

**NEW LISBON TOWN BOARD—MARCH 21, 2023---7:30 PM---TOWN HALL  
REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING (POSTPONED FROM 3/14/23 DUE TO SNOWSTORM)**

Present: Supervisor Edward Lentz, Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, Councilman Bill Whitaker, Councilman Brian Ryther, Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith, Town Clerk Charlene Wells, Assessor Pamela Dyn-Gohde, County Rep. Meg Kennedy, Residents: Edward George, Tom Riso, Brian Holt, Joe Gregory, Theresa Burdick, Matt Palmer, Lenny Melillo, Laura Curtis, Other: Patrick Pegg -Absent: Councilwoman Flo Loomis

Supervisor Edward Lentz opened the regular monthly meeting at 7:30 PM. A motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to accept the minutes for the February 14, 2023 regular meeting as drafted.

Patrick Pegg spoke on behalf of the Morris Rec. Committee about using the New Lisbon ballfield at the town hall for their baseball/softball program. They are a separate entity from the Town of Morris, having their own Federal ID # and insurance. With only one field in Morris to use for grades PreK to 6, it would be helpful to their scheduling to have another field available for use. They realize that the field and backstop haven't been used in years and will need some work before use. They are willing to do this and upgrade as needed. Willard Lasher is doing the mowing of the town hall and park and they would provide him with a schedule of use. After further discussion, the Town Board advised that they had no objections to the New Lisbon Town Hall ballfield being used for the Morris Rec. Committee baseball/softball program.

Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith reported that the Chevy pickup had to have a new body control module and the bill will be approximately \$1600.00 because of the labor involved. He is working on getting quotes for Cat and John Deere graders to get one approved now as delivery time is six to eleven months. Hopefully we will be able to get at least \$40,000.00 for our current grader at auction. He is looking into a used PTO driven generator. He has not received a delivery date for the new pickup. He is going to look into a Dig Safely class in Oneonta. Components of the new hwy. garage have been delivered to the site. He will start hauling sand and gravel as soon as possible. He attended Advocacy Day with the NYS government and did get to talk with Senator Oberacker about the implications of the proposed increases in minimum wage. Hwy. Superintendents advocated for an increase in CHIPS funding because if it stays flat, it will actually be about a 40% decrease because of the increased costs of materials. Councilwoman Nancy Martin Mathewson reported that our repair costs to date are \$2826.00 compared to \$9429.00 at this point last year. Supervisor Edward Lentz noted that we are hopefully going to be at the end of the process for getting the loan and grant for the new truck from USDA. There is a meeting tomorrow with USDA about the hwy. garage project. He has sent out our revised RFP's for our roofing repair needs to be returned next month.

The highway inventory was updated and the Hwy. committee is working on the hwy. plan. In a risk assessment with our insurance carrier, discussed below, they suggested that we need to draft a written policy for doing an annual driver's license check on hwy. employees, even though we already do this and consequences if someone gets a ticket. We should also have written training and safety policies and training logs of who was trained, even though we already do the things that would go into the written policies. They suggested that we update the employee handbook as needed and get a signed acknowledgement form from the employee each time.

Assessor Pamela Dyn-Gohde advised the Board concerning a property owner who has filed for tax exempt status on two of her six parcels. The owner has a non-profit status, but that does not make her property automatically tax exempt. The properties are not open to the general public, only to those referred by certain agencies. The assessor wanted to make the Board aware that she was going to deny the tax exempt status because the use of the parcels is too limited, not being open to the general public and not beneficial to the community. The owner can appeal to the Board of Review.

In finalizing the paperwork for the USDA loan and grant for the 2023 Freightliner, USDA has requested a statement that the truck has been received and payment approved. A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Brian Ryther and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve Resolution #2 of 2023, accepting the 2023 Freightliner and authorizing the final payment. A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Bill Whitaker and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to reverse the two previous change orders on the hwy. garage project and put back in \$31,000.00 to S & H Mechanical's contract and \$56,700.00 to Upstate Companies. Upstate Companies has submitted a pay request for delivered hwy. garage materials which has been approved by the engineer. A motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-

Mathewson and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve the payment request of \$389,559.66 to Upstate Companies for the Hwy. Garage project, subject to approval from USDA.

