

Town Of Austerlitz
Regular Town Board Meeting
February 13, 2020

Present: Robert Lagonia, Supervisor, Greg Vogler, M. Wilson, J. Wrightsman, Town Board Members, Robert Meehan, Highway Superintendent, and Susan Haag, Town Clerk.

Town Board Member Chris Schober absent.

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 January 16, 2020 Town Board Meeting minutes was made by G. Vogler and seconded by M. Wilson.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

C. Schober: absent

M. Wilson: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 4:1.

Auditing of Accounts and Claims

A motion to pay General Fund, #23-54, in the amount of \$22387.42, Highway Fund, #13-33, in the amount of \$41636.99 and Capital Fund #2 in the amount of \$345.00 was made by G. Vogler and seconded by J. Wrightsman.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

C. Schober: absent

M. Wilson: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 4:1.

Reports

Monthly Cash Disbursement and Supervisor Report

Updated Monthly Cash Disbursement for the Month of January 2020 submitted.

Supervisor Lagonia noted that the 2019 AUD Report was sent to both him and Town Board Member Vogler for review. After any corrections, the Report will be sent out by the end of February. The Town is in good shape with regards to reserves.

Supervisor Lagonia spoke concerning an immunization policy that Columbia County is trying to approve. There has been a good amount of push back from the public on the proposed law with roughly 100 people in attendance at the Public Hearing. Since it was not presented well to the

public, the proposed law has been pulled for the time being. A new proposal will be presented in the future with more communication to the public beforehand.

Supervisor Lagonia met with Summer Recreation Director Deb Oleynek to discuss plans for the 2020 Summer Recreation Program. Discussion centered on camp pricing, Fox Hill requirements and cost, bussing cost, possibly teaming with the Town of Ghent and some new options to try. Director Oleynek will gather information and get back together with Supervisor Lagonia. Hopefully there will be more kids in attendance this summer.

Highway Report

Highway Superintendent Meehan reported that the constant change in weather lately from rain to snow to rain and then snow again has been hard on the roads and the Highway Crew is trying hard to save them best they can. The Town needs to blacktop more of the roads because during the winter, gravel on the dirt roads keeps getting plowed off. Big delivery trucks are also tearing up the roads and sinking into the mud. The Highway Crew has been trying to fix the roads by filling in potholes, rolling and putting down some gravel in-between storms.

Town Clerk Report for the month of January 2020 submitted.

Tax Collector Report for the month of January 2020 submitted.

No Planning Board Report for the month of January 2020 submitted. Chairman Lee Tilden was in attendance and verbally gave a report concerning the Punsit Road Planning Board Project. Three of the Planning Board Members walked the property in question, as did the property engineer. This was done at separate times so as not to construe a meeting of any kind. This was a big help as it gave a greater understanding of the issues that have been raised. At the February 6, 2020 Public Hearing roughly people were in attendance with more pro than con comments. The applicants made a presentation right off the bat that helped to correct many of the misconceptions. The Planning Board heard all those who wished to speak and closed the Public Hearing. Chair Tilden thanked Attorney for the Town, Joseph Catalano and Town Clerk, Susan Haag for all their help during this process. The Planning Board will now make a decision on the project.

Supervisor Lagonia attended The Planning Board Public Hearing and thought that Chair Tilden did a great job. He appreciated the process noting that this was politics at its best and it was wonderful to see so many resident attend. Some even changed their minds by the end of the night.

No Comprehensive Plan Oversight Committee Report for the month of January 2020 submitted.

Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Report for the month of January 2020 submitted.

Justice Grubin Justice Court Report for the month of January 2020 submitted.

Justice Cassuto Justice Court Report for the month of January 2020 submitted.

No Dog Report for the month of January 2020 submitted.

No Climate Smart Report for the month of January 2020 submitted. Committee did not meet.

A motion to accept the monthly reports was made by J. Wrightsman and seconded by M. Wilson.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

C. Schober: absent

M. Wilson: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 4:1.

Correspondence

James Oates and Jane Magee: Interest in serving on the Planning Board.

Lester Kempler: Request to appear before the Town Board because of road conditions on Beale Road.

