

December 8th, 2020

Minutes of the bi-monthly Town Board meeting held Tuesday December 8th, 2020 at 7pm Virtually Via Zoom. (recording of this meeting is available)

The Following board members were present: Supervisor Joseph P Wilson Jr. Members of council: Robert M. Biesemeyer, Teresa Cheetham-Palen, David R. Deyo and Jennifer Whitney.

Town Clerk: Cori-Anne Favro

Water Superintendent: Ryan Hall

Highway Superintendent: Scott Smith

Residents present: Barb Dumas, Melissa Estes

Sun Community news writer: Tim Rowland

The Chairman, Mr. Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:00PM.

Resolution No. 201-20

Ms. Cheetham-Palen offered a resolution and moved its adoption. Be it resolved that the minutes of the Town Board meeting held November 5th, 10th and 24th be accepted with the correction of the spelling error on the 3rd page of the November 24th, 2020 meeting minutes' paragraph 4, be corrected from jester to gesture.

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

Old Business:

Covid-19 Update: Mr. Wilson explained that covid cases continue to grow in the county. The Essex county department of health contact tracing departments are getting very busy and may call on town to check up on people. The vaccine is expected to roll out for this county in the spring. We all need to continue to be diligent, continue doing meetings on zoom, wearing mask, limiting density based on room size. Non-essential employees going home, and reducing staffing as needed. Does anyone have any questions or comments?

Ms. Whitney commented that she saw that the North Elba Town Hall has closed.

Mr. Wilson stated that brings up a good question I wanted to go over about Tax Collection that is coming up. Some ideas to limit the number of people coming to the town hall, or if we do close the town hall. The ideas are a secure drop box for the tax payments or setting up appointments only so there is only 1 person in the building at a time.

Mr. Biesemeyer suggested that we should suggest people to only mail in tax payments or maybe we should mandate only by mail collection?

Mr. Deyo said that those that maybe don't mail, need to make an appointment with Cori-Anne.

Mr. Wilson asked Cori-Anne Tax Collector how she felt about it and what her thoughts were about it.

Cori-Anne stated that she is putting an informational insert into each envelope that is mailed out to all tax payers. Once we make the final decision on what our protocol will be, whether it's a secure drop box, mail or appointments She will place that information into each tax bill so that the tax payers are informed.

Mr. Wilson, that sounds good. Next order of business is the transfer station. This part is 2 parts, one being the recycling confusion and frustration and two, being that we need to set up something to protect the employee at the transfer station. Next summer the current recycling trailer and system s not

going to be able to withstand the high volume of traffic. The trailer takes up a lot of space and Ryan has some ideas to share that he has been looking into for the future.

Mr. Hall: We have been looking at different containers, one big shipping container for cardboard and another for other recycling materials.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: Signage seems to be an issue. There was a newspaper sign, but in the bin was not newspaper. Maybe we need to make some laminated signs that we could have on the bins to help people better understand each bin?

Mr. Hall: We do have signs

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: I didn't see any signs when I was there.

Mr. Deyo: Said he thinks that everything is being updated daily.

Ms. Whitney: Stated, I went to the dump today, because I haven't really been there recently because I have Cassella Waste management at my home. A few of the bins had no signs and one had a sign that said Magazines, but inside were cereal type boxes and not magazines. The outside was really confusing but Ryan explained to me that once its full an then a new bin comes it just gets confusing because they are always changing where they are located. I like Teresa's idea about the laminated signs that could be moved. She continued to give examples of how there was Plastic #1 inside the trailer and then some outside which made it more confusing to her.

Mr. Hall explained they do have some metal signs, and he is not disagreeing that it is confusing and could be improved. Lots of the different signs add confusion. There is a problem and probably a better way to go about it.

Mr. Wilson stated that after Jennifer's visit to the transfer station today she put together an analysis and the board should review it and if anyone else has some ideas for improvements we could go over them.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: Like Jenn said in the past maybe a volunteer to help with recycling at the dump would help the process. Maybe the Keene Green Team or some others would be interested to volunteer some time.

