

## **NEW LISBON TOWN BOARD---JANUARY 14, 2025—7:30 PM REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING—TOWN HALL**

Present: Supervisor Edward Lentz, Councilwoman Melaina Woodbeck, Councilman Brian Ryther, Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, Councilman Scott Fickbohm, Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith, Town Clerk Charlene Wells, Assessor Pamela Dyn-Gohde, County Rep. Meg Kennedy, Residents Bob Schenfeld, George Knarich, Lenny Melillo, Mert Hull, Also: Lois Ballard from Gates-Cole

Supervisor Edward Lentz opened the regular monthly meeting at 7:30 PM. A motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilwoman Melaina Woodbeck and carried 5 Ayes / 0 Nays to accept the minutes for the December 10, 2024 regular monthly meeting and the January 2, 2025 organizational meeting as drafted.

Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith advised they have been fixing multiple minor breakdowns, including the 2023 the PTO Clutch, the 2018 a hydraulic line and coolant leak (he can't find a new radiator), 09-A air tank, 23 Ford bad plugs and plug wires and the 2018 a broken bed chain. We were advised that we did not get a grant from the NYSDEC to use towards converting the old garage into a salt shed. It has been learned that the State might make us switch to a brine instead of road salt. We might want to keep the entire old garage for brine storage tanks. The Hwy. committee will discuss further as information becomes available. The Highway crew did their annual sexual harassment prevention training at the County. Four quotes were received for wood for the Turnbull Bridge deck. The two from Curtis Lumber and Picketts did not meet the wood spec of CCA treated lumber that he had asked for. Munsons gave a price of \$12,400.00 and Bruce Hall gave a price of \$13,300.00 and they both met the wood spec. A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Scott Fickbohm and carried 5 /0 to accept the quote of \$12,400.00 from Munsons for the materials for Turnbull Bridge deck.

Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson gave her fuel/truck report. We used 11,011.8 gallons of diesel and 2,483.2 gallons of gas in 2024. For 2024, the 2009-A cost us \$4.14 per mile, the 2018 \$2.20, the 2019 \$2.69 and the 2023 \$1.44. The cost goes down for each if averaged with previous years. Repair costs for 2024 were at \$55,780.00.

Lois Ballard of Gates-Cole was present to discuss the town's insurance policy. She can get prices from any of the companies that handle municipal insurance, but if we put out an RFP only one agent can get a quote from each carrier. She recommends that we get quotes every five years. She advised that she did a preliminary look at ours and thought we would be fine staying with our present carrier HCC. Gates-Cole gets a small percentage in commission, averaging 11.8%, but they don't add any additional fees. She noted that she shopped around for us two years ago, so 2028 would be when she would do it again, unless the Board wanted her to do it earlier. We could use the new hwy. garage as a reason to get quotes. After further discussion, the Board agreed that they would like her to get us new quotes from different carriers. She agreed, but advised that then we should wait five years before doing it again.

Mert Hull of the Garrattsville Fire Company gave their 4<sup>th</sup> quarter report for 2024. They had 11 calls including 4 structure fires, 4 motor vehicle accidents and 3 automatic alarms for a total of 57.5 man hours, averaging 7 members per call. They also had 203 hours of training/meetings/work nights during the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter. He also advised that they had a total of 32 calls in 2024 with approximately 920 man hours for the year. The Board is thankful for the service of all the fire company members. George Knarich questioned about the OSHA regulations recently discussed in the news and how it would affect local departments. It is getting harder to get volunteers due to the training requirements, but Lenny Melillo noted that better training has been shown to have saved lives. In other states, the Counties are taking over fire protection when there aren't enough volunteers. Perhaps Otsego County needs to start looking into what is going to happen with fire coverage in the future.

County Rep. Meg Kennedy advised that the Community Event Grants will be available again this year with the online application coming out in February. She noted that it is mostly non-profits that apply, but a few towns do have events that qualify. She reminded that the County's Veterans Services has funding for veteran activities, meals, etc. The County Office for the Aging also has services such as helping with HEAP paperwork. She noted that NYMIR gives out a poster to remind highway workers to make sure that disconnect switches are off when leaving the garage because of garage fires which are raising insurance costs. She checked with Soil & Water about our rejected salt shed application and the low point was

considered that we were going to reuse an old building, not build a new one. The County has received housing rehab money which will be administered through Otsego Rural Housing.

Supervisor Edward Lentz reported that DCO Keegan Holt had his state inspection and the only thing they wanted him to do different was to get a larger kennel. He has a medium sized one which may not fit a large dog. He had one stray pickup in December. There were no updates from the CSC Committee or the Facilities Committee.

We have been having a go-around with the County Civil Service office about Our Deputy Assessor Christopher Farrell. At first, we were told that the County did not have a deputy assessor position, but we could have more than one assessor so we applied that way. We were then told that he did not meet the qualifications so we got him approved as a part-time clerk so he could work with the assessor. Now since he has taken an assessing course and spent the last year working with the assessor, we reapplied to have him approved as Assessor. They still say he can't be approved for many reasons based on civil service rules. Options may be trying to establish a position of Deputy Assessor or getting the County Real Property Director to be in charge of training. With a lack of assessors in the County, we have been trying to help get a new assessor started while staying within the rules. Unfortunately, we have received different guidelines from different people in the County office and NYS Office of Real Property Tax Services. Supervisor Lentz and County Rep Meg Kennedy will look into it further.

The new website is almost ready to launch. The Clerk is still learning some posting guidelines. If any of the Board want to look at it, Supervisor Lentz will mail them a log in so they can look at it and give any feedback. Supervisor Lentz suggested we may want to look at updating our investment policy. He will email all the town policies to Board members for their review. The Annual Update to the State Comptroller due in by February 28, 2025 will be the Town's final financial report for 2024. A motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilman Scott Fickbohm and carried 5 Ayes / 0 Nays to update the Town Attorney's salary to the 2024 rate of \$150.00 per hour.

The Board reviewed the bills prior to the meeting. A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Scott Fickbohm and carried 5 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve paying General Fund bills #1 through #15 for a total of \$7,258.30 and Highway Fund bills #1 through #14 for a total of \$16,348.82. Supervisor Lentz paid General Fund bills #237 through #240 for a total of \$662.31 with prior Board approval.

For the audit of 2024 books, Councilman Brian Ryther will do the Justice, Councilman Scott Fickbohm will do the Supervisor and Councilwoman Melaina Woodbeck will do the Town Clerk/Collector. Supervisor Lentz asked that these be completed in the first quarter of 2025.

Councilman Scott Fickbohm checked with the Otsego County Sign Shop and they don't make the same kind of sign we need to replace the Community Park sign. He suggested we accept the quote from Prolifiq Sign Studio for the sign and installation. A motion was made by Councilman Scott Fickbohm, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin and carried 5 Ayes/ 0 nays to accept the quote from Prolifiq Sign Studio of \$476.00 for a new Community Park sign and \$250.00 for installation.

With no further business or public comment, a motion was made by Councilman Scott Fickbohm, seconded by Councilman Brian Ryther and carried 5 Ayes/ 0 Nays to adjourn at 9:15 PM.

Charlene R. Wells, New Lisbon Town Clerk