

NEW LISBON TOWN BOARD---FEBRUARY 14, 2023---7:30 PM REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING---TOWN HALL, GARRATTSVILLE

Present: Supervisor Edward Lentz, Councilwoman Flo Loomis, Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, Councilman Brian Ryther, Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith, Town Clerk Charlene Wells, Assessor Pamela Dyn-Gohde, County Rep. Meg Kennedy, Residents; Edward George, Joseph Gregory, Keegan Holt, Brian Holt, Tom Riso, Lenny Melillo, James Neilson Absent: Councilman Bill Whitaker

Supervisor Edward Lentz opened the regular monthly meeting at 7:30 PM. A motion was made by Councilwoman Flo Loomis, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to accept the minutes for the 1/10/23 Organizational meeting and regular monthly meeting as drafted.

In regards to the assessment dispute between the Town and Keith Reynolds, Attorney Michelle Kennedy has been in contact with Mr. Reynolds' attorney and they have come to agreement on a compromise offer, or the Town would have to expend an estimated \$1,500.00 to do an appraisal by March 3, 2023. The assessed value was \$197,600.00 and Mr. Reynolds had sought to get it reduced to \$163,900.00. After further discussion, the following Resolution #1 of 2023 was presented by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Brian Ryther and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays (Ryther—Aye, Martin-Mathewson—Aye, Loomis—Aye, Lentz—Aye) as follows: "In the matter of Keith A. Reynolds vs. Pamela Dyn-Gohde, Assessor and the Board of Assessment Review for the Town of New Lisbon, for the purpose of settlement, the Town of New Lisbon Town Board hereby resolves to reduce the assessed value of Tax Map ID 191.00-1-58.02 on the 2022 tax assessment roll from \$197,600.00 to \$180,750.00 by stipulation. The Town Supervisor, the Town Assessor, the Town Clerk and the Town Attorney are hereby authorized to execute any and all documents, subject to attorney review, necessary to effectuate this resolution."

Discussion was held on the new state law which allows towns and school districts the option to adopt a local law to provide a property tax exemption of up to 10% for volunteer fire fighters and ambulance workers. In review of the law, it was found that if a fireman took this reduction, they could not claim the \$200.00 state income tax deduction. Assessor Pamela Dyn-Gohde noted that she figured the reduction on a \$150,000.00 assessment would be \$88.00 per year. We have not heard if the school districts are considering this exemption yet. Supervisor Lentz commented that if the other taxing jurisdictions, particularly the school districts adopted the exemption, we might want to adopt it as well because the school taxes are much higher than the town taxes. As we will not be able to get this local law ready for the upcoming roll, the Board will keep the option open while we see what others are doing with it.

Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith noted that the 2017 pickup had a transmission fluid leak fixed. The 2023 Freightliner had a problem with the coolant valve which was covered under warranty. They have the new part, but the original one started working again. The new pickup was ordered but no estimated delivery date yet. Supt. Smith is planning on participating in a Hwy. Supt.'s Advocacy Day on March 8, 2023. Upstate Companies has advised that the new highway garage materials are in and will be delivered to the site soon. Repair costs total \$2,826.00 through February bills. The Hwy. Committee is working on updating the hwy. plan which includes anticipated equipment purchases and paving projects. The Board discussed whether we should directly hire the company who does testing of materials with the new hwy. garage or have the engineer hire them. After discussion it was decided it was reasonable to leave it as it was scheduled under the engineer's job duties.

James Neilson of Middlesdorf Road addressed the Board about his road. He noticed the hwy. crew had been out cutting brush. The army truck had left some ruts on the road. He asked for more gravel to be placed to build up the crown on his road and to keep the ditches open so it doesn't run off into his yard. He also asked if they could back up all the way and sand the turnaround. Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith noted that they try to keep the 10 wheelers off the roads during soft conditions. They can make sure they sand the turnaround area better.

Lenny Melillo advised that the Fire Dept. had a training class on electric vehicle battery fires. Basically, there is no way to put them out. They can burn for hours and there are dangerous chemicals involved. Roads will have to be closed until the vehicle is safe to be loaded and moved. Chuck's Towing is available to tow vehicles for the Fire Dept.

County Rep. Meg Kennedy advised that the \$50,000.00 Community Events Grant program is open for applicants on the County website. The deadline is March 6, 2023 and the maximum award per event is \$2,500.00. The \$300,000.00 Microenterprise Grant opportunity is committed to half going to agricultural businesses and half going to small businesses. Preliminary applications must be in by March 1, 2023. The transfer station in Oneonta will now take electronic waste at no cost. The County is working on a 5-year Forestry Contract. The County owns 3700 acres of land. The NYS Budget is proposing to cut the federal Medicaid money to Counties which would result in a 1.3 million dollar shortfall in the Otsego County budget. The Association of Counties is pushing state officials to rethink this as it will have a negative impact on all Counties in the state. Rep. Kennedy noted that the Town of Hartwick has also hesitated on the new fireman's exemption to see what others are doing.