County Rep. Meg Kennedy advised that Otsego County Soil & Water Conservation District has \$1000.00 grants available for conservation related programs and educational opportunities. She further noted that the longtime commissioner of Social Services will be retiring soon and they are interviewing replacements at this time. The County Board has spoken out against the Governor's budget which would take away 1.3 million in Medicare funds and allow the siting of large utility projects without local reviews and assessments. The County's tiny house project is now open with 6 houses and a community center which will be used for short term housing and counseling services. County Rep. Kennedy attended a NYSAC meeting where she learned about computer chip development in Onondaga County and a cyber attack in Suffolk County. She noted that the Otsego County IT Department has been upgrading technology to try to stay ahead of cyber attacks. The Veterans' Director is reaching out to non-profits to help run programs for Veterans with funds they will be receiving. County Rep. Kennedy advised that we have to send an invoice to the County Treasurer in order to receive the \$50,000.00 in ARPA funds that they allocated to us to use in our Hwy. Garage project. The Town Board decided not to take any action on the request for resolutions against the Governor's budget which is trying to eliminate municipal input from large scale utility projects and overriding local laws to allow for housing projects.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Bill Whitaker and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to adopt Resolution #3 of 2023, establishing Energy Benchmarking Requirements for Certain Municipal Buildings. This effort of tracking energy use for two years will help us achieve Clean Energy Community status which will make us eligible for a \$5,000.00 grant towards a "green use" project.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Bill Whitaker and carried 3 Ayes/1 Nay (Councilman Ryther against) to appoint Ryan Wing to the New Lisbon Planning Board to fill the term which expires 5/31/2024.

The Board audited the bills prior to the meeting. A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Bill Whitaker and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve paying General Fund bills #43 through #63 for a total of \$529,622.05 and Highway Fund bills #22 through #33 for a total of \$14,702.73. Supervisor Lentz paid General Fund bills #40 through #42 for a total of \$303.37 with prior Board approval.

Planning Board Chairman Matthew Palmer was present to discuss their request that we adopt a minimum lot size of 2.5 acres. The Planning Board felt that the suggested minimum of one acre was not always sufficient with well/septic/building standards that must be met. They also are proposing a minimum of 150 foot of road frontage per parcel and a setback for structures of 75 feet from the center of the road. They felt that these proposed changes to our subdivision regulations are in line with our Comprehensive Plan goal of keeping a rural nature in the town. Many towns have a five-acre minimum lot size for subdivisions. Anything that is smaller than 2.5 acres would be grandfathered in, but they would not be allowed to be subdivided any further, or go through a boundary line adjustment that would create a parcel smaller than 2.5 acres. Councilman Brian Ryther commented that he was in favor of the 2.5 acre lot size as a way of preserving our rural atmosphere. Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith commented that we need a setback to keep people from building too close to the Town's right-of-way. After further discussion, the Town Board was in favor of having the Planning Board work on making the proposed changes in red ink on the current regulations, so that the proposed changes can be reviewed. We will have to adopt a new revised subdivision law, so a public hearing will have to be held on the proposed changes. The Board discussed the NYS requirement that planning board members need to have four hours of training per year. For a five-year term, that would mean 20 hours of training were needed in order to be considered for reappointment. We have always given a leeway of a few hours, but the Town Board can't waive the requirement. Planning Board Chairman Matthew Palmer will go over this with the Planning Board members. County Rep. Meg Kennedy noted that she will send us some information on an additional source of training that she got from Hartwick. (Councilman Brian Ryther left the meeting).

Supervisor Edward Lentz advised that he had sent a letter to Morris, Edmeston and Laurens Schools to see if they were going to adopt the new Firemen's exemption. We received a request from Tectonic Engineering about the new County tower proposed to replace the existing one on County Hwy. 14. The Clerk responded that there was no impact to historical resources and the new tower will be replacing an existing tower so there is no change of use involved. New DCO Keegan Holt has been on a few calls and has purchased a snare, gloves and a large crate. New ticket books have been ordered. We

are still looking for a Board of Review candidate and a person we had been hoping would accept the Land Use Enforcement Officer position has decided against it. An extension request was filed for the 2022 AUD as the bookkeeper and supervisor are still working on the final figures.

Our insurance carrier Tokio Marine HCC did a recent risk assessment by phone with Supervisor Edward Lentz. He submitted a summary of the issues discussed. They advised that they have a HRMuni program that they provide free of charge which provides resources, sample policies and HR advice. The overall advice was that we haven't had any claims so keep on doing what we are doing.

Supervisor Edward Lentz had been discussing with other Supervisors that NY Class was offering a money market account with 4.5% interest. We were a member of NY Class years ago. Since we are obligated to do the best for the Town, Supervisor Lentz reached out to Community Bank and Bank of Cooperstown to see if they could match this amount. BOC advised that they would do 4.45% and Community Bank at first said 4.25%, but later offered 4.45% on money market accounts. Supervisor Lentz advised that he would stay with Community Bank as long as they stay competitive since they are the one with a local office which makes it most convenient and it benefits the entire Butternut Valley. Rates can change daily, so there is no guarantee of how long the rates would remain at 4.45%.

Councilman Bill Whitaker completed the audit of the Town Justice office on March 8, 2023. The Board reviewed the audit report and a motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Bill Whitaker and carried 3 Ayes/ 0 Nays to accept the audit of the Town Justice as completed.

With no further business and no further comments, a motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Bill Whitaker and carried 3 Ayes/ 0 Nays to adjourn at 9:25 PM.

Charlene R. Wells, New Lisbon Town Clerk