

**Town of Keene**  
**Joseph P. Wilson, Supervisor**  
**Robert M. Bisemeyer, Deputy Supervisor**  
Town Board Meeting  
Tuesday March 9th, 2021  
7:00pm (Remotely via Zoom)

Board Present Mr. Joseph P. Wilson Jr, Supervisor, Mr. Robert M. Bisemeyer, Ms. Teresa Cheetham-Palen, Mr. David R Deyo, Ms. Jennifer Whitney. Highway Superintendent Scott Smith, Water Superintendent Ryan Hall, and Town Clerk Cori-Anne Favro.

Mr. Wilson called the meeting to order at 7:01pm.

There were a couple of short additions to the meeting that were not on the agenda Mr. Wilson informed the meeting.

Mr. Wilson began the meeting with information regarding the High Peaks Advisory Group. Stating they released their report this week. That the group is focusing on more enforcement in Keene, more bathrooms in Keene, and more support for the Essex county shuttle. Keene had a heavy representation in the group. We are now working with DEC to do some of this management. So we can work towards more management steps. I will keep everyone posted.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen is happy the report is out so now we can openly discuss the things that were in it. I think it will help with our planning efforts and she is happy to answer any questions.

Ms. Whitney asked about more bathrooms, is this something that the town will need to pay for?

Mr. Wilson said Ms. Cheetham-Palen was spearheading the human waste issues, DEC is taking on more of that. Even last year they took over the Town of Keene some. We are working on mapping out where they (Port a Johns) were and where they are thinking of new ones and what cost DEC is going to be picking up.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen added a part of the plan as well as more coordination. There are multiple entities controlling the port a Johns. Also adding year round port a Johns plan. When the summer port a Johns are removed in the winter it leaves people with no place to go to the bathroom.

**Resolution 79-21**

Motion to accept the meeting minutes offered by Ms. Cheetham seconded by Ms. Whitney.

1. Accepting of meeting minutes from:

2/9/21 Regular Meeting - Ms. Cheetham-Palen offered the corrections No H in Teresa's name and some places there is a colon between the speaker and some places there is nothing and it just makes it clearer with the colon.

2/23/21 Bi-monthly Meeting

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: YES

Mr. Deyo: YES

Ms. Whitney: YES

Next item of old business:

Mr. Wilson stated that a revised sidewalk policy was sent out. This new plan was put together with Ms. Whitney, Mr. Hall and himself. Mr. Wilson also talked with Mr. Smith and he is working on a plan for the highway department. Snow bank removal is something that is in the scope of snow removal; the highway will now remove the snow banks at the end of roadways that block visibility.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen posed 2 questions, the first being about the schools sidewalks being completed first. What sidewalks are considered the school sidewalks? Would that be considered Market Street? It was answered yes. Mr Hall was asked to speak and share his plan with the priorities.

Mr. Hall stated that next year after we get our equipment. We will put a piece of equipment in Keene and Keene Valley. So that we can get the school done in Keene Valley first and government buildings in Keene.

Mr. Biesemeyer asked where we are getting the funds to purchase this new equipment?

Mr. Wilson asked to stay on track with the policy before we go into this.

Mr. Hall stated that this was discussed in the last meeting, and it will use up his full equipment budget, he will try to stay under his cap.

Mr. Biesemeyer: Concern is having too much equipment and nowhere to store it. It feels like 2 years ago we bought a bunch of equipment. How much more equipment we thought we needed?

Mr. Hall: Responded with: two years ago I offloaded a bunch of equipment. This year I plan to purchase a bobcat and a replacement or repair of the Ventrack. Which was approved last meeting. The Ventrack is year 4 and we would be replacing it a year early. I want to get another quote before moving forward.

Mr. Deyo: Yes, we approved this last meeting and the equipment would not be ordered for a couple of months right?

Mr. Biesemeyer asked what happened with what Ms. Whitney asked in the last meeting about this using up your whole budget? This is only March and that would leave you nothing left for the rest of the year.

Mr. Wilson stated that he would answer this question. He stated that the way we have equipment set up for sidewalks and mowing and all general fund work divided into different accounts. A little in cemeteries, parks, public works. Those equipment lines are all set and then Ryans asset management plan takes into account that we are adding in 2 machines.

