

NEW LISBON TOWN BOARD—AUGUST 8, 2023---7:30 PM REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING---TOWN HALL, GARRATTSVILLE

Present: Supervisor Edward Lentz, Councilwoman Flo Loomis, Councilman Brian Ryther, Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith, Town Clerk Charlene Wells, Assessor Pamela Dyn-Gohde, County Rep. Meg Kennedy, Residents: Lenny Melillo, Brian Holt, Dauna Osborne, Joseph Gregory, Bruce Page 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 July 11, 2023 regular meeting as drafted.

Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith advised that they need to get a new bucket for the excavator. He can get one for \$2,782.00 from Milton Cat. When they have time, he can fix the old one to have on hand as a spare. The Board had no objection to the purchase of the new excavator bucket. The mower has been giving them problems all season, working one day, being fixed the next. He would like to purchase a Farm King RSB7H 7-foot sickle bar hydraulic mower. He got prices for this mower of \$5,795.00 from Clinton Tractor, \$6,250.00 from McFadden and \$6,500.00 from White's Farm Supply. These places all have it in stock so he could get right away. He will keep the current flail mower as a backup as it wouldn't bring much at auction. A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilwoman Flo Loomis and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to authorize the Hwy. Supt. to purchase a new Farm King RSB7H 7-foot sickle bar hydraulic mower from Clinton Tractor for \$5,795.00. \$75,000.00 was submitted to NYS for CHIPS reimbursement on the last Freightliner. A new rule with CHIPS reimbursements is that there can only be one submission per piece of equipment. Since the hwy. committee was thinking we would put in for part of the grader this year and part next year, how we are going to pay for the grader will have to be refigured to make sure we only submit one request for the grader. We have not heard back yet from USDA about a possible grant and/or loan on the grader. The NYSDOT recently inspected bridges. Nothing was flagged but they suggested that we get an engineering study done on Turnbull Bridge. The deck is the main concern, but having the whole bridge analyzed would make sense before investing money on a new deck. The Hwy. committee will get an RFP ready so we can get quotes. We've had no further word on the status of our ordered pickup. Supt. Smith has heard that some towns have had their orders cancelled, so he is hoping ours is still being built. A town resident and Garrattsville Fire Dept. member, John Stavola has been hired as a HMEO in the Highway Department. In regards to the new hwy. garage, steel is being placed. It was agreed that we could do without insulation between the firewall as it isn't required by code and would save us about \$2,700.00. A quote for additional outside outlets was requested and received at \$4,836.63. It was decided that the cost was too high to do at this time. In regards to the beaver pond on Card Road, Supt. Donald Smith has been trying to get hold of the Army Corps for information on the fill material and he will be submitting the application to build up the road to the NYSDEC. Councilwoman Nancy Martin Mathewson reported that our repair costs are at \$14,481.23, less than last year and on par with 2021. The hwy. committee is reviewing future vehicle options for the highway plan and working on risk assessment items from our insurance carrier.

Lenny Melillo asked if the Supervisor would meet with the Fire Department to talk about the 2024 budget. County Rep. Meg Kennedy reported that the consultant who was retained to draft the Energy Task Force's findings is working on assembling a report that will be accessible to everyone. The County is working on redoing their Strategic Plan. There will be a survey on the County website that anyone can complete. For the County's 2024 Budget, the Administrator will be the Budget Officer instead of the County Treasurer. They will be working on a long-term capital improvement plan. The jail which has had problems and is one of the newest buildings, will be included in the long-term plan. They will be reviewing the findings of a consultant they hired to review the County's EMS data. They should be reaching out to hold meetings with all local squads. They have updated their Video Policy. Videotaping is allowed in all areas except where personal, private material is. The policy is posted at the entrance of the building. Supervisor Edward Lentz thanked County Rep. Kennedy for all the work she does.

