

NEW LISBON TOWN BOARD---FEBRUARY 13, 2024---7:30 PM REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING—TOWN HALL, GARRATTSVILLE

Present: Supervisor Edward Lentz, Councilwoman Nancy Martin Mathewson, Councilman Brian Ryther, Councilwoman Laura Curtis, Councilman Scott Fickbohm, Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith, Town Clerk Charlene Wells, County Rep. Meg Kennedy, Assessor Pamela Dyn-Gohde, Residents Edward George, Lenny Melillo, Brian Holt, Joeseeph Gregory, Bruce Page.

Supervisor Edward Lentz opened the regular monthly meeting at 7:30 PM. A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Scott Fickbohm and carried 5 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve the minutes for the January 9, 2024 regular monthly meeting and January 22, 2024 special meeting as drafted.

The 2023 Freightliner needed a new clutch for \$2,300.00 which was not covered under warranty. Supt. Smith noted that he welded the broken clutch and will use that over the winter. They are still working on the punch list for the new highway garage. One exhaust fan is not working and he has both electrical and hvac people coming to hopefully get it working. They are still working on emptying out the old garage. The propane tanks were switched out to Center State tanks at the storage building. They advised that we need a bigger fuel line to avoid causing problems. They provided an estimate of \$236.00 to change the fuel line. A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilwoman Laura Curtis and carried 5 Ayes/ 0 Nays to authorize the Hwy. Supt. to have Center State Propane put in a larger fuel line for the propane tank at the highway storage building for an estimated cost of \$236.00. Supt. Smith advised that Morris wants the old grader, but has to work out how they are going to pay for it. He is still waiting for a report on Turnbull Bridge from Delaware Engineering. Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson reported that 2024 repair costs started out high at \$5,808. 00, due to the purchase of tire chains at about \$3,000.00. After working for the town since 1987, highway employee Willard Lasher has given notice that he plans on retiring on February 28, 2024. Councilman Scott Fickbohm asked how we would advertise for the position. Supt. Smith responded that we would post on our website and Facebook and word of mouth to start. The Highway committee has started looking at what it would cost to switch back to allowing hwy. employees to have the family plan in medical insurance. We may need to do more to draw in new employees. Supt. Smith asked about giving the \$500.00 per man clothing allowance to our probationary employee. Supervisor Lentz noted that we had no policy against giving it to a probationary employee. Councilman Brian Ryther questioned whether we should require steel toe boots since we give the clothing allowance. The Board discussed how to get the employees to wear all required safety gear. It was agreed to have the Highway Committee draft guidelines for what safety equipment will be required for each job and the Board will review and discuss possible penalties for failing to comply with the guidelines. Supt. Smith advised that he has an upcoming Streams Remediation Class with Soil & Water and plans on attending Advocacy Day in Albany on March 6, 2023.

Supervisor Edward Lentz noted that we will have an interest payment coming up on the new garage loan. The Bond Anticipation Note with Wayne Bank is due May 24, 2024, so he hopes we have the closing with USDA before that. Supervisor Lentz noted that he is getting an RFP ready for replacement of the highway storage building roof and for replacing the ceiling tiles in the town hall main room.

Edward George questioned if more than one employee is going to be trained on the new grader. Hwy. Supt. Smith responded that the equipment seller did not provide training. They are reading the manuals and learning a lot of what it can do. Bruce Page asked Councilman Scott Fickbohm when he worked for Otsego County Soil & Water and Councilman Fickbohm responded from 2006 to 2014.

County Rep. Meg Kennedy advised that the application for the Community Events Grant is open on the County website and has to be in by March 8, 2024. The maximum grant per event is \$2,000.00. The total amount to be handed out is \$75,000.00 which comes from the occupancy tax. Recipients will be required to submit a post grant report within 90 days after the event. The Veteran's office has a \$100,000.00 grant for peer-to-peer counseling. They are looking for housing for vets in the County, but it would have to have 20 beds available to be considered as veteran's housing. Contract negotiations are still underway for the County wide ambulance services. They remain committed to being supportive of local agencies. At the upcoming Assoc. of Towns conference in NYC, NYMIR will offer a free training session on cyber security. Rep. Kennedy noted that she will be attending a NYSAC meeting and Soil & Water Advocacy Day in Albany. Resident Bruce Page noted that he went to Soil & Water to get copies of his ag files and they were missing, which he implied that they had been stolen. Supervisor Edward Lentz noted

that he is resigning his position on the Otsego County Soil & Water Board. It is a 7-member Board with his position being a non-ag position if anyone is interested in being considered.

DCO Keegan Holt submitted his monthly report advising that he is doing his normal duties including calls on expired dog licenses and he had one stray dog call.

Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson reported that because we became a Clean Energy Community, we can get a \$5,000.00 grant for a clean energy project. We can also become eligible for an additional \$10,000.00 when we get a specific plan. The CSC is working on getting a proposal from Revolution Solar for a solar system at the town hall and they met with Collis about heat pumps for heating and cooling at the Town Hall. We can get more points and more grant funds as we do projects, up to \$50,000.00. They were also going to check and see if they could get a grant through the Justice grant program for part of the cost of a heat pump. There are several grants available for EV charging stations.

Bruce Page had complaints about his neighbors and missing animals. He asked Assessor Pamela Dyn-Gohde why his one parcel lists livestock when it is the parcel where the barn burned down. She advised that she did not change his assessments from previous assessors, only deleted his ag exemptions because he failed to file the proper paperwork with her to keep the exemptions.

Supervisor Edward Lentz advised that he was going to look at updating town policies, which he will bring to the full board to review. The Garrattsville Fire Company is going to look into getting a grant for a new ambulance. Supervisor Edward Lentz will help them with some of the paperwork and they will send it to a grant writer who will advise if he feels they would have a chance at getting a grant. Community Bank had matched the rates of NYCLASS to keep our business. Supervisor Lentz noted that our last statement showed we were only getting 4.73% and NYCLASS is at 5.25%. He is waiting for a response on this matter from Community Bank. He is looking at moving our money market accounts to NYCLASS, which is a consortium of municipalities.

We had money budgeted for repairs to the town hall roof last year, but the project just got done and the 2024 Budget is short \$6,650.00 since we didn't carryover the funds earmarked last year because we expected the project to be completed in 2023. A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Scott Fickbohm and carried 5 Ayes/ 0 Nays to transfer \$6,650.00 from Contingent Account A1990.4 to Town Hall Repairs Account A1620.40. A motion was made by Councilwoman Laura Curtis, seconded by Councilman Scott Fickbohm and carried 5 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve paying General Fund bills #27 through #40 for a total of \$36,339.56 and Highway Fund bills #15 through #28 for a total of \$20,521.39. Supervisor Lentz paid General Fund bills #20 through #26 for a total of \$1,102.14 and Highway Fund bill #29 for \$2,335.22 with prior Board approval.

A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Brian Ryther and carried 5 Ayes/ 0 Nays to appoint Theresa Berdon as our Health Officer for a four-year term. Dr. Benjamin Friedell has agreed to remain her medical consultant.

Robert Taylor's family has advised that they did not get the paperwork completed in time and they asked for an extension of the approval on Simple Subdivision Application # 3 of 2023. A motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and carried 5 Ayes/ 0 Nays to grant a 60-day approval extension to Robert & Claire Taylor on Subdivision #3 of 2023 on parcel #159.00-1-25.01.

Supervisor Edward Lentz had submitted proposed changes to the subdivision regulations to require that all driveways would have to be approved and installed on minor and major subdivisions as part of the process and making the minimum lot size for a simple subdivision 2.5 acres and the minimum lot sizes for minor and major subdivisions at 5 acres. Other possible revisions would be concerning setbacks of buildings from boundary lines. Supervisor Lentz questioned if boundary setbacks could be included in subdivision regulations which are for subdividing land, except in the case of an existing structure. If they were allowable, they would only apply to a subdivision, not town wide. Councilman Scott Fickbohm commented that having setbacks from boundary lines could help protect adjacent land values. Comments from residents included that maybe we should have setbacks for wells and septic and maybe require perc tests. The Board also discussed the option of changing our review process to give all authority to the Planning Board. After a good discussion, it was decided to send the questions back to the Planning Board for their input and discuss further next month.

Regarding the issue of possibly giving compensation to our Planning Board, it was found that locally, Edmeston pays \$200.00 per year to all their members and Morris and Burlington don't pay

anything. From around the state, town clerks gave information that many pay per meeting, from \$10.00 and up, with some paying the Chairman more per meeting. The Planning Board Clerk would verify the number of meetings that each member attended for the year to receive the compensation. After further discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Scott Fickbohm, seconded by Councilwoman Laura Curtis and carried 4 Ayes/0 Nays/ 1 Abstention (Councilman Ryther) to set a monetary compensation for planning board members at \$20.00 per meeting and \$30.00 for the Chairman per meeting to be paid annually upon verification by the Planning Board Clerk as to the number of meetings each attended.

Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson completed the audit of the Justice office, Councilman Scott Fickbohm conducted the audit of the Town Clerk/Collector's office and Councilwoman Laura Curtis conducted the audit of the Supervisor's office. The Board reviewed all of the audit paperwork and a motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Brian Ryther and carried 5 Ayes/ 0 Nays to accept the audits as completed.

Town Clerk Charlene Wells submitted her 2023 annual report to the Board. Joseph Gregory commented that the Planning Board has to have four hours of training annually, but the Town Board doesn't. With no further business or comments the meeting was adjourned by unanimous acclamation at 9:43 PM.

Charlene R. Wells, New Lisbon Town Clerk