

February 25, 2020

Minutes of the Bi-Monthly Town Board Meeting held Tuesday, February 25, 2020, at 5:30 PM, at the Keene Town Hall. The following Town Board Members were present: Joseph P. Wilson, Jr., Supervisor, Robert M. Biesemeyer, Teresa Cheetham-Palen, David R. Deyo and Jennifer G. Whitney, Members of Council. Also present were: 17 residents, Ryan Hall, Water Superintendent, Scott Smith, Highway Superintendent and Ellen Estes, Town Clerk.

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

Mr. Wilson offered Privilege of the Floor.

Donna Austin asked if the Town of Keene was going to be reassessed this year.

Mr. Deyo and Mr. Wilson said the Assessor would be starting the reassessment this year but it wouldn't be finished until 2021.

Jim Bernard informed those present that the solar array at the highway garage has been in use for 1 year; he said that he would like to compile a report of its first year's numbers and make that presentation at the end of the month meeting in April.

The first item on the agenda was the transfer station.

Mr. Wilson began by explaining that the Town had been sited with safety violations by the State. He said that Mr. Biesemeyer has a quote to get them into compliance.

He also said that the Town ended 2019 over budget saying this is partly caused from a loss of revenue from recycling. He said as a result of the loss of revenue in recycling, Lake Placid has stopped taking glass bottles and they are now considered garbage.

Ryan Hall said the Town needs to decide how to level out the money being spent on recycling. He said a short term fix would be to stop separating the cardboard from the zero sort, but keep that container as a back-up for the zero sort; he said this would save about \$2,000 per year in trucking.

Mr. Wilson explained that this allows the Town to comfortably use the containers to full capacity.

Mr. Wilson stated that the County is evaluating the whole system across Essex County and that there may be changes in the next two years when the Serkil contract expires.

Mr. Hall said there is a double hinged problem now, being caused by the safety violations saying that with the compactor chained until a fence can be put in, the Town cannot take big objects. He said the Transfer Station needs a Skid-Steer to load large objects into the compactor or will need to continue with bulky days which isn't helping the budget. He said if the Town did away with the Bulky Days they could save \$3,000. He explained that the large items can't be manually loaded or lifted over the required 48- inch fence. He said the State requires Transfer Stations to take these items.

Mr. Deyo said it would be foolish to spend \$40,000 on equipment when the County may come through in two years and take over; Mr. Biesemeyer agreed.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen asked what the difference was with having bulky days; Mr. Hall explained that during bulky days the containers are on the ground with the door open so there is no safety danger of falling in.

Mr. Hall said another way to cut expenses would be to cut being open 5 days a week to four days a week saying this could save about \$6,000 per year.

Mr. Biesemeyer felt this could only work during the non-busy season and would need to be open 5 days during the busy season; Mr. Deyo agreed.

Mr. Wilson stated that Mr. Biesemeyer had a quote for the fence being required by PESH.

It was stated that the quote the County had gotten for this fence was \$11,000; Mr. Biesemeyer said that Sheehan had verbally quoted \$10,000, but said he didn't have it in writing yet.

The Board Members all seemed to agree to wait until they had this quote in writing to accept it; Mr. Wilson went on to say this work needs to be done by May 1<sup>st</sup> to avoid fines.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen asked if the Board had to make decisions tonight; Mr. Wilson said no, that what he wanted was to gather feedback first.

(continued)

Mr. Hall said he had been at a County meeting today saying that the County may opt to run our transfer station, with us, as a pilot for the County. He said if this happens it would be a County facility and there would be changes to the zero sort.

Mr. Deyo asked if this is tried and it doesn't work, would the Town get it back.

Mr. Hall said the County will probably be taking it over anyway.

Mr. Deyo suggested if there was a chance of the County taking it over in the next two years the Town should do a short term fix and let them. He said he would hesitate on buying equipment and wait and see what the County does.

Mr. Wilson said the Town is going to find themselves over budget when trying to close out 2020 if hard decisions are not made.

Mr. Wilson said that recycling materials are being rejected by other Countries and that the revenue has dropped 70% in the last 18 months saying that at the same time the trucking costs have increased.

Jim Bernard said he recently read an article about the market for glass going up.

Mr. Wilson again said that Lake Placid has given up glass as a recyclable and customers now have to pay to dispose it.

Larry House suggested charging for recyclables; Mr. Hall said you can charge a handling fee but DEC regulates charging for recyclables.

Dan Mason said it may not do any good but has anyone talked to Casella about this problem.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen questioned going back to using the County for the Town's recyclables; Mr. Hall explained that the County takes less plastic than the Zero Sort through Casella.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen questioned closing a day a week year round; Rusty Hall suggested shortening the daily hours.

Bunny Goodwin gave the history on the Town's recycling saying that when the Town changed to Zero Sort in 2014 they chose a plan to separate the metals and cardboard. She said she fears going backwards by going back to the County system.