Mr. Bieseyemner stated: that does not answer my question. What is he going to do when the budget is depleted for equipment and we are only 1/4 a way through the year.

Mr. Hall stated well we haven't ordered anything yet Bob, Mr. Wilson stepped in and stated: We are not depleting the budget we are spending up to the budget.

Mr. Biesemyer stated that per the last meeting minutes, when Ms. Whitney was concerned about that, (using all of the budget.) She had asked Mr. Hall, doesn't that use all of your budget and he said yes it does.

Mr. Hall responded that: right now there are a few things that he is now pulling back on, he is looking at possibly going used on the skid steer instead of new and doing a rebuild on the Ventrak instead of buying a new one. He is working to get a quote on the re-build.

Mr. Hall explained that he hasn't done anything yet, has not spent any money on equipment yet.

Mr. Wilson explained more that “ We budget in all those different accounts a total of \$34,700 a year to spend on equipment and then that's what we spend each year, so we are committed to it but we are not out of the money. That is what we budgeted and that's what the asset management has us spending. So we have not depleted, we are spending up to our budgeted amount. So we aren't going out of budget and we aren't out of money.

Mr. Deyo clarified that what Ryan said is that he has not purchased anything yet and is still exploring options. Right we haven't spent anything yet?

Mr. Hall stated yes, we have not spent anything yet, except for the rental, but that comes out of the contractual budget.

Ms. Whitney asked Mr. Hall about the rental refund.

Mr. Hall said yes on the Skid steer this month we do not have to pay. So we only had to pay for 1 month.

Mr. Deyo stated he thinks Ryan, Scott and Joe Pete have a handle on this.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen had one last item about the use of salt. I have a thought to look into more salt alternatives and if there is grant money for that.

Mr. Biesemeyer questioned the sidewalk violation policy in the sidewalk policy about the leaves, sand and rocks debris. He thinks that it may be unavoidable.

Mr. Wilson replied that it's more of the intentional blocking of the sidewalks and not the normal debris.

Mr. Biesemeyer stated that: I don't want to make a harsh policy and it will not be voted on today. We need to review the wording of this further.

Next item presented by Mr. Wilson was not on the agenda: Farmers Market update.

Mr. Wilson announced that the Farmer's Market alliance is eager to hear from us. Mr. Wilson emailed the board the planned map. They are keeping the same safety plan. They will be paying the \$1650 for use of Marcy field for the year. They want us to supply 2 toilets. Which will cost us \$1950.

Mr. Biesemeyer wanted to Clarify that this is not a new plan, this is going back to the old agreement. Now we may want to look into this because it is costing the town more money than we are making on this. Farmers market had locked the toilets after the market in the past. They were opened with bolt cutters 3 times in one summer. If we do supply the port a John then they are left open for 7 days a week and the town supplies the port a Johns?

Mr. Wilson: That's where I was trying to go. What we just need to know is their safety plan okay, is the mapping okay, the fee and if they are supplying the Port a Johns.

Ms. Whitney: Are we going to have the port a Johns regardless if the Farmers market wants them?

Mr. Wilson last year we did not put port a Johns out, due to covid because of the cleaning protocols, and reduced revenue. We had 1 at the Marcy field parking, DEC put one at the garden and Farmers market put one at the Market.

In years prior we had port a Johns at multiple locations.

Mr. Biesemeyer: I think we should focus on the Port a Johns at the Farmers market and not get into the other locations at this point.

Mr. Deyo: Should we just have them pay for the port a Johns and we don't charge them then we will not be upside down the \$300.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: If there is the expectation that there is going to be port a Johns for the summer and not locked.

Motion on the floor: Safety plan is good, Numbers of vendors are good

**RESOLUTION 80-21 :**

Mr. Biesemeyer offered the motion that we would charge the \$1650, but we will provide the toilets.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen seconded the motion

Ms. Whitney would like to discuss.

Ms. Whitney what about 1 port a John

Mr. Biesemeyer I think we need to make sure we furnish enough to make sure its sanitary and hygienic event.