Supervisor Edward Lentz advised that he had met with Morris, Butternuts and Pittsfield Supervisors and Keith Darragh and Joe Roberts of the Otsego County Code Enforcement Office. Discussion was on if the towns should consider combining to hire their own Code Enforcement official. Code Enforcement Officer Keith Darragh advised they will go out if we find projects without permits and residential garbage issues. They feel that they could do more if they had a bigger budget and more staff. Since it would be expensive to have our own code enforcement officer, at this point we should try to get the County to build up the Otsego Code Enforcement Office so that it can better handle calls for the towns that rely on them.

We have received an email notice from the NYSDEC that they have contracted with Parsons to perform site investigations at the old town dump site at the corner of County Hwy. 16 and Backus Road. The dump was closed in the 1980's per DEC regulations at the time. Parsons will be installing monitoring wells to assess groundwater quality. We will receive notice of what the water samples taken reveal. They were asking for the Town's permission to conduct this investigation, with the NYSDC paying for the cost of this process. The Board had no objection to this being done.

Supervisor Edward Lentz appointed Councilman Brian Ryther to the Hwy. Garage Committee along with himself, Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith and other Town residents. Supervisor Edward Lentz appointed Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson to the Hwy. Committee along with himself and Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith. Tom Riso advised that he would not be able to continue as Land Use Enforcement Officer due to health issues. Discussion was held on the Dog Control Officer position. Elizabeth Fish is interested in continuing in this position and town resident Keegan Holt has been requesting the Board to consider him for the position. After discussion, a motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Brian Holt and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to appoint Keegan Holt to the position of Dog Control Officer for 2023.

A resignation letter was received from Robert Taylor from the Planning Board effective January 10, 2023. A motion was made by Councilwoman Flo Loomis, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to accept the resignation from Robert Taylor from the Planning Board with thanks for his many years of service to the Town. There was some confusion on who the Planning Board was proposing to be his replacement so that appointment was put off until next month.

A motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve the 2023 Poll Site Agreement with the Otsego County Board of Elections for using the Town Hall for elections. Primary Election Day is June 27, 2023 and Election Day is November 7, 2023.

The Board reviewed the bills prior to the meeting. A motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilwoman Flo Loomis and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve paying General Fund bills #17 through #23 for a total of \$19,861.93 and Highway Fund bills #10 through #20 for a total of \$13,396.09. Supervisor Lentz paid General Fund bills #17 through #23 for a total of \$986.31 and Highway Fund bill #21 for \$4,599.68 with prior Board approval.

Supervisor Edward Lentz has submitted a new proposed law Prohibiting the Accumulation of Garbage and Junk for the Board to consider. This draft was based on a law from the Town of Otego and would only be a court ticket for violations. The Town would not go in and clean up violations and assess the bill if unpaid to the property owner's tax bill as was in the previous draft law. The Board will review and consider moving forward next month. Supervisor Lentz was asked to check with the Town of Otego and see if they felt their law was working out for them.

Councilwoman Flo Loomis completed the audit of the Supervisor's office on January 17, 2023 and the Board reviewed the paperwork. A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin Mathewson,

seconded by Councilman Brian Ryther and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to accept the audit of the Supervisor's office.

The Planning Board has submitted some ideas for creating lot standards for the Town. Instead of having no minimum lot size, they are suggesting 2.5 acres as the minimum. They further suggested 150 feet of road frontage, a 50 foot setback from side of building to boundary and a 75 foot setback from center of the road. Lots under 2.5 acres could not be subdivided or reduced by boundary line adjustment. These standards would apply only to new actions if adopted. The Board will ask Planning Board Chairman Matthew Palmer to come to the next meeting to discuss further.

The office of Schlather & Birch has asked again for an extension of the subdivision approval on Subdivision #3 of 2022 for Richard Eldridge and Neil Olmstead. A motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve an additional 60 day approval extension of Subdivision #3 of 2022 for Richard Eldridge and Neil Olmstead so the attorney can get the documents filed.

Supervisor Edward Lentz would like the Board to approve hiring an intern, through the NYSERDA Clean Energy Internship program, to help update CSC lists, look into getting a charging station, etc. Councilwoman Nancy Martin Mathewson commented that she would be happy to have some help in going for the next level of certification, which is a Clean Energy Community certification. A motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilwoman Flo Loomis and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to authorize Supervisor Lentz to apply to get an intern through the NYSERDA Clean Energy Internship program at a cost to the Town not to exceed \$300.00.

With no further business and no further comments, a motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilwoman Flo Loomis and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to adjourn at 9:35 PM.

Charlene R. Wells, New Lisbon Town Clerk