

Town of Austerlitz  
Town Board Meeting  
November 17, 2016

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

Regular Town Board meeting called to order at 7:04 p.m.

Moment of Silence, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes**

A motion to accept the October 20, 2016 Budget Public Hearing/Workshop/Regular Town Board Meeting minutes was made by N. Friedman and seconded by J. Wrightsman.

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, #323-358, in the amount of \$37947.06, Highway Fund, #174-193, in the amount of \$11604.09, and the Capital Fund #45-48, in the amount of \$4728.77 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 October 2016 submitted. Supervisor Lagonia noted the Town is in great shape. There haven't been any budget amendments to date yet, so the budgeting is appropriate. Total on hand is \$1.9 million which includes the recent donation of \$800,000.00.

There will be some extra money this year, especially in the Highway Department. It was a mild winter last year so much of this overage is a result of that. There is also a chunk of money that was to be used on the Schoolhouse Road culvert project, which appears will not happen until next year because of the hold up with the engineer. Supervisor Lagonia would like to set up a broad reserve account that can be used for multiple projects. Attorney Catalano is looking into reserves accounts for multiple uses and will have an answer before the Town's Annual AUD is

filed. Supervisor Lagonia and Highway Superintendent Meehan met to discuss the numbers. The Town will need some material for winter to top off what was left from last year.

The Town has stayed under the tax cap for two years so the numbers are good as is the management.

The tree lighting in the park for Christmas appears to be scheduled for December 10<sup>th</sup>, but Supervisor Lagonia feels this is a little late. Daniel Howes will decorate the Town Hall again this year showing the spirit of Christmas without anything religious in nature.

A motion to hire Daniel Howes to decorate the Town Hall for Christmas was made by G. Vogler and seconded by M. Verenazi.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

N. Friedman: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 5:0.

Supervisor Lagonia met with Town of Austerlitz Historian, Tom Moreland, and Town Clerk, Susan Haag, concerning the additional records that were move from previous Town Historian, Sally Light's house to the Austerlitz' Historical Society. At this point the Town should have all of the Town's Historical records. T. Moreland and the Austerlitz Historical Society have been working with S. Light's daughter, Lisa, who dropped off 50 boxes. Historian Moreland and Karen Carney from the Austerlitz Historical Society are going through each box. The 'missing' Gott Diary has been found. The Austerlitz Historical Society does not want to house all of these records. Some should be kept, but a good amount of the material is photo copies that do not have much historical value. This can be used though for research. Historian Moreland will itemize the content of the boxes, and when the new Town Hall is complete maybe the Town can have a Historian's room in the loft. Some of the items can be displayed as well.

The Town's Bicentennial is coming up in 2018 and Supervisor Lagonia would like to include one other Town Board Member to the Bicentennial Committee besides himself. There will be a lot of planning and cooperation from other Town entities and community members. Town Board Members Wrightsman and Friedman would also like to be on this committee.

Town Board Member Verenazi noted that the Spencertown Fire Company's 100 year celebration is in 2017.

On a County level, Supervisor Lagonia noted that the county is overrun with heroin abuse. Columbia County Sheriff is sending more and more staff for training. The thinking is that there should be a police presence in all the schools in the County, not just the couple that already have one. This would be funded by tax payer dollars, and all entities should advocate for this. The County is trying to deal with this from all avenues as well as on a State level.

### Highway Superintendent Report

Highway Superintendent Meehan reported that his crew has been out patching blacktop, replacing the culver on F. Fizzinoglia's property, and other projects. R. Meehan has spoken to Serge Bervy Jr. who is considering volunteering a day to brush hog Town trails in Austerlitz. Town Board Member Friedman met with Christine Vanderlan of the Land Conservancy and they will walk the Town property in Austerlitz. The Land Conservancy is very interested in working with the Town of Austerlitz to find source money.

Superintendent Meehan also advised that a roller was rented for rolling and grading of dirt roads. Material is being put down on 3 roads coming out of Red Rock to make up for the extra traffic all summer. Madsen Overhead Doors put new seals on the doors at the Highway Garage. This is a routine maintenance issue in which they did a great job. R. Meehan would like to use the extra Highway Fund money to purchase sand and salt for the coming season, and a small trailer to move the skid steer around. This would cost roughly between \$6500 and \$8500.00 depending on the size. Also, a poly tank would be helpful for use on a water tanker to keep the dust down in the summer months. There is no pricing on this yet.

A question was asked concerning the timing of the East Hill Road Culvert replacement. Highway Superintendent Meehan does not know the time because he is waiting on the Town Engineer who has been working on flooding issues on Fog Hill and Middle Road and other Town projects. R. Meehan did note that the Town Attorney will need to become involved in this process due to easement issues. Town Engineer, Ray Jurkowski, did look at the pond put in by Serge Bervy which is now a nice project. A project on Hemlock Lane was also looked at. There are many projects in the Town and Engineer Jurkowski has a lot on his plate. Supervisor Lagonia believes he is spread thin and next year the Town Board will have to decide a direction to go in for a Town Engineer.

Superintendent Meehan advised that the Schoolhouse Road project will have to wait until next year. In addition, it was noted that the Town tennis court is not prepped for the winter. The nets need to be taken down and stored.

Town Clerk Report for the month of October 2016 submitted.

Planning Board Report for the month of October 2016 submitted.

Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee Report for the month of October 2016 submitted. The new Solar Law has been sent to Supervisor Lagonia and Attorney Catalano for review. A workshop will be set up to work on this.

