerns that, in its current state, this section of roadway is not passable during the winter months. The existing side slopes along the roadway severely limit the ability to adequately remove snow from the area.

It is R. Jurkowski’ s opinion that in order for the roadway to be opened for year round use, the roadway will need to be significantly improved to allow for a wider travel way, shoulders and roadside ditch lines to convey storm water. This may become challenging due to the existing steep slopes and rock outcroppings.

In addition, prior to any improvements, the ownership of the roadway and the adjacent property will need to be verified. At this time, R. Jurkowski would anticipate that the existing road is considered a “user road” and therefore the Town in limited to area that is currently maintained by Highway Department. Any addition improvements that include widening of the roadway, would require permanent easements or formal dedication. I would recommend further discussion with Attorney for the Town, Joseph Catalano and the Highway Superintendent, Robert Meehan.

New Business

2017 Annual Budget: Discussed.

Public Comments

Chic Vander Weit questioned if there was an ordinance in Town about leaving garbage containers on the road because some are left out for 3-4 weeks. Supervisor Lagonia noted there is a problem for the companies involved and for plowing in the winter. R. Lagonia will ask Attorney Catalano if other towns have a law or verbiage to deal with this issue and to what extent. It may or may not be something the Town wants to tackle. Member Verenazi noted the

public safety aspect and if our Code Enforcement Officer handles this. Supervisor Lagonia answered that Code Enforcement Officer Heim has some rights to manage this, just not sure to what extent.

Eileen Fusco asked the Town Board to consider the Austerlitz Hamlet and specifically the park there when budgeting because this area does need some attention. E. Fusco would like to see some Town events held in the Austerlitz Hamlet. Supervisor Lagonia stated that money spent in the Spencertown Park was donated for that purpose. R. Lagonia asked E. Fusco exactly what she would like to see to which she answered maybe a pavilion, and some trails in the wooded area.

Cono Fusco questioned the bonding that was to be paid off in 2017 and the timing of payments hoping that the timing of the new bonding being considered would alien the current payment structure. Bonding and timing was discussed.

Supervisor Lagonia advised that a new salt shed is what is currently being considered for the new bonding. The plan is to keep the new payment similar so that the Town can get some of the things it needs.

Cono Fusco questioned the participant registration fee for the Summer Recreation Department. Supervisor Lagonia explained that it is lower for residents, but much higher for non-residents. Program revenue and costs were discussed noting to costs the Town roughly \$300-400.00 per child. The question was raised why the Town has this program if its costing money, to which the answer was because it feels good and is a service to the community. Supervisor Lagonia noted that an extensive analysis was done of this program a few years ago and fees were increased at that time, especially for non-residents. But, costs are increasing and the Town will be looking at this for the future because fees are still too low. C. Fusco suggested to increase fees over a few years to lessen the impact and to close the gap between revenue and the costs.

Eileen Fusco stated that seniors need services as well and a senior center may be a future idea.

Eileen Fusco asked about finishing paving West Hill Road to Dugway Road, and putting some additional stone where the payment ends. Highway Superintendent Meehan noted that he is trying to get up there.

Chic Vander Weit questioned if the Summer Recreation Program participation decreased when the fees were increased and if rates are increased, will costs continue to go up as well. Supervisor Lagonia advised that some costs stay the same like the bus and swimming rentals, and some would change like personnel. Member Vogler notes that thresholds need to be watched. Discussed in more details.

Kathy Vander Weit questions the brush piles on the Kern property.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by M. Verenazi and seconded by J. Wrightsman.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

N. Friedman: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 5:0. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan A. Haag, Town Clerk