

November 24, 2020

Minutes of the Bi-Monthly Town Board Meeting held Tuesday, November 24, 2020 at 5:30 PM, via zoom. 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: at least 4 residents, Debbie Rice and Annie Scavo, Little Peaks Representatives, Cori-Anne Favro, Town Clerk Appointee, 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.

Resolution No. 194 – 20

Ms. Whitney offered a resolution and moved its adoption.

Be it resolved that the Minutes of the Special Town Board Meeting held October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020, be accepted with the clarification that she did not do a survey of salaries, Mr. Wilson supplied her with a rundown of the other Town Clerk salaries and gave them to her to average out.

Also, be it resolved, that the Minutes of the Special Town Board Meeting held October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2020, be accepted with the following amendment to the fourth paragraph, "Mr. Biesemeyer said the Board came to the conclusion that Personal Service was the only place *left* in the Highway Budget...

Be it also resolved, that the Minutes of the of the Town Board Meetings held October 13, 2020 and October 27, 2020 be accepted as presented.

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 introduced Annie Scavo and Debbie Rice saying they are on the Little Peaks Board and were here tonight to give a Little Peaks Update.

Ms. Scavo introduced herself and went on to say that Little Peaks is venturing into the childcare hub. She said Little Peaks has plans to expand to a full day program and care for 6 week old infants up to 5 year olds. She said the program is grateful to the Town of Keene for helping Little Peaks exist all these years. She said they are in the process of looking at spaces to purchase and raising money. She went on to explain this would be a year round, full day program to accommodate 35 children. She said it would employ 6 to 7 teachers plus a director. She said they would offer workshops for parents.

Debbie Rice said the Board has formed a task force to meet property requirements and to develop a budget. She said they have identified 12 promising properties, but said they are disappearing quickly and asked for any ideas that may be out there. She said they have formed a fund raising team that has already raised \$750,000 saying she suspected that would slow down. She said the program is acting aggressively and plans on being ready in 9 to 18 months. She said this will be a high quality program and will provide access to all families, regardless of income.

Ms. Scavo stated that their Board is grateful to the home care providers in Keene and said this is a chance to have a local childcare center.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen said she was excited.

Ms. Whitney asked if the program will have the same connection with KCS regarding Pre-K; She was answered that they would.

Mr. Deyo stated he would like to help this venture succeed.

Mr. Biesemeyer asked what the geographical boundaries were, stating that 35 children were a lot; Ms. Rice stated that she has already been contacted by someone interested in Jay. She said the children would come from Jay to Lake Placid to Elizabethtown.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen asked why they chose Keene; Ms. Rice said she has a bias with the location for Keene.

Ms. Whitney mentioned Kathy Gagnon's response on Nextdoor Keene to having an available building in Keene for sale; she was answered that it was on the list.

Mr. Biesemeyer stated this project was very exciting.

Mr. Wilson thanked Ms. Rice and Ms. Scavo for coming in with this update.

Privilege of the floor was offered; there were no questions or comments.

Resolution No. 195 – 20

Mr. Wilson offered a resolution and moved its adoption. Be it resolved, that the Town Board adopt a Resolution of Appreciation for Ellen Estes, who is retiring from her position as Town Clerk. This resolution was unanimously seconded.

Mr. Wilson gave a Corona Virus update saying that Mr. Smith and Mr. Hall, each, have a plan to manage and reduce their staff if necessary after the holiday.

Mr. Biesemeyer asked if there was a new case in Keene; a brief discussion lead to the statement that the total in Keene has been brought up to 5.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen explained the testing time frame.

Mr. Biesemeyer said a Doctor at AMC told him that the results can be obtained through a Primary Care Doctor within 24 hours.

Ms. Whitney asked what Mr. Smith and Mr. Hall's plans were.

Mr. Smith said his crew would go to the week on and a week off schedule. He said that they would respond to emergencies and snow removal. He said they would stagger start times when needed to cut down on contacts.

Ms. Whitney asked when this would be decided and by whom.

Mr. Wilson stated that the Town can decide, but would probably go by Essex County Public Health or the State's recommendations.

Mr. Deyo stated that if they have a plan, that's fine.

When asked, Mr. Hall said his plan is similar to Scott's, except he has less people. He said since they are still classified essential, he would use the week on, week off plan.

Ms. Whitney said that she has seen that Town Halls are closing.

Someone stated that they thought that was Saranac Lake in Franklin County.

Mr. Wilson informed everyone that the Community Bank was going back to drive through only. He said if closings occur, since the Library is non-essential, they will work from home. He said he was unsure about Susan Whitney's schedule and the Town Clerk's schedule saying it depends on how bad it gets.

