

Town of Keene

Joseph P. Wilson Jr, Supervisor
Robert M. Biesemeyer, Deputy Supervisor
Bi Monthly TOWN BOARD MEETING
February 23rd, 2021
Via Zoom 5:30 pm

Board members present: Joseph P Wilson Jr., Supervisor,
Teresa Cheetham-Palen, David R. Deyo, Jennifer G Whitney.
Highway Superintendent Scott Smith
Water Superintendent Ryan Hall
Town Clerk Cori-Anne Favro
Town Residents also present.

Meeting Called to order at 5:32pm
Privilege of the floor: No Residents Spoke

OLD BUSINESS:

Mr. Wilson presented the Corona Virus Update: "As of today Essex county is almost to 10% of the county population vaccinated. We are making progress. The county is supposed to be getting an increased supply of vaccinations and will go from 100 doses to about 300 doses per shipment. People will still need to travel to state sites Like Potsdam and Plattsburgh as we don't have local sites open yet. We need to continue to wear masks, distancing ourselves and stay vigilant. The Town will continue to operate as we have with the guidelines in place. Any questions from the board members? None.

Next item of business presented by Mr. Wilson. The Building permit Fees update & 2020 Audit of Code Enforcement Mr. Wilson stated to the board "Last week you got the packet from the code officer with the new fees that was created with the planning board and the code officer and we also need to approve the audit of the books of the code officer for 2020."

RESOLUTION No. 71-21

Mr. Deyo offered a resolution and moved to its adoption. Be it resolved that the board approves the 2020 account audit of the Code officer after thorough review. This resolution was seconded by Ms. Whitney.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: YES

Mr. Deyo: YES

Ms. Whitney: YES

RESOLUTION No. 72-21

Ms. Cheetham-Palen offered a resolution and moved to its adoption the new 2021 building permit application fee schedule that was previously approved by the planning board. This was seconded by Mr. Deyo

Mr. Deyo began the discussion stating that “ We talked with Derrick at some length today and we haven't changed anything in 3 decades and I think now we will be right in line with the neighboring towns, with the exception of Lake Placid which is much higher.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen asked The figures we are seeing on this new fee schedule are all new fees? How much were they raised?

Mr. Willson responded with “ It was raised about 30-40%, we were way lower than what we should have been.”

Mr. Deyo: I don't think it is out of line at all to do this increase.We looked at the money that Derrick is bringing in and if we didn't have stewarts last year we would have only brought in around \$3000 dollars. It does not even pay for his salary for 2 months.

Mr. Willson This is one of those things that we are only hurting ourselves with not being in line with what other towns are charging. It makes sense for us to recoup this revenue so that we can also pay the code officer to be here more so that he can do what he needs to do.

Ms. Cheetham- Palen does this go into effect immediately?

Mr. Wilson: Yes

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: YES

Mr. Deyo: YES

Ms. Whitney: YES

The updated building fees will be on the new town website for the residents to view.

Next item of business is to finalize the December Supervisors report. The town clerk Ms. favro then stated that we did not get the final report yet.

Mr. Wilson asked Ms. Susan Whitney if the final report for December was completed yet. Per Ms. Susan Whitney she is not done with the December report yet. This will need to be tabled until it's ready. So we do have the revision of the September, October and November Monthly reports.

Resolution No. 73-21

Ms. Cheetham-Palen offered the resolution and moved to its adoption the acceptance of the revised Bank reports from September, October, and November. Seconded by Ms. Whitney.

Ms. Favro asked for future reference. What is the time frame for seeing the finalized Supervisors reports? Is it normal to not get a finalized report 2-3 months after the month closes?

Ms. Susan Whintey responded with "Sometimes, December is always late because there is just so much that happens in January that you have to wait to put into December to get ready to put in the annual update document."

Mr. Wilson added that we had the Draft 2 meetings ago but there are some outstanding checking accounts things to justify. So we had the initial report but there were errors or outstanding checks to track down in one of them. So we had the initial draft, just waiting on the final draft."

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: YES

Mr. Deyo: YES

Ms. Whitney: YES

Next item of business is the Sidewalk snow removal policy

Mr. Wilson: Ryan and I made a Draft and we gave it to the board to look at and we wanted input from the community for their input. I will be putting this out on Nextdoor Keene for public input. Do any board members have some questions on it?

Mr. Deyo I think it's a good idea to put it out there to the public and have transparency. Get some public input and I think Ryan together with Scott will take this information and put together a plan. I think today we can't make any decisions but we need to wait for the residents to speak.

Ms. Zemple(resident) "Thank you for the removal job you did last week. The plowing has been very unpredictable. I'm looking forward to seeing the policy and I hope that it is part of the policy."

Mr. Wilson thanked Ms. Zemple for coming to the meeting and the feedback.