Mr. Tom Both Since 1998 we have been putting out port a Johns around town. There was a big wrap that the Town of Keene had no public toilets. I think there is a real need.

Ms. Cheetham-palen: If we are the ones supplying the port a Johns, normally we have events in the summer to help make up the cost.

Mr. Deyo: I think we decide and move on, we should put 2 of them there and we will get back to making up this money. I think we should stop debating this and pay for the port a Johns and move on.

Mr. Wilson: I think next year we should look at the rates and the services we are providing to the Farmers market.

Mr Biesemeyer: I think before we look at next year I think we should meet with farmers market and set up a new rate structure. They had less vendors and they stated last year they lost money. We should meet with them and communicate to make the best decision. Once covid is over

So we are voting on Safety plan good, Numbers are good

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: YES

Mr. Deyo: YES

Ms. Whitney: YES

Privilege of the floor was missed at the beginning of the meeting so it was offered now:

Donna: Privilege of the Floor, Is the town being reassessed this year and if so when will the impact statements be going out?

Mr. Wilson: we started the data collection this year, so the statements won't go out until 2022.

Next item of new business, presented by Mr. Wilson:

After the repairs we did to the water main in water district one, Kelly Tucker of Ausable River Association helped the town apply for a grant through Lake Champlain Basin.

We were awarded the grant to construct 2 new weirs, we were granted \$125,000.00 to get this grant the town has to provide a \$5000 match. We can take this out the environmental budget line.

#### **RESOLUTION 81-21**

Ms. Cheetham-Palen offered the resolution to support the \$5,000 match to receive the \$125,000 grant for the construction of 2 weirs in the Ausable River. Mr Deyo seconded the motion.

Mr. Deyo also wanted to clarify that we will not spend a lot more money and eat it up on duplicate engineering since we just did the same project just upstream right?

Mr. Wilson stated yes, this will not need to be re-engineered, we will have blanket permits, and it should be a streamlined process.

Mr. Biesemeyer: We have to be careful that the money goes to the work, and not towards getting the engineering. I hope the money can go towards the work that we need done in the river.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: YES

Mr. Deyo: YES

Ms. Whitney: YES

Next item of business :Public Employer Public Health Emergency Plan (draft was sent to the board to review) - Required by state Law, this will be reviewed and discussed at this meeting and then accepted next meeting. Does anyone have any questions?

Ms. Whitney:Page 10, number 3 "Equipping staff with laptops"Does this mean we would need to buy each person a laptop?

Mr. Wilson so that's a good question. If it's work that is confidential that can't be used on a personal computer. This is not a one size fits all and will depend on the nature of the emergency. This doesn't commit us to that but we would need to have this .

This will be up for approval at our next meeting.

**RESOLUTION 82-21:**

Offered by Mr. Biesemeyer to re-appoint Tony Goodwin as the chair of the board of assessment review. This was seconded by Ms. Cheetham-Palen.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: YES

Mr. Deyo: YES

Ms. Whitney: YES

Next item of business:

Mr. Wilson: Up at the transfer station we are still looking for a solution for the cardboard to get it out of the trailer. The best plan we have been able to come up with is to buy a 40 yard roll off container with doors off the back and borrow one from the county, so we will swap out the containers. It won't cost more on handling cost, but we will need to buy a container.

Mr. Hall the one person from waste equipment, hasn't gotten back to me. We would need a 40 yard container and have to weld doors on it. Cost of that is \$7000.00, that we would own. I was looking at a few other routes. Regardless of how we do it it's looking around \$7000.00.

After the year we had last year with the crowding and complaints and cardboard. So far this is the best solution we can come up with. So that's our question to the board.

Ms. Whitney: What is going on with the current cardboard situation?

Mr. Deyo: It's a headache, since we left zero sort. This (transfer station) is the second biggest problem in the Town of Keene.

Mr. Biesemeyer: We are running the transfer station with duct tape and bailing wire. Every year we do something ,we need to look at the big picture. We need to look at the landfill big picture and year to year problems. Every year we have some of these ideas, this year we have a huge problem with cardboard. Another \$7,000, another container, again its not an easy decision.