Mr. Wilson stated cannot afford to hire another employee to help at the transfer station. It's just too much cost.

Mr. Deyo said that he was skeptical about someone wanting to volunteer, but he was also skeptical about the go fund me for the tree and that worked out excellent. So he thinks if we can find some people interested in volunteering we should go for it.

Ms. Whitney: stated that she does think Laura needs a little assistance, and Mr. Deyo agreed.

Mr. Wilson: Stated that this is a good Segway to our next item regarding the transfer station. How employees are treated and how everyone works together. There have been 3 incidents where 1 town resident has not been following the rules at the transfer station and the resident has been abusive and a bully to the transfer station attendant. This past weekend another bystander resident was at the transfer station when the aggressive resident was there and was being aggressive towards the dump attendant. They emailed me after concerned for the safety of the attendant and wondered if the police were called. I believe the town needs to do something to protect our employees. I have spoken with the town attorney Deb Whitson and she stated we should place a sign that says something like "Customers are responsible for sorting trash and recycling and must follow the guidance of the attendant. " Then we will have a sign and then we will create a resolution. If this person continues we will have to call the state police because we need to protect our employee. Deb is here to answer any questions that anyone may have.

Mr. Biesemeyer: Stated he didn't have any questions.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: Asked the question "What if there is no time to call the police?"

Mr. Biesemeyer replied that he didn't think it was life threatening, but we should continue to monitor the situation closely.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen suggested we give this person a warning? That it is their last chance. Mr. Wilson explained that he did talk to this person and stated that this was their last warning and the police would be called and would no longer be able to use the transfer station.

Mr. Deyo stated he thinks the sign is a good idea so that everyone can follow the rules as posted.

Ms. Whitson explained that maybe we should do a graduated penalty, for example you will lose access to the transfer station for 2 weeks on your first violation and then forever if it happens again. She suggested passing a resolution and she will work with Mr. Wilson to get that drafted up. It would be up to the town board on what they feel the penalty should do and it's the towns duty to make sure all employees feel safe and protected at work. She stated that she thinks it's been appropriate to have the state police called to press charges as needed.

Mr. Biesemeyer added that he thinks Laura should know that she can video tape if something happens again. Mr. Wilson added that in a meeting with Laura he let her know that if she feels unsafe that she can call the police as needed. Mr. Biesemeyer stated that he agrees but sometimes the police cannot get there quickly and a video may help. He also asked was this all over just the disposal of cardboard and Mr. Wilson replied yes.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen asked if we repaired the window at the transfer station yet and Mr. Hall replied yes, it was replaced with plexi- glass the same day the complaint came in.

Ms. Whitney reported on the Marcy Field Christmas tree lighting project. The Go-Fund-me Campaign raised \$6250.00 in funds. The 2 men from North Line Dan Hasensis, and Justin Hart volunteered their time and took the day off from work today 12/8/2020 to put up the lights. They started at 7:30 am and they were still out there at 5:30pm working in this bitter cold. The new LED commercial grade lights cost \$4199.00. Taylor Rental donated the cost of the lift, and the town had to pay \$400 for the transportation trucking of the lift to Marcy Field. That leaves about \$1200 remaining which is suggested to leave on a Christmas Tree budget line item for any repairs needed down the road in years to come. Suggested we also give a thank you gift to the two volunteers from north line. Mr. Biesemeyer agreed and Mr. Deyo suggested the board brainstorms in an email chain what should be given but it should be generous because of the hard work they put in.

Mr. Wilson announced the tree will be lit on 12/9/2020 and it will be recorded or put on facebook live for all the town to view. They do not want anyone to gather at the field for this due to the pandemic. But it will be able to be enjoyed by all online.

Mr. Wilson stated we received a request about certain plots at the cemetery. He spoke with Jerry Smith about this matter and it going to do the leg work with the requesters and it should be taken care of from there.