Mr. Wilson moved on to the next section of the sidewalk plan which is equipment. And stated "Ryan sent out asset management plan information and narrative last week to the board. We have been having equipment failure after failure. So Ryan would you like to give a presentation of your plan you put together? "

Mr. Hall: Right now what I am proposing, because our primary tractor is down with an expensive repair. I am looking at a used tractor that is the same of what we had or very similar. We do

already have all the attachments for it. It is a \$13,000 tractor, and the tractor to be repaired will cost \$10K to repair and the used one has less hours, so we would be looking at a \$3,000 difference.

The Second piece would be to add an S-70 Bobcat which is a small skid steer, kind of like the one we are renting. It's about \$25, 000 for the Bobcat and we also need a zero turn this year for the cemetery so that's \$7,000 for that. For a total expenditure this year of \$45,000. It's not really how I had it budgeted this year but I have the funds. I hope we can start working on getting it ordered so we don't continue to run into the issues that we are having.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: I spoke with Mr. Hall a few days ago and although this is quite the deviation from his original spending plan it's still within his budget and within the timeline. So I am okay with this spending plan.

Ms. Whitney asked "Will that leave you money left in your budget in-case there is something that goes wrong?"

Mr. Hall Replied with no, that uses up everything, I will have a little left in the cemetery budget but that's it.

Mr. Deyo Stated that he also spoke with Ryan and there are other places he would like to spend this money but after the last couple of weeks and we have seen that it needs to be the priority. I have no reason to object. He has the money there. He went above and beyond using his own personal equipment last week so I think we should move forward.

Mr. Willson said " like Theresa said this is a revision on the asset management plan that was presented in the past. We are still staying within the budget and we don't need to look for more money to do this.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen also asked if the equipment that you are getting will also be able to be used for mowing? Mr. Hall said yes the Ventrack can be used with the mower attachment.

Ms. Whitney asked Will you get any money back from the rental that broke down?

Mr. Hall stated that he needs to call them and see if they will do something for us. He will call this week.

Ms. Favro asked " The money that was spent for the rental and transportation, is that included in these numbers of cost for the equipment or was that something separate that was allocated for that? "

Mr. Hall Replied that it was money that was in the budget but was not allocated for that use, and like I said the budget is going to be tight. I can pull a little from here and there but it's going to be tight.

Mr. Wilson added that the rental would have come out of contractual accounts not out of the equipment budget. The equipment is like a fixed budget we do for capital purchases. The rental is a rental. So that would have come out of the contractual . We have contractual multiple accounts in other areas so we will need to spread it out so we will have to take money away from another account.

Resolution No. 74-21

Ms. Cheetham-Palen offered a resolution and moved to its adoption the spending for Mr. Hall's asset replacement plan revision. This was seconded by Mr. Deyo.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: YES

Mr. Deyo: YES

Ms. Whitney: YES

Next item of business is the 3 budgetment amendments, Transfer Station amendment for the 2020 budget and Town Clerk and Town Court Clerk amendment for 2021.

RESOLUTION No. 75-21

Ms Whitney offered a resolution and moved its adoption. Be it resolved that the budget 2020 amendments be approved for the General Fund to increase appropriation lin #A8160.1.1 Transfer Station contractual by \$24,738.07 using fund balance and the second to increase 2021 appropriation line #A014101.01.00 Town Clerk Personal Service by \$8,000.00 based on funds left over from Susan Whitney's retirement in July and increase in revenue in Fines & Fees over 2020. To add an Appropriation Line #A111041.01.001.01 for the hiring of the Town Court Clerk by \$14,000.00 using Fines & Fees over from 2020. This resolution was seconded by Mr. Deyo (see attachments)

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: YES

Mr. Deyo: YES

Ms. Whitney: YES

Next item of business is the presentation of the Ventek parking box for the garden by the Town Clerk Ms. Favro. Automated parking system that will help with the cash flow that we have at the garden. It will help bring us into the 21st century, and would also allow people to use a credit or debit card if they didn't have cash. The machine also takes cash . It comes with software as well that reports daily to the Town hall where we can monitor the amount of money being taken in. This machine is set up to run on solar power and uses cell phone services to operate. It has a little heater in it and made for use in harsh environments. It's made to go on a concrete pad. (Town board was sent the estimate and information via email prior to the meeting)

Mr. Deyo stated: "I think it's a good idea, I know it's pricey to get started but I think it's the way forward and we could possibly use on Marcy field. I'm just a little hesitant to spend that amount

of money. But I think we would be able to recoup the funds quickly. Some weekends we are bringing in \$2000 a weekend so it wouldn't take that long to pay for it."

The question was also raised about warranty, and was answered that it comes with a 1 year warranty and additional years can be purchased.

Ms. Whitney asked if there was a discount if we got more than 1 machine. Ms. Favro responded that she could look into that.

Ms. Favro also brought up the other idea of having a machine like this at the transfer station allowing residents to simply purchase their dump tickets right on site at the dump using credit card or cash.

