

April 30, 2020

Minutes of the Bi-Monthly Town Board Meeting held remotely on Thursday, April 30, 2020, at 5:30 PM. The following Town Board Members participated: Joseph P. Wilson, Jr., Supervisor, Robert M. Biesemeyer, Teresa Cheetham-Palen, David R. Deyo and Jennifer G. Whitney, Members of Council. Also participating were; 6 or 8 residents, 1 reporter and Ellen Estes, Town Clerk.

The Chairman, Mr. Wilson, called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

Privilege of the Floor was offered.

Barbara Stowger said there was an organization putting out signs encouraging dandelion growth for the bees; she suggested the Town do something similar.

Mr. Wilson said he had a question from Elizabeth Izzo asking about the Community Center Project.

He said that AES is in the process of interviewing the Youth Commission, Town Board, Senior Club, etc., looking for feedback on what the needs of these organizations are.

Resolution No. 108 – 20

Ms. Cheetham-Palen offered a resolution and moved its adoption. Be it resolved, that the Town Board approve the 2020 Water Rates and Anticipated Lists for Water Districts #1 and #2 as submitted for review at the meeting held April 14<sup>th</sup>. (The new water rates have been attached to and made a part of these minutes.) This resolution was seconded by Mr. Biesemeyer.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson:	Yes
Mr. Biesemeyer:	Yes
Ms. Cheetham-Palen:	Yes
Mr. Deyo:	Yes
Ms. Whitney:	Yes

Mr. Wilson said the next item for discussion on the agenda is the Farmers' Market request to start their Farmers' Market on Marcy Field on May 31<sup>st</sup>.

He said a Farmers' Market is an essential service because they sell food and said they have guidance from the Department of Agriculture and Markets. He said he has met with members of the Farmers' Market, their Board and Dick Crawford to discuss their plan which he has forwarded to the Board. He said that he thought their plan was good and that Deb Whitson, the Town Attorney, had looked over and thought it was good. He said the Farmers' Market does not have pandemic insurance so if someone gets sick and it is traced to the Farmers' Market it could come back to the Town.

Mr. Deyo said he had spoken to Ms. Whitson and she expressed that the plan they came up with was a good plan if it went perfectly, but said she probably wouldn't attend the market until it went on for a few weeks.

He asked her if this market was held on at her property, would she let this market go on. He said she hesitated for a second and then said "absolutely not". He said she said she had given the Board the facts and it was their decision.

Mr. Deyo went on to say that he is a "hard no" saying the Board can discuss it, but if Ms. Whitson wouldn't be willing to allow it, he wouldn't either.

Mr. Biesemeyer said some of the reasons he thought the Board should let them try it because it's good food, he said not selling could put these farmers under. He said they were not allowing Arts and Crafts and would separate their stands. He said he felt they deserved a chance saying they could try it for a couple weeks and see how it goes. He said he doubts if any Court would hold anyone accountable if someone gets sick.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen said she understands Mr. Deyo's concerns and she takes this serious. She said she talked to the plan writer and feels they put a lot of thought into it. She said she feels better with the presence of this plan and she thinks they should be allowed to try. She said she is concerned about the exchange of cash which they should do away with; she said the Snowy Grocery uses a card reader and you don't touch anything. She said she feels the Town would have the right to shut the Market down if they do not follow their plan.

(continued)

Ms. Whitney said she agrees and asked how many vendors there are.  
Mr. Wilson said 21 or 22, much smaller than usual. He said there would be no sitting to eat and no entertainment saying there would be just food sales to go.  
Mr. Wilson said that he was really not in favor of allowing this, until after meeting with them and seeing their plan. He said he will be checking up on them and said any violations would be reported to him.  
He said he thinks this is a good place to start and the Town can stop the operation if necessary.  
Mr. Biesemeyer said he would be happy to help monitor the Market so Mr. Wilson wouldn't have to be there all the time.  
Ms. Cheetham-Palen said she should be able to help too.