Mr. Wilson stated that until the domestic market for recyclables forms the Town is going to be facing hard decisions. He said there are a lot of choices but they come with a lot more money.

Ryan Hall said another solution was to form a solid waste authority saying that forces Keene trash to be disposed of in Keene explaining that garbage pickup would have to be disposed of locally.

Tom Both spoke about how there used to be a market for metals, and asked if combining the cardboard with the zero sort is okay.

Mr. Hall and Mr. Biesemeyer both said it was.

Donna Austin asked whether cutting the hours at the transfer station would affect the attendant's benefits; Mr. Wilson said 1 day a week would not.

Mr. Wilson went on to say that soon DEC would be regulating food waste; he said when this happens the tonnage of trash would go down.

Mr. Hall stated that 50% of the weight of trash is food waste.

Dan Plumley stated that this must be a problem for small towns all over New York State.

Mr. Wilson said that Essex County is not allowed to have a landfill saying that they used to get State funds instead, but that has expired.

Mr. Biesemeyer said he would like to hear from someone at the County level and from Casella.

Next was a discussion regarding composting; Ms. Cheetham-Palen said she would like to get the costs on that.

Mr. Wilson said that he had explored it a while back and said the equipment to get started would be \$50,000 and you need a building and then there is labor.

Ms. Goodwin and Mr. Biesemeyer discussed where there are composting models happening already.

Mr. Hall suggested waiting to let someone else try it first.

Mr. Deyo suggested "treading water" for 18 to 24 months to see what the County offers;

Mr. Biesemeyer agreed saying that some of Mr. Halls ideas are good, mentioning cutting back in the off season.

Ms. Whitney said that she had gone back to Josh Whitney with the Town Board's ideas for the Town signs, she brought back his suggestions saying that he felt if the hiker was taken out it would be too plain and if the words "Home of the High Peaks" was added that would shrink too much on letterhead. She said he suggests using what he has, he gave 3 variations, one with a hiker, one with a pine tree and one with a fisherman. Mr. Biesemeyer said he really wants the signs to include "Home of the High Peaks". The Board Members all agreed to use the sign with the hiker and to add "Home of the High Peaks" somewhere on the letterhead since it won't be part of the sign. Ms. Whitney said she would get estimates on getting the signs made.

Mr. Wilson said a request had been received for the purchase of one of the old signs. The Town Board all agreed that the various old signs should be looked up in the Spring to see what the Town has, then be declared surplus and auctioned off.

The Town Board discussed the need to reschedule the April Bi-Monthly Town Board Meeting due to a conflict with the Presidential Primary. It was agreed by everyone to have the meeting on Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 PM.

#### Resolution No. 85 – 20

The Town Board adopted Resolution No. 85 – 20, a Municipal Resolution Adopting the Essex County 2019 Hazard Mitigation Plan as the Town of Keene's official Plan. This resolution, in its entirety, is attached to and made a part of these minutes.

Mr. Wilson informed the Board that Essex County Public Health would be speaking to the Board of Supervisors on Monday about their monitoring and plans regarding the coronavirus outbreak.

#### Resolution No. 86 – 20

Ms. Cheetham-Palen offered Resolution No. 86 – 20, a Resolution to Amend the 2019 Budget. This resolution, in its entirety, has been attached to and made a part of these minutes. This resolution was seconded by Ms. Whitney.

#### Roll Call Vote:

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

Scott Smith said he had gotten State Contract prices on back-hoes from John Deere and Case. He shared a quote with the Board. He said that he can make this purchase as a lease to own with 3 annual payments starting next year. He also said the final payment on the truck will be made this year.

He said he would be trading his current backhoe on this sale.

He said this backhoe purchase would mean he can get rid of the tractor and broom he now has by declaring them surplus for auction.

The Board asked if this purchase fits into the Highway's budget; Mr. Smith said it does.

#### Resolution No. 87 – 20

Mr. Biesemeyer offered a resolution and moved its adoption. Be it resolved, that Mr. Smith be given the authorization to purchase a new Backhoe using State Contract pricing. This resolution was seconded by Ms. Cheetham-Palen.

#### Roll Call Vote:

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

Mr. Smith said he had put up the LED bulbs in the shop; Ms. Cheetham-Palen and Mr. Wilson discussed the LED lights for the Town Hall.

Resolution No. 88 – 20

Mr. Deyo offered a resolution and moved its adoption. Be it resolved, that the Town Board approve the following bills for payment, including those that were prepaid. 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

Multi-Fund Vouchers Numbered 92 to 127, totaling \$111,952.19, as follows;

General Fund Bills	\$70,056.17
Highway Fund Bills	32,530.54
Library Fund Bills	1,291.97
Water District #1 Bills	2,494.99
Water District #2 Bills	3,862.72
Salt Station Capital Fund	1,715.80

Resolution No. 89 – 20

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

Roll Call Vote:

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 PM

Ellen S. Estes, Town Clerk  
February 28, 2020

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