Mr. Deyo stated that he didn't even think that was an option. I don't see a real downside.

Ms. Cheetham-Palen stated : I would like to do more number crunching about this before we go ahead. Also the garden is private land so we will need permission. I just need a little more information on the cost benefit ratio, because we do use the parking money in other areas. But I understand from an accounting standpoint it would be best.

Ms. Whitney asked if we do want to move forward with this in a few weeks where would we take the funds from?

Mr. Wilson said he would just overspend in hiker parking and then fill it back in as the fees come in from parking to balance it.

Mr. Wilson asked, ``Does the machine charge a transaction fee? And what's the yearly operating fee? It's just unclear and I know from doing the concrete pad it's going to be a couple of thousand bucks. And we will need to get permission from the land owner and this might not be as quick as we would hope. If we wanted to do something at the dump it may be easier, because we don't need to get all the permission.

Ms. Favro replied that they stated they only needed 1 bar of cell phone service to answer Theresa's question on that. The other is the main reason we are going to this is so that we have better accountability on the cash flow, because right now we have no idea how much is coming in and how much should be there. It also might bring in a little more because of the credit card option since a lot of people don't carry cash.

Mr. Cheetham-Palen and Mr. Deyo agrees that it's in the right direction; we just need to gather more data and really look at the cost.

Mr. Whitney asked if we looked into other brands as well.

Ms. Favro said yes that she had a hard time finding other solar and rugged options but will continue to look into more options and also reach out to the company and get the answers to the other questions asked.

KYC Summer Program approval

Mr. Wilson presented the next item of business. Youth commission would like to see about starting to plan for the summer program for 2021, I think we should do what we did last year. Which is to begin to work on getting our permits and plans in place and go

from the guidance from there. We did that last year and just have everything together so if we are given the guidance to open we will be ready.

RESOLUTION 76-21

Ms. Cheetham-Palen offered the resolution for the KYC Summer program to begin the planning process for the summer program for 2021 and continue once more guidance is available. This was seconded by Mr. Deyo

Ms. Cheetham-Palen stated that she thinks this summer will work out better since we have had the vaccine cycle and since school has been open all year with great success. Ms. Whitney: added that she thinks part of the concern was bussing and 50% of Capacity and needing to find more drivers etc.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: YES

Mr. Deyo: YES

Ms. Whitney: YES

Next item of business: Farmers Market Request for Marcy Field summer of 2021

Mr. Wilson presented the request to run the market at Marcy field again this summer, they will follow the same plan as last year but they would like to open it up to the full list of Vendors again.

Resolution offered by Ms. Cheetham-Palen to discuss the Farmers Market on Marcy Field for 2021 Teresa. This was seconded by Ms. Whitney.

Mr. Wilson stated they did not have any volunteers lined up yet, Mr. Wilson spoke with Bob Andrews and he had not heard from them yet. It was key to keep the layout very wide again and I think we need an updated operating plan for 2021.

Lisa (resident) - We got an email from Dan today stating 35-40 Vendors. It will be open mostly to just food vendors.

Questions issued by the board: If we add in the crafters and other non food Vendors won't that include higher numbers? Will the market start out larger than it did last year?

Mr. Deyo stated “ I think we need the guidance and information written out before we give them the go ahead. I think we need everything in writing. We need the Volunteers list, the mapping ect.”

Ms. Cheetham-Palen I agree if it's going to be like last year I am okay with that.

Ms. Whitney: Last year we didn't charge them, but I don't see why we couldn't charge them for this year.

Mr. Willson: we didn't charge them last year because we didn't have a town Employee.

Mr. Deyo I agree we should charge again.They need to submit a 2021 Safety plan, we need the list of secured volunteers, We will resume charging and we need a list of number of starting vendors.

Ms. Whitney: I think we need their plan and then we can know where to go from there.

Mr. Willson: We don't really care what kind of vendors we just want to make sure the spacing and safety is set up correctly.

Lisa: I know the plan would be to have volunteers and Nancy Both would be in charge and the volunteers are given vouchers. I know the plan as a vendor is the same as last year and we are waiting on NYS to send out new farmers market guidance.

Mr. Wilson: I will communicate this back with the board of the Market.

RESOLUTION 77-21

Resolution offered by Ms Whitney to approve the Audit the bills, this was seconded by Mr. Deyo.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: YES

Mr. Deyo: YES

Ms. Whitney: YES

Resolution 78-21 offered by Mr. Deyo to adjourn the meeting as all business was conducted. This was seconded by Ms. Whitney. Meeting was adjourned at 6:27pm.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Wilson: YES

Ms. Cheetham-Palen: YES

Mr. Deyo: YES

Ms. Whitney: YES

Adjournment 6:27pm

**Cori-Anne Favro, Town Clerk
3/3/2021**