#### Resolution No. 109 – 20

Ms. Whitney offered a resolution and moved its adoption. Be it resolved, that the Town Board grant permission for the Farmers' Market to start their Market on Marcy Field on Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>. This resolution was seconded by Ms. Cheetham-Palen.

#### Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson:	Yes
Mr. Biesemeyer:	Yes
Ms. Cheetham-Palen:	Yes
Mr. Deyo:	Oppose
Ms. Whitney:	Yes

The next item discussed was the Town Justice vacancy.

Mr. Wilson began by explaining that the next Town Justice Training School is scheduled for June saying it may or may not happen.

He said he proposes that the Town Board wait on this appointment saying that the Court is currently not in session; he said he proposes holding off for the election.

Mr. Deyo said he thought that was a wise decision saying Bill Harral can handle it until Fall and then let the voters decide.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen said she had spoken to Bill Harral, who told her that the training doesn't fully train on the clerk part of the job. She said it would be a lot of extra work for Mr. Harral to help with the training and might not be worth rushing through.

Mr. Wilson said a clerk has been talked about for the last 18 months.

Mr. Biesemeyer said there isn't a lot of traffic right now; Ms. Whitney said there may be an increase in hiker parking tickets.

Mr. Wilson suggested waiting on the appointment saying there is still time for interested applicants to register with the Board of Elections as an Independent Candidate.

The Board all seemed to agree.

The next discussion was in regards to Hiker Parking.

Mr. Wilson said that last Saturday was a nice day for hiking; he said that the Rangers were out writing tickets. He said that barricades are up allowing local traffic only and no roadside parking on Market, Adirondack and Johns Brook Roads, he said one barricade had gotten run over but had been fixed. He said new permanent No Parking signs will be installed on Market Street this week. He said he was coordinating with DEC, but said they are strapped saying that some of their rangers are out of town working on the covid issue.

Mr. Deyo said he saw the "local traffic only" signs, but didn't see the "Garden Parking – open/closed" sign. He said he wondered if the new signage was sending a mixed message.

Mr. Wilson said that the sign at the bottom of the Johns Brook Road would be changed to "Violators will be towed".

Mr. Deyo asked if DEC was discouraging hiking saying that last weekend he had counted 60 cars on Route 73.

Mr. Wilson said he counted 92 cars on the Cascade Road; he said DEC is pushing "hike local". He said he has been working to get the message of limited parking out. He said the most cars that were in the Garden Parking lot had been 17, but said that other lots are getting buried. He said he had been meeting with DEC to coordinate.

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John Schuler, the Au Sable Club Manager, offered the services of 3 retired State Troopers on his security staff to write tickets on the Au Sable Road, in the parking lots and on Route 73 if they could be empowered to do so. He said he was offering this service on his payroll.

Mr. Wilson said they would have to be bonded and have current firearms permitting; he said he would talk to the Town Attorney about this.

Mr. Schuler said their firearms training is up to date, he said this may be worth looking into.

Mr. Wilson said he would research the details.

Ms. Whitney said this is all confusing, she agreed that "hike local" was in place saying maybe they are.

Mr. Wilson said he saw a lot of Vermont plates.

Mr. Deyo commented that at this time there are no Canadians but said he had seen a lot of out of state plates. He said they appear to be Ironmen saying that when they finish their hikes, they take out their bicycles.

Mr. Wilson stated that the Canadian border is still closed saying it will be a major problem when it opens.

Mr. Wilson said he has people that have been helping him get the word out about limited parking before hikers get here; he said the Town of Keene can ramp up this effort as they need to.

The next discussion was CoronaVirus planning.

Mr. Wilson began by saying that NYS is still under pause; he said the Town Hall is closed and the other Town staff is working in shifts to minimize exposure. He said the Town is following State guidelines.

He said he is waiting to see how this will affect the Youth Commission Program saying it wouldn't look the same this year.

Mr. Biesemeyer suggested no field trips or swimming while social distancing at the Community Center.

Mr. Wilson said the Department of Health will give guidance saying he is waiting to see more.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen said she's confused, she said the guidance for opening rules states you have to be showing 14 days of downward exposure saying that Essex County is still moving upward.