St. Peter's Presbyterian Church: Thank you for letting the Church use the Town Hall for their Installation Service.

Wes Powell: Resignation as Dog Control Officer due to health issues effective as of March 31, 2020. The Town Board wished him well. Supervisor Lagonia has asked around for replacement ideas. Other Town Supervisors are looking as well and will get back to Supervisor Lagonia if they find anyone interested in taking this job over.

Spencertown Academy, Rae Gilson: Requests permission to use the Town Green on Saturday, June 20th, for the Market on the Green, as part of this year's Spencertown Academy's Annual Hidden Gardens Tour.

A motion to allow the Spencertown Academy use the green on Saturday, June 20th from 9:00 am-2:30 pm for the Market on the Green was made by M. Wilson and seconded by J.

Wrightsmen.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

C. Schober: absent

M. Wilson: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 4:1.

Unfinished Business

Broadband

Town Board Member Wrightsman noted there may be grant money available, but there are parameters to meet in order to qualify. Member Wrightsman would like to conduct a survey to determine how many residents do not have broadband and questioned how the Town could do

this. Supervisor Lagonia noted the Town could use survey money. Member Wrightsman noted that the biggest complaint residents have is the lack of broadband. Consolidated Communications noted that if there was a section of a road that did not have any cable laid for broadband at this point, the residents in that area could band together and pay Consolidation for that cable to be laid. Supervisor Lagonia suggested a test area before a Town wide survey which Member Wrightsman will pursue.

New Town Hall Update

Wallace Architecture submitted an updated construction budget versus cost sheet for review. Supervisor Lagonia met with Architect Wallace to go over unfinished areas and other issues with the new Town Hall. Railing for the dais and the vestibule will be installed Saturday. There is a crack on the back wall and on the dais and the front door needs some work. Acoustic panels are coming. It was noted that with the room filled at the Planning Board Public Hearing, the acoustics were pretty good and no mics were used. Will look at the panels and make a decision as to the direction the Town Board wants to go with this.

The smell in some of the downstairs offices is getting better with fresh air now coming into those areas. No air intake was put into the plans for the building. Instead, the plans read for a window to be cracked which is crazy. Will see what happens in the summer.

The old Town Hall renovation work is completed, but the back room needs to be cleaned out. Maybe this can happen in March. Historian Tom Moreland would like to be in the building by April.

NYSEG LED Street Light Conversion Letter Agreement

Town Board Member Vogler advised that Town Board Member Schober is heading up this project. There is a \$500.00 fee for this light conversion that Member Vogler will follow up with NYSERDA to see if they will pay for. Either way it is okay because the fee is minimal.

A motion to authorize Supervisor Lagonia to sign the NYSEG LED Street Light Conversion Letter Agreement was made by G. Vogler and seconded by J. Wrightsman.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

C. Schober: absent

M. Wilson: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 4:1

Planning Board Appointment

The Town Board was given two additional options for Planning Board Member, James Oates and Jane Magee. The Town Board reviewed qualifications.

A motion to appoint Jane Magee as Planning Board Member for a term beginning January 1, 2020 and ending December 31, 2024 was made by M. Wilson and seconded by J. Wrightsman.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

C. Schober: absent
M. Wilson: yes
J. Wrightsman: yes
Motion carried 4:1

New Business

2020 Highway Form 284

Highway Superintendent Meehan asked if this could be put off until the March Town Board Meeting.

April Town Board Meeting

Supervisor Lagonia advised that the April Town Board Meeting date would have to be moved.

A motion to change the date of the April Town Board Meeting from April 16, 2020 to April 23, 2020 was made by G. Vogler and seconded by J. Wrightsman.

R. Lagonia: yes
G. Vogler: yes
C. Schober: absent
M. Wilson: yes
J. Wrightsman: yes
Motion carried 4:1

Public Comments

Lester and Maureen Kempler: Have lived on Beale Road for 32 years and on Tenbroch for 12 years. Over this time they have driven Beale Road at least 10000 times and have never had an issue with flat tires until May of 2017. From this time forward, the Kemplers have spent \$2000.00 fixing tires and their road side assistance will no longer come out to help because they have met the 4 time limit.