Ms. Teresa Cheetham-Palen: Last Summer the big concern was the transfer station budget, the dump was not paying for itself and concerns about the budget. Where are we now changing back to the old way and away from casella. Was the county going to come in?

Mr. Hall: The county thing will be years out, the zero sort was costing a lot. Its being post poned due to covid. Maybe 2 years before the county. Getting rid of zero sort and go back to the old school way. We were paying a lot in trucking with zero sort. It was about \$20,000.00 in trucking.

Mr. Wilson: I need to get an operating statement from Susan, and since Ryan has not heard back from the salesman. We can get more information.

Mr. Biesemeyer stated that we are in agreement that there is a problem with the cardboard.

Mr. Wilson I will work and get real numbers.

Mr. Deyo I think we are patching this together and I think Covid is being used for people to not give a response. If \$7000.00 is an option for the cardboard thing. If we get more information for the next meeting.

Mr. Willson: Do you think if we wait 2 more weeks that will put us behind the 8 ball?

Mr. Hall: Yes, I think we are already behind. So what's 2 more weeks.

Next Item:

Mr. Willson Can you give update on Water systems

Mr. Hall: We will be doing tank repair and getting a tank inspection in Keene and there will be limited water use for a few days hopefully this can be done before spring.. We will be Water #1 new pump tomorrow.

Mr. Wilson: The last item we have is to make a resolution.

#### **RESOLUTION 83-21**

Mr. Biesemeyer made the motion to raise the credit card limit to \$10K for larger town purchases. This was seconded by Mr. Deyo

Susan will need the copy resolution to make the change on the account.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: YES

Mr. Deyo: YES

Ms. Whitney: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: The Keene Clean Energy Team: We got a \$50K grant and did LED and Solar on the Highway garage. The team is getting back together and we are still eligible for some of these grants. Some of the things we have already done give us points towards more grants. What new things we will want to pursue. They will be coming to a meeting next april with an update. Just a heads up.

My second item is what happens at this point that Cori-Anne now has decided to run for Supervisor? Should we be advertising for the Town Clerk position.

Mr. Biesemeyer: What we have to do now is just let the public know that this is an election year, and that the Town Clerk is one of the positions. That's all we can do, we don't have a vacancy.

Mr. Deyo: I don't think we need to do anything, we aren't obligated to and its public knowledge.

Mr. Biesemeyer: The only thing that the public might not know is that Cori-Anne cannot run for 2 positions. So no one is running for town clerk.

Ms. Whitney: I think we can do something on Nextdoor Keene just letting everyone know all the positions available.

Ms. Favro: it's shared on Essex county web, and the Town of Keene has openings for Supervisor, 2 board seats, Town Clerk and Highway Superintendent.

Mr. Biesemeyer: What do we do if no one runs for Town clerk?

Mr. Wilson: We will have to do what we did last year and put it out there and appoint someone.

#### **RESOLUTION 84-21**

**Ms. Cheetham-Palen made a motion to audit the bills and Mr. Biesemeyer seconded.**

Teresa: Question about the Salt bill through the county, I thought the salt was purchased through Scott and then if parks needed salt then they would get it from Scott.

Mr. Smith: I never keep plain salt there, so the parks use just the plain salt and they just use that. Its stored at the h

Scott- I don't keep plain salt there, they keep a load just for the sidewalks. It's in the salt barn. They have their own corner.

Kinsley Water Systems: sent 2 bills for water district one, one was out of the Highway.

Mr. Biesemeyer stated Susan said there was a billing error and she is going to correct it.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen  
2 propane tanks delivered to the assessors office 4 days apart and both billed to that office. Is there 2 tanks? Was one supposed to be billed somewhere else?

Mr. Wilson: No there are 2 tanks there.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: YES

Mr. Deyo: Abstain



Ms. Whitney: Abstain

**RESOLUTION 85-21**

Mr. Biesemeyer made the motion to adjourn the meeting as all business was completed. This was seconded by Mr. Deyo.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: YES

Mr. Deyo: YES

Ms. Whitney: YES

Meeting was adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Cori-Anne Favro, Town Clerk

3/17/21