Mr. Wilson turned the floor over to Mr. Hall to give an update on the Water District #1 repairs.

Mr. Hall started by saying the work on the waterline is completed as far as possible for this year. He said they need to get a project number from FEMA to get reimbursed.

Mr. Wilson said the Town keeps pushing at the State level people, who keep pushing at the Federal level people to get this done. He said he has to see how to structure the loan, starting next year from the general fund.

Mr. Biesemeyer asked how big the loan is anticipated to be; Mr. Wilson said \$40,000 to \$60,000, he said if they don't get a FEMA project number in time, they may have to get a commercial loan. He said he is working to figure out the total needed.

Ms. Whitney asked if the money would be coming from the State; Mr. Wilson said it would, but the FEMA project number is the green light.

Mr. Hall and Mr. Wilson stated that the US Fish and Wildlife had been involved in the planning which had helped in making FEMA understand and approve this project.

Mr. Wilson said that on the positive side, Kelly Tucker from the Au Sable River Association had notified him that the Town was going to receive a \$125,000 grant for the construction of 2 more weirs upstream from this project, going toward Gulf Brook.

Resolution No. 196 – 20

Mr. Deyo offered a resolution and moved its adoption. Be it resolved, that Cori-Anne Favro be appointed Town Clerk and Registrar of Vital Records, effective Monday, December 1, 2020. 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 next discussion was in regards to upcoming special meetings that needed to be scheduled.

The Board discussed and agreed to the following schedule:

- The December Bi-Monthly and End of Year Meeting will be held on Tuesday, December 22<sup>nd</sup>, at 5:30 PM, via zoom,
- the Organizational Town Board Meeting will be held Monday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 PM, via zoom, and
- the Annual Audit of Officers and Employees will be held on Tuesday, January 19<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 PM, also via zoom.

Mr. Wilson explained that the Officers and Employees would set out their books for review at the Town Hall for the Board to come in and look over.

Mr. Smith made the following request to the Town Board.

He said that the Town of Newcomb had a flail mower advertised on Auction's International and said that he would like to bid on it. He said that new this mower would cost \$23,000 and said that he would like permission to bid up to \$5,500.

Mr. Deyo asked if he had the money in this year's budget; Mr. Smith said he still had \$10,400 left in his equipment budget.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen asked how old this mower was; Mr. Smith responded by saying he wasn't sure, but it looked exactly the same as the one owned by the highway, but was in better shape.

Resolution No. 197 – 20

Ms. Cheetham-Palen offered a resolution and moved its adoption. Be it resolved, that the Town Board give authorization to Mr. Smith to bid up to \$5,500 on the previously discussed flail mower. 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 that he, Ms. Whitney and Mr. Hall have been talking about the Christmas tree on Marcy Field.

Ms. Whitney said there are a few strands of lights out and she feels they should be fixed. She said they have a couple options saying the Town could rent a lift or they could wait until next year and mentioned stringing the strands vertically.

Mr. Deyo commented that he thought the Power Company had helped out in the past as a good will jester.

Mr. Hall said he didn't think there was good will.

Ms. Whitney suggested trying a fund raising using "Go Fund Me".

When asked, Mr. Wilson stated that it cost \$3,600 to fix them last time.

Mr. Biesemeyer commented that it needs to look professional or they shouldn't be turned on.

Ms. Whitney said she had spoken to Bill Ferebee who said that Chad Casey at "Northline" would do the work with a lift for \$3,000.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen said that she felt it was important to do this during this year full of stress.

Mr. Biesemeyer and Mr. Deyo said they were okay with talking to Chad Casey to find out what the options are.

Ms. Whitney said she had looked it up and Chad Casey had done it the last time, she again asked for confirmation whether the Board wanted to go with a "Go Fund Me" account and hire Northline do the work.

Mr. Hall questioned the timeline; Mr. Wilson suggested finding the money and getting it done as quickly as possible and using fund raising to pay the money back.

Mr. Biesemeyer stated it didn't look good last year and he was in favor of leasing a bucket truck to get it done.

Ms. Whitney said you can rent a lift for the day for about \$300; Mr. Wilson said to have a trained operator it would be \$850.

Mr. Smith said that Seth at the County was a trained operator and may come over.

(discussion continues on next page)

Mr. Biesemeyer stated that if the only thing on the table was having Northline do it for \$3,000, he just wasn't sure.

Mr. Wilson suggested trying to come up with an alternate plan and starting the "Go Fund Me" account.

