

Town of Austerlitz
Town Board Meeting
December 19, 2019

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

Town Board 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 21, 2019 Town Board Meeting minutes was made by J. Wrightsman and seconded by C. Schober.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

C. Schober: yes

N. Friedman: abstain due to meeting absence

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 4:1.

Auditing of Accounts and Claims

A motion to pay General Fund, #413-448, in the amount of \$21599.62, Highway Fund, #246-277, in the amount of \$62981.51, and the Capital Fund #123-125, in the amount of \$1933.89 was made by N. Friedman and seconded by C. Schober.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

C. Schober: 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 November 2019 submitted. Supervisor Lagonia noted the financials are kind of hard to work out this month because money is being juggled around. The General Fund numbers stayed pretty much in line with the budget. Due to Supervisor Lagonia's negotiating skills with the bank, the Town was able to make \$33,000.00 in interest this year. The Highway Fund is over budget, but the Town Board knew it would be. Some General Fund money will be shifted into the Highway Fund where it is allowed to be. The line items just need to be juggled and juggled appropriately. \$86,000.00 has come in for C.H.I.P.s funding; it is just not reflected in the financials yet.

Highway Meehan noted that due to the early storms this year, the salt and sand on hand has been depleted, but the salt shed has been replenished and is now full.

Supervisor Lagonia advised that the Fund Balance is very healthy even with a zero tax rate increase. Real numbers will be available after all the 2019 bills have been paid. The Kelly Foundation line item shows a deficit, but Supervisor Lagonia has asked for an additional \$80000.00. This will cover sound proofing for the meeting/court room, storm windows and railing on the dais and in the vestibule, as well as, some set aside for future maintenance on the building. The Town will also purchase an outside shed to house outside tools and machinery such as the snow blower.

Highway Superintendent Meehan and Dan Howes are sharing the snow clean-up duties around the Town Hall. R. Meehan is plowing and cleaning the sidewalks first thing in the morning. D. Howes will be cleaning up the sidewalks, front steps, etc. for meetings and court.

The radar gun the Town purchased for the Columbia County Sheriff's Enhanced Patrol is in and they have just started to use it. The Enhanced Patrol will finish out December and then take a couple months off and start back up in the Spring.

Supervisor Lagonia thanked outgoing Town Board Member Nansi Friedman for serving on the Town Board. R. Lagonia noted that N. Friedman has been a tremendous asset and has contributed to accomplishing much. Town Board Member N. Friedman noted it was an honor for her to serve her community and to be on the Town Board. It has been a pleasure.

Supervisor Lagonia spoke concerning the new bail reform law that was passed in the State. There are big changes from the old law which will affect how crimes are handled, such as felonies, even manslaughter, which will not require arraignments. The accused will be given an appearance ticket. Some changes in the law will mean less money for the County and ultimately for the Town. People might not show for some of the appearance tickets and therefore warrants will be issued. There is no manpower to handle what is coming down the pike. It has been suggested that our Town Attorney can handle our case load, but this will never happen. This is not his area of expertise, plus the caseload would be tremendous. The County doesn't think it can handle the case load. There is a lot to this new law. Supervisor Lagonia is not sure where this will all shake out. There is talk that the State will make some tweaks to the new law because they didn't realize the havoc the changes would make. Member Friedman asked if the Town could hire a part-time prosecutor, to which Supervisor Lagonia noted it is possible.

Supervisor Lagonia will be the 2020 Chair of the Office of the Aging, which houses Mental Health, DDS, Human Services and Youth Services. This will be a learning curve. R. Lagonia is also the Deputy Chair of the Public Safety Committee.

Highway Report

Highway Superintendent Meehan reported that this past month there have been a lot of storms! The roads were very soft and the Highway Crew ended up hurting some of them. Now they are snow packed. One truck lost a set of rear wheels and there were some other minor break downs.

Some culvert work has been done and the Highway Crew has been trying to fill in potholes in-between.

The new salt shed is working out well and saving a good deal of time since the trucks don't have to drive all the way to Braley's each time they need to refill with salt and sand. There is a learning curve with the new trucks. One of them is back to Zwacks for reprogramming.

Supervisor Lagonia questioned the issue with Beth Rinzler, noting she complained about blocked culverts and flooding in her basement. Highway Superintendent Meehan advised the Town Board that these issues are not the Town's fault. R. Meehan believes the person B. Rinzler hired for snow plowing covered her culverts with snow, which the Town has since dug out. R. Meehan is trying to watch out for this culvert because he knows it can be a problem.

There have been a couple mailboxes taken out during the storms, one in particular which cost the resident around \$600.00. Supervisor Lagonia advised that the Town is not responsible for replacing mailboxes, but has on occasion as a curtesy. Any mailbox that is replaced is replaced with something standard. The Town does not replace custom mailboxes. Highway Superintendent Meehan noted that most of the replacing that is done is to replace the pole the mailbox sits on.

Town Clerk Report for the month of November 2019 submitted.

Planning Board Report for the month of November 2019 submitted.

Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee Report for the month of December 2019 submitted.

Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Report for the month of November 2019 submitted.

Justice Grubin Justice Court Report for the month of November 2019 submitted.

Justice Cassuto Justice Court Report for the month of November 2019 submitted.

Dog Report for the month of November 2019 submitted.

Climate Smart

Town Board Member Vogler advised there was no meeting in December.

A motion to accept the monthly reports was made by G. Vogler and seconded by J. Wrightsman.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

C. Schober: yes

N. Friedman: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 5:0.

Correspondence

None

Unfinished Business

New Town Hall Update

Wallace Architecture submitted an updated construction budget versus cost sheet for review.

Supervisor Lagonia noted earlier what was yet to be finished.

New Business

None

Public Comments

None

Executive Session

Motion to enter Executive Session for personnel issues was made by C. Schober and seconded by N. Friedman.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

C. Schober: yes

N. Friedman: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 5:0. Executive Session entered at 7:24 p.m.

A motion to exit Executive Session was made by J. Wrightsman and seconded by G. Vogler.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

C. Schober: yes

N. Friedman: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 5:0. Executive Session exited at 7:30 p.m.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by N. Friedman and seconded by J. Wrightsman.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

C. Schober: yes

N. Friedman: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 5:0. Meeting adjourned at 7:31 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan A. Haag, Town Clerk