Mr. Wilson agreed that numbers have been climbing though he said it was now a sustained level. He said since the region is not seeing declining cases, he thinks things won't open until the beginning of June, not May 15<sup>th</sup>. He explained that the areas go by region, not County.

Ms. Whitney said the Governor was going to announce his plans for schools tomorrow.

Mr. Wilson commented that this situation was unfolding rapidly saying he had no more information.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen said she's concerned that this is not over.

A conversation followed about numbers in Essex County, including inmates and prison personnel. Mr. Wilson said the County has had 47 positives as of today.

Mr. Biesemeyer said he would like to protect the Town from people coming into the area.

Mr. Schuler questioned feedback from the Governor suggesting that visitors shouldn't be invite into the region.

Mr. Deyo said this is his concern with allowing the Farmers' Market prematurely.

Mr. Biesemeyer said things may be different by May 31<sup>st</sup>; Mr. Deyo commented that this could be rescinded if things change.

Mr. Wilson gave numbers from Public Health saying Essex County had a rate of 124 per 100,000 people; he also gave neighboring County numbers. He said we are in a public health crisis and said we must continue to be careful.

He said that he and Ms. Whitney, his clerk, had been looking at the numbers in the current budget and the future budget. He said this is going to have a huge impact on the County budget. He said he will continue to work on this saying he is anticipating an impact on the 2021 budget.

Mr. Wilson said he had received a nice note from the Keene Valley Library Association thanking the Town of Keene for their continued support.

Mr. Wilson again offered the public a chance to speak. Mr. Schuler said that the Au Sable Club supports the Town of Keene in anything and everything they are doing; he offered his support saying to reach out if needed. He went on to say that the Club had made tough decisions for the health and safety of their members and the community; he said they will be shutting down this summer saying that they normally have members that come from 32 States and internationally. Mr. Wilson thanked Mr. Schuler saying his management and his Board have been really, really responsible which will result in a very hard season for them. Everyone thanked Mr. Schuler.

Aaron Miller said the Keene Library has been busy using a 3D printer to make PPE for health care workers. He said so far they have made 163 face shields. Everyone present thanked Mr. Miller.

Mr. Wilson said he was going to defer Draft #1 of the January Supervisor's Report saying he didn't have one.

Resolution No. 110 – 20

Ms. Cheetham-Palen offered a resolution and moved its adoption. Be it resolved, that the following bills, from the Town Board Meeting held April 14<sup>th</sup>, be accepted as presented. This resolution was seconded by Ms. Whitney.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson:	Yes
Mr. Biesemeyer:	Abstain
Ms. Cheetham-Palen:	Yes
Mr. Deyo:	Abstain
Ms. Whitney:	Yes

Mr. Biesemeyer and Mr. Deyo abstained since they had not signed them.

Multi-Fund Vouchers Numbered 216 – 244, totaling \$13,976.13, as follows;

General Fund Bills	\$5,726.54
Highway Fund Bills	6,452.24
Library Fund Bills	228.43
Water District #1 Bills	1,362.53
Water District #2 Bills	206.39

Ms. Whitney and Mr. Deyo said they could come in tomorrow to sign tonight's bills which will be approved at the next meeting.

Resolution No. 111 – 20

Mr. Deyo offered a resolution and moved its adoption. Be it resolved, that with all business having been transacted, this meeting be adjourned. This resolution was seconded by Mr. Biesemeyer.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson:	Yes
Mr. Biesemeyer:	Yes
Ms. Cheetham-Palen:	Yes
Mr. Deyo:	Yes
Ms. Whitney:	Yes

The meeting was adjourned at 6:21 PM.

Ellen S. Estes, Town Clerk  
May 2, 2020

Joseph P. Wilson, Jr., Supervisor  
Robert M. Biesemeyer, Councilman  
Teresa Cheetham-Palen, Councilwoman  
David R. Deyo, Councilman  
Jennifer G. Whitney, Councilwoman