Resolution No. 202.20

Mr. Biesemeyer offered a resolution for year-end that we move to increase appropriation line #A90608.01.008.00 Medical Insurance Town share by \$37,341.73, funds to be transferred out of C..L.A.S.S (Fund Balance). Also to increase appropriation Line #SW83204.08.004 Source Power Pump Contractual by \$12,000.00 to be transferred out of C.L.A.S.S (fund balance). Mr. Wilson explained that towards the end of year there is a lot of transfers that will occur.

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

Resolution No. 203-20

Mr. Biesemeyer made a resolution to accept the November Supervisor report, this resolution was seconded by Mr. Deyo.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen questioned why there was still money in the salt shed line item on the report. Mr. Wilson explained that they just got reimbursement and its sometimes delayed. At the end of the year it will be closed out and return any funds to the C.L.A.S.S account, general fund.

Roll call vote:

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

Ms. Cheetham-Palen asked about a formal agreement between the highway department and the parks department. Mr. Wilson asked Ryan if he has met with Scott. Mr. Hall stated we say hi to each other. (laughter) Mr. Wilson suggested that a formal meeting get set up between highway and parks so that a formal agreement can be completed.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen asked Mr. Hall about the monitoring/ water testing systems and about the frequency. Is the town at two quarterly test? Mr. Hall responded that every water department in New York starts at two per quarter and if that goes well then they will move to yearly and so on. The question on how the water was tested was brought up and Mr. Hall stated that 1 liter is drawn off and 5 test were completed 4 times a year from both pump stations Keene and Keene Valley. The testing is very expensive, the town uses one lab and Mr. Hall stated he did not call around to other labs for testing cost.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen Asked if we have heard from FEMA about the funds for the water line repair that was done from the Halloween storm? Mr. Wilson replied that they had just finished up the \$3000-\$4000 request from FEMA for the Holt house damages/ repairs, but they did not have a project number yet for the water line repair from FEMA yet.

RESOLUTION 203-20

Ms. Cheetham-Palen offered a resolution to appoint Keene Youth Commission board Katelyn Bottcher, who is a non-resident, but has children in the Keene Central School District. The board discussed not making it a blanket rule that you have to have a child in Keene and be non-resident. The board should take the most qualified people for the position. Maybe look at making a rule that a certain percentage of people on the board need to be Town of Keene residents.

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

Ms. Whitney stated to go back to the Highway and Parks agreement. She wanted to know with Friday's water break, why the Highway Department backhoe was unavailable? Mr. Hall stated he called Mr. Smith and other highway department members on the phone and no one answered. He had to end up calling the vacuum truck from Lake Placid Water department to come down and assist him. Mr. Smith replied that the highway department was on O'Toole road cutting brush and there was no cell service.

Mr. Deyo asked about adding a blinking radar speed sign in Keene Valley by the country Club to slow traffic in the busy summer months. They agreed and would look more into this as it got closer.

Mr. Wilson asked the board that he needs another board member to come into the town hall to sign the vouchers. Mr. Deyo stated he would come in and do this.

Mr. Biesemeyer gave compliment to the new Town Clerk Cori-Anne Favro. Stated he was very impressed how quickly she is catching on and keeping the board up to date. Thank you. Mr. Deyo agreed.

Vouchers were not able to audited during this meeting since only one board member has signed. This will be moved to the next meeting after it is signed by Mr. Deyo

Resolution 204-20

To Adjourn offered by Ms. Cheetham-Palen, seconded by Mr. Biesemeyer.

Meeting was Adjourned at 7:54pm

Cori-Anne Favro, Town Clerk

December 9th, 2020

Joseph P. Wilson, Jr., Supervisor

Robert M. Biesemeyer, Councilman

Teresa Cheetham-Palen, Councilwoman

David R. Deyo, Councilman

Jennifer G. Whitney, Councilwoman