Because the Town has a number of large projects in the works currently, the general consensus of the Town Board was to work on the updates to the zoning code one at a time, starting with the Solar Law.

Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Report for the month of October 2016 submitted. Supervisor Lagonia noted that G. Smith is a great addition to the town. He is in the office, efficient, and takes care of things. The project on Firehill Road has 2 stop work orders currently;

one from the Labor Department and the other from Workmans Comp. The owner is now complying with the approvals given to him on a Planning Board level and not overstepping the boundaries.

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

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

No Dog Report for the month of October 2016 submitted.

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

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

N. Friedman: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 5:0.

### **Correspondence**

None

### **Unfinished Business**

**New Town Hall Update:** Supervisor Lagonia advised that most of the pieces are ready to go so the Town can go out to bid. The Town just received some of the engineering work today. R. Lagonia explained the pieces of the project, how the water and septic are connected to what is already there, outside site work such as the curbing, power, parking, drainage, etc. and the foundation replacement under the existing building, as well as the new.

This will be bid as one project, but completed in pieces, with the Highway Crew doing quite a bit of the work to save money. No prevailing wage needs to be pay this way since this work is part of the Highway Crew's normal work. The Town will have insurance coverage for this as well.

Supervisor Lagonia hopes to have the bid package out the first week in December with bids back by the first of the year. Cost for the project was discuss noting the available money. There is still a possibility that the Town can complete this project with what is on hand, but if not, bonding is an option.

This time schedule should be good timing for contractors looking for and lining up Spring work. Hopefully local contractors will bid on the project.

After speaking with Attorney Catalano, it is not a good idea to hire a 'Town Electrician' to complete the work. It is to complicated.

Town Board Member Vogler hopes to have the new Town Hall complete by the 2018 Bicentennial Ceremony. The Town Park should be spruced up as well.

**Town Park Update:** Supervisor Lagonia received an estimate of \$15750.00 from L.D. Coon and Son, Inc. for a 64' x 24' slab, a 21' x 34' slab, 6" thick with heavy wire mesh saw cut expansion joint on prepped subgrade for the area around the new pavilion at the Town Park.

Due to timing, the pavilion will not be completed until spring and the additional concrete work will be done at that time. Town resident, Harry Newton, has discussed donating \$7500.00 toward the concrete work. Electrical Contractor, Paul Robertson, submitted a contract, with a price to perform work listed of \$2251.90, for electrical work at the Town Park.

Price breakdown: materials \$1061.90 and labor at \$1190.00.

A motion to accept the pricing for the concrete slab and the electric work was made by G. Vogler and seconded by M. Verenazi.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

N. Friedman: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 5:0.

### **Columbia County Broadband**

Town Board Member J. Wrightsman distributed 2 maps of Columbia County showing areas that are served and underserved with broadband services. The Town of Austerlitz is clearly shown as being underserved. There is very little fiber running in the town as well. Town Board Member Wrightsman attends the County Broadband Committee meetings looking out for the Town of Austerlitz interests. Charter Communications is responsible for fiber on Routes 22 and 203 where there already is quite a bit of fiber run. The rest of the Town falls under Fairpoint Communications who have not committed to this project. The goal is to have fiber running to every resident's home, but only if that is fiscally possible. There is money available for this project on a State level and Fairpoint is attempting to speed up their part.

### **New Business**

**2017 County Chargeback Agreement:** Columbia County Treasurer Keeler submitted the annual chargeback agreement for approval. The Town lists items that will be included in the Town of Austerlitz' portion of Columbia County's tax rate. Last year the only item listed was the Chatham Rescue Squad for \$60900.00. Supervisor Lagonia noted that this year some towns are increasing the amount, some towns are not. Supervisor Lagonia would like to keep the Town of Austerlitz' amount the same.

A motion to approve a chargeback item of \$60900.00 for the Chatham Rescue Squad and to authorize Supervisor Lagonia to sign the 2017 Chargeback Agreement between the Town of Austerlitz and the Columbia County Treasurer was made by G. Vogler and seconded by M. Verenazi.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

M. Verenazi: yes

N. Friedman: yes  
J. Wrightsman: yes  
Motion carried 5:0

**Healthcare Rates:**

A motion to keep the same healthcare and dental plan for the highway employees for 2017 with the Town paying 100% was made by R. Lagonia and seconded by N. Friedman.

R. Lagonia: yes  
G. Vogler: yes  
M. Verenazi: yes  
N. Friedman: yes  
J. Wrightsman: yes  
Motion carried 5:0

**Public Comments**

Judith Choate questioned the plans for lighting in the parking area of the Town park. Supervisor Lagonia advised that this is the last portion of the project and there is not currently a bid out for this. R. Lagonia does agree that something needs to be done. The power to the pavilion was approved tonight so maybe a spotlight into the parking lot can be installed. It is all about the money at this point. Town Board Member Verenazi will look at the options before the electric is buttoned up for the pavilion. Discussion then centered on solutions to this issue in the meantime.

Chic Vander Weit asked who is responsible for and benefits from the election day pork dinner. The Spencertown Tower Club puts this event on. C. Vander Weit advised that the menu choice eliminates a percentage of the Town's residents.

**Adjournment**

A motion to adjourn was made by J. Wrightsman and seconded by G. Vogler.  
R. Lagonia: yes  
G. Vogler: yes  
M. Verenazi: yes  
N. Friedman: yes  
J. Wrightsman: yes  
Motion carried 5:0. Meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Susan A. Haag, Town Clerk