Beale Road is the only gravel road that the Kemplers travel so the problem is a result of Beale Road. Large, sharp gravel is puncturing their tires. This gravel is different from the gravel that has been used in the past. L. Kempler is not criticizing Highway Superintendent Meehan, only noting that the gravel currently being used is the problem. During walks on Beale Road, L. Kempler has gathered some of the gravel which he shows to the Town Board. The Kemplers are not asking that Beale Road be paved, just maybe rolled or a different type of gravel used.

The Kemplers are not the only ones on Beale Road who have had flat tire issues. L. Kempler read letters he received from other residents who have had similar instances and read responsibilities of the Town and Highway Superintendent from Town Law. L. Kempler noted that he realizes the Town Board dictates the money Highway Superintendent Meehan has to spend and he only has that amount to spend. Supervisor Lagonia clarified that R. Meehan is responsible for deciding what projects he would like the Town Board to fund in any given year and then the Town Board determines what projects it can fund.

Town Board Member Vogler noted he has had tire issues from Beale Road. Town Board Wrightsman noted he has heard from a couple of residents who have also had flat tires from Beale Road.

Highway Superintendent Meehan notes that the gravel that has been used for the roads in Town is State approved and comes out of Colarusso Quarries. All the Towns in the area are using this same gravel. Superintendent Meehan has spoken with Colarusso who noted that they think what they are getting is a harder vein of rock that does not break up under pressure. This coupled with the roads being plowed bringing up rocks may have caused some of the issues. Different types of material was discussed and when each is used. There is a gravel pit in Massachusetts that R. Meehan has researched, but their gravel is reported to be even harder. Superintendent Meehan will look into alternative options.

Supervisor Lagonia advised that the Town is currently in the process of working out the details of the 2020 Highway Form 284 with Highway Superintendent Meehan and one project that might make the list is the paving of Beale Road. R. Meehan is currently getting bids for 2020 road projects. Supervisor Lagonia also noted that he had a private contractor look over Beale Road and concurred that R. Meehan is in fact using the correct road material.

Brian Johnston: Lives on Beale Road and noted that he has had 4 flat tires over the last year and sees a big difference in the material used over that time. The gravel has very sharp stones that have come up from the surface that are cutting into the tires.

The Kemplers are only asking for the road to be safe.

Highway Superintendent Meehan advised that about 20 years ago thousands of yards of material was put down on various roads in Town including Beale Road and unfortunately, this needs to be done again. Beale Roads is one of the better roads in Town.

There is a gravel bank in Schodack that R. Meehan would like to use, but it has not opened up yet. There is another possibility in West Stockbridge, Ma.

Choices for a fix for the winter/spring is to either leave Beale Road muddy or put gravel down. Plowing will take off some of the material though. Rolling packs the gravel and plowing brings it back up. Town Board Member Vogler questions what the ultimate fix for Beale Road is to solve issues, to pave it or bring it down to base and build it back up. R. Meehan advised either is an option. This time of year is hard on dirt roads. He will try and roll Beale Road tomorrow and maybe put on some softer material.

Supervisor Lagonia noted that every single Town has the same issues with dirt roads and are slowly blacktopping them. Dirt roads actually cost more money to maintain. Beale Road is in the Town's purview and could be on the 2020 Highway Form 284. This process was explained.

Supervisor Lagonia advised that the Town is cognizant of the issue on Beale Road and feels bad about it. R. Meehan is trying to find some fixes and along with the Town Board, will try and find some permanent fixes. R. Lagonia does not want the homeowners on Beale to be frustrated.

Executive Session

A motion to enter Executive Session for personal reasons was made by G. Vogler and seconded by J. Wrightsman.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

C. Schober: absent

M. Wilson: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 4:1 Executive Session entered at 8:05 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: absent

M. Wilson: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 4:1 Executive Session exited at 8:20 p.m.

Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by J. Wrightsman and seconded by G. Vogler.

R. Lagonia: yes

G. Vogler: yes

C. Schober: absent

M. Wilson: yes

J. Wrightsman: yes

Motion carried 4:1

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,
Susan A. Haag, Town Clerk