

Town of Keene
Joseph P. Wilson, Supervisor
Robert M. Biesemeyer, Deputy Supervisor

TOWN BOARD MEETING

January 12th, 2021

7:00 pm Via ZOOM (recording 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 G. Whitney.

Town Clerk: Cori-Anne Favro

Water Superintendent: Ryan Hall

Highway Superintendent: Scott Smith

Residents were present.

Meeting called to order: 7:01pm

Privilege of the Floor: NONE

Meeting Minutes will all be reviewed from December in our next meeting.

Mr. Wilson the Annual Audit will take place the 19th and the books will be available for preview at the town hall prior to that meeting. A legal notice has been presented.

Heather Coffin wanted to talk about the plowing on her driveway, but she was not on the call at this time.

Mr. Wilson presented a Corona Virus Update: Infection rate is staying high for Essex county and the workforce for Essex county has been hit hard. Concerns about our small work force we need to be careful. We may monitor and see if we need to close in the future, or reduce staffing and setting up alternate shifts.

Mr. Hall and Mr. Smith agreed to wait to change the current workflow set up.

Mr. Biesemeyer asked about the county level with vaccines, is there any plan to hold a clinic in town at the firehouse to help vaccinate our community?

Mr. Wilson said the county had a plan together and then it all changed. They are creating a new plan for mobile clinics and then the availability of vaccines is the next problem. Hospitals have been doing a good job, but the pace is on the amount of doses we will be getting in this area.

Mr. Wilson will keep everyone updated on what he hears back from the county.

Ms. Favro the tax collector stated that Tax collection is also going well and maintaining only one person in the office at a time, which seems to be working for now. We can keep the town hall open as long as everyone continues to follow the protocols.

Mr. Wilso noticed that Ms. Coffin had arrived at the meeting and gave her the privilege of the floor.

Ms. Coffin stated her understanding of her road on Interbrook Way was maintained by the town. She stated that they cannot find anyone to sand their road and there are 7 houses there and wants the town to continue to sand her road. She is afraid that it is a safety concern and since they were always taking care of it she would like to overturn the decision of the town no longer taking care of Interbrook Way.

Mr. Biesemeyer asked if she had contacted any private sanding companies? He also explained that the town can just not continue to maintain the road, since the road is not up to the standards.

Mr. Deyo: I agree with Bob we cannot go down this slippery slope of maintaining roads that are not town roads. It will open up others to request the same and we will be in a bad spot.

Mr. Biesemeyer: stated that there has to be a private sanding business that will be able to help you out.

Mr. Deyo is going bring a list of sanding businesses to Ms. Coffin tomorrow.

Mr. Wilson: So Mr. Deyo and Mr. Biesemeyer is going to work with you to help you find a contractor for sanding and it will stay as a road not maintained by the town. Thank you

Mr. Wilson: Next order of business is the list of old items that needs to be disposed of from the town hall. Mr. Hall did some cleaning out at the town offices on Monday and has a list of 6 items that need to be removed from the inventory. See attached list.

50-21 RESOLUTION

Mr Deyo offered the resolution to dispose and remove the items from inventory.

Seconded by Mr. Biesemeyer

Roll Call Vote:

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

51-21 RESOLUTION

Ms. Cheetham-Palen offered the Resolution to discuss:

Whereas, the recent attack on the United States Capitol inspired by the legally unfounded accusations of voter fraud and incendiary language used to incite violence by the President of the United States and the willingness of Representative Elise Stefanik and other Congressional Representatives to support these false accusations and,

Whereas in allegations of voter fraud brought before the Pennsylvania Supreme Court no evidence of malfeasance or voter fraud was found and,

Whereas these same allegations were rejected by the United States Supreme Court and,

Whereas despite the lack of legal merit, Congressional representatives chose to vote against the certification of electors for Pennsylvania despite the violence perpetrated at the US Capitol and,

Whereas as a duly elected official and servant of the people Elise Stefanik thwarted her Oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States by supporting unfounded claims of voter fraud, she has threatened the foundation of our democracy by disregarding the electoral process,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Keene Town Council supports the duly certified results of the 2016 election in honor of our own sacred oaths to the US Constitution condemns this dangerous and reckless behavior by Congressional Representatives that serves to weaken our democratic institutions.

Mr. Biesemeyer seconded the motion and opened it for discussion.

Mr. Deyo: stated that in an email he did not fully agree with the language , I don't not like to vote on things like this quickly without having more time to review.

Mr. Biesemeyer Stated what if we did something more like this. ***“We the Keene Town Board in this resolution express our outrage at the 1/6/21 attempted overthrow of our Democratic electoral process. This is not a Republican or Democratic issue, this is just asking for condemnation and removal from public office and criminal prosecution of all those found guilty of participating and condoning this act.”*** He continued with “What happened in our capitol on January 6th anyone in government needs to show the voters where we stand. I don't want to pour more salt in the wound and make it one party verse the other. “
“I think it's critical that anyone in public office needs to not be a coward and say what they feel. Don't hide behind and ride the fence. I would like to see us as a town board. I feel strong. I don't think we should sweep it under the rug.”

Ms. Cheetham Palen stated that the language she used was from formal resolution verbiage. She continued, “Because Elise Stefanik is not supporting the constitution, the reason I mentioned Pennsylvania is because that is the state she objected to. Not to rub salt in wounds but to be honest. I feel strongly, and I don't want to wait another month. “

Ms. Whitney: I don't know what to say, I tend to agree with Dave more that we were just given this and need more time. I don't want to make it look like political sides.

Mr. Wilson asked if anyone in attendance had an opinion they wanted to share?

Resident named Jenn stated: “You were elected by the residents, and we appreciate your voices. It's not a time to hide and make your voice heard. It's unprecedented in our country. I support it and I support it being bold against our representative. I don't think we need to pull a name off of it.”

Mr. Wilson: stated “ I am torn, I do feel strongly that we should stay focused on town business. It's fundamental that we do uphold our oath of office. “

Mr. Deyo:“I think we should just table to verbiage and I think we should maybe have a special meeting. “

Mr. Wilson stated if we table this then we will make the public aware. Should we do it Friday Morning? Or Thursday Evening?

It was agreed upon that Thursday evening worked best for the special meeting

Not voted on, discussion is to be held until 1/14/21 at 7pm Special meeting in which will be open to the general public.

RESOLUTION 52-21

Be it resolved that the following budget amendments be approved.

General Fund

To decrease Appropriation Line #A97107.1.57 Serial Bond Highway Garage interest to \$3,593.75. (2020 budget amount was \$4312.50 was not updated in the 2021 budget.)

Motion to move resolution by Ms. Cheetham-Palen, Seconded by Ms. Whitney.

Roll Call Vote:

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

RESOLUTION 53-21

Ms. Cheetham-Palen brought to motion that the bills be accepted.

Seconded by Mr. Deyo.

Roll Call Vote:

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

Jennifer and Bob abstain from the vote.

Jennifer and Bob will be going to audit and sign the bills tomorrow.

Ms. Whitney: Does anyone have a specific date when the tree will be shut off.

It was decided that the lights on the Marcy Field tree would be turned off on Tuesday January, 19th. This will be posted to Next door Keene and Facebook.

RESOLUTION 54-21

Motion to adjourn the meeting presented by Mr. Biesmeyer. Seconded by Ms. Cheetham-Palen.

Adjournment at 7:42pm

Cori-Anne Favro, Town Clerk