I lost zoom service for a minute or two and when it came back on Mr. Wilson was suggesting scheduling Northline for Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup> and having Ms. Whitney set up a "Go Fund Me" fund raiser.

Ms. Whitney thanked Mr. Smith and his highway crew for building the sign frames and putting up the new signs. She also thanked Mr. Hall and his crew for putting up the new banners.

Ms. Whitney asked if there was any way that the Town could flood the skating rink in the middle of the night to make decent ice.

Mr. Hall stated that they do work some nights from 9:00 – 12:00 and stated that we haven't been having good winters.

Ms. Whitney said the ice was best when Bob Gifford used to come in the middle of the night to flood.

Mr. Wilson talked about not having a good surface and said he was looking into whether it could be moved to the basketball court.

Ms. Whitney said right now, with not a lot going on, it would be nice to go skating safely.

Mr. Deyo asked how it's going to work with the kids going inside.

Mr. Wilson said the Youth Commission Board is working on plans with Mr. Hall and his crew. He said in terms of the skating room, there will be limited capacity, he said the YCB is working on coming up with rules on this also.

Ms. Whitney asked if there was a Green Team Update.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen said that Sam is working on the recycling video and said she would touch base with him this week.

Mr. Deyo began the next discussion by asking if Deb Whitson, the Town Attorney, was present on this meeting; she was not.

He said he had a copy of the letter that stated that they as a Town Board had asked for a compilation of actions, resolutions and decisions of the Board. He stated that he didn't remember discussing this request as a Board and requesting the Ellie get it together for us. He said he didn't recall the Board ever discussing anything that was in this letter, although this letter that Deb Whitson sent out stated it was from the Board.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen, Ms. Whitney and Mr. Biesemeyer all said they didn't know anything about it either.

Mr. Biesemeyer said the demands that were put on Ellie to produce everything from 1990 up till now, which she replied to and I think everyone got a copy of that also, was unreasonable. He said he didn't recall the Board agreeing to request that she provide them with these things and that her reply was reasonable in the sense that asking for 30 years of history at this time was impossible. He said if this letter was regarding the letter that has been discussed previous by the Board, they could either discuss it here now or go into Executive Session, if anyone feels it's a personnel issue, which is what this letter was referring to.

Mr. Deyo stated that the Board has had Executive Sessions but this had nothing to do with what they had discussed; Mr. Biesemeyer said "Understood".

Mr. Wilson said thank you for bringing this up... and asked if they were asking him to do something.

Mr. Deyo said no, that he was just saying that this letter said the Town Board had required it and he didn't remember the Town Board requiring it or asking of it.

Mr. Biesemeyer said in reply to her letter, that he would be in favor of saying the Town Board does not require it.

Mr. Wilson said they don't have to do anything, he said that Mr. Biesemeyer just said that she had already provided an answer.

Mr. Biesemeyer said he was perfectly comfortable with that saying this letter was given to her and she replied that she doesn't have enough time to comply with it. He said he is fine with that, saying he understands.

Ms. Whitney said that she thinks that Mr. Deyo just wants it known that the Town Board did not request this, reiterating that it wasn't their request; Mr. Deyo said "correct".

Mr. Wilson asked if everyone got their copy of the Supervisor's Monthly Financial Statement for October. Mr. Biesemeyer and Ms. Whitney said they had not.

Resolution No. 198 – 20

Ms. Cheetham-Palen offered a resolution and moved its adoption. Be it resolved, that the Town Board accept the Supervisor's Monthly Financial Statement for October. This resolution was seconded by Mr. Deyo.

Roll Call Vote:

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

Resolution No. 199 – 20

Mr. Deyo offered a resolution and moved its adoption. Be it resolved, that the Town Board approve the following bills for payment. This resolution was seconded by Ms. Cheetham-Palen:

Roll Call Vote:

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

Mr. Biesemeyer and Ms. Whitney abstained since they had not signed the vouchers.

Multi-Fund Vouchers numbered 745 to 783, totaling \$314,175.07, as follows;

General Fund Bills	\$ 73,437.01
Highway Fund Bills	68,895.11
Library Fund Bills	35.47
Water District #1 Bills	159,098.29
Water District #2 Bills	12,709.19

Mr. Deyo asked what the boulders on his mother's old property on Route 9N were for; Mr. Wilson answered that they were for the next phase of the river project that the grant money was for.

Resolution No. 200 – 20

Mr. Biesemeyer 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 Ms. Whitney.

Roll Call Vote:

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

The meeting was adjourned at 6:33 PM.

Ellen S. Estes, Town Clerk  
November 27, 2020

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