Assessor Pamela Dyn-Gohde proposed the idea of appointing a person as a Deputy Assessor that she could train. She is hoping to eventually move up the ladder in the County Real Property Tax Office which would make her ineligible to serve as an assessor. She has a person who is interested in learning the job. After an appointment, he would have three years to take all the required classes to become certified. She noted that it was how she learned the job and she wouldn't want to leave us without an

option in the future. She added that she would be willing to give up part of her salary to fund the Deputy Assessor position. She is also asking her other town, Westford to consider the idea. After discussing the issue, the Board was in support of the idea of appointing a Deputy Assessor with the amount of salary to be discussed further, as it should be in line with other job positions.

The Town Board will hold a special meeting on September 20, 2023 for the 2024 Tentative Budget. It is anticipated that the public hearing on the 2024 Preliminary Budget will be on October 10, 2023 and adoption of the 2024 Final Budget on November 14, 2023. DCO Keegan Holt has been on military duty, but will be back soon. There is a meeting scheduled for 5:45 PM on August 17, 2023 at the Hartwick Town Hall on the Otsego County 2024 Shared Services Plan. There will be a public hearing at 5:30 PM. Councilman Brian Ryther and/or Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson will attend. County Hwy. Supt. Rich Brimmer has advised that the County Hwy. Dept. will grind up the tree stump on the corner lot in Garrattsville for us when they get time.

We received notice from the Edmeston Central School that they passed a resolution to opt out of Exemption under Section 487 of Real Property Tax Law which provides exemptions to renewable energy systems. A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and seconded by Councilwoman Flo Loomis to have the Town of New Lisbon adopt a local law to opt out of Exemption under Section 487 of Real Property Tax Law which provides exemptions to renewable energy systems. Discussion followed. Councilwoman Flo Loomis noted that she felt the consensus in the area was to opt out and she felt those that have studied it have concluded that was the way to go. She also heard that we could opt back in. Supervisor Edward Lentz felt that opting out might be a barrier for towns as it removes an incentive to build and companies might look at towns where they could get the exemptions on the increased assessment for renewable energy systems. If we didn't opt out, we would have to work out a PILOT agreement within sixty days of notice from the company. Supervisor Lentz felt that opting out is a blanket policy against installations and feels that we should do our part to help out renewable energy options. Councilwoman Flo Loomis suggested we make a list of pros and cons so we could consider all sides. Councilman Brian Ryther agreed we should do some more research on the issue. The motion and second to opt out of Exemption under Section 487 of Real Property Tax Law were withdrawn. The Board will continue discussing next month.

No action was taken on the Garbage and Junk local law as we have not received any feedback yet from our Attorney Michelle Kennedy or Attorney Will Green. Supervisor Edward Lentz and Councilman Brian Ryther agreed that the one application we had received for Land Use Enforcement Officer would not be considered due to a conflict of interest with junk. Perhaps a good shared service would be sharing a land use enforcement officer with several towns.

Monthly financial reports were submitted to the Board. The bills were reviewed prior to the meeting. A motion was made by Councilwoman Flo Loomis, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve paying General Fund bills #153 through #167 for a total of \$181,025.68 and Highway Fund bills #72 through #79 for a total of \$24,092.07. General Fund bills #147 through #152 for a total of \$661.86 were paid by the Supervisor with prior Board approval. All checks for the new highway garage will be held until the bills are approved by USDA.

Lenny Melillo noted that the Garrattsville Fire Company is looking for individuals from the community who would be interested in serving on a Firefighter's Auxiliary. They can call him at 607-437-4694 for more information. Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson has been working on a report to help us get a Clean Energy Community certification which would allow us to get a \$5,000.00 grant for an energy related project. Dauna Osborne questioned what the benefit was to our town to have large renewable energy projects here. Supervisor Edward Lentz responded that we should be doing our part to help the environment and they have to go somewhere.

With no further business or comments, a motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilwoman Flo Loomis and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to adjourn at 9:00 PM.

Charlene R. Wells, New Lisbon Town Clerk