

**2021 REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING  
MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING HELD JUNE 14, 2021  
IN PERSON MEETING**

Present:

Paul H. Smith	Supervisor
Patrick Britton	Councilman
Susan Storms	Councilman
Shari Gerber	Councilman
Frank Skvorak	Councilman
Lori Borland	Town Clerk
Michael O'Shaughnessy	Highway Superintendent
Jim Yuhas	Bookkeeper
Terry McKeever	Code Enforcement Officer
Robert Ball	Assessor
James Burrows, Esq.	Town Attorney
Mickey Dietrich	RACOG Circuit Rider
Rebecca Shultz	Deputy Clerk

Supervisor Smith called the Public Hearing to order at 6:45 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited. The purpose of the public hearing was read, (regarding the opting in or out of the retail sale of cannabis within the Township). No one was present to speak, so the Public Hearing was closed at 6:46 p.m. upon motion of Councilman Skvorak, seconded by Councilman Britton.

Supervisor Smith called the Regular Meeting to order at 6:46 p.m.

Motion was made by Councilman Storms, seconded by Councilman Britton to approve the minutes from the meeting held on May 10, 2021. Unanimously passed, carried.

Privilege of the Floor: Mickey Dietrich, Circuit Rider for RACOG was present and noted that the next RACOG meeting will be a date to be determined in September. Regarding the Black River Trail expansion, there was a public comment section that he took part in. "Friends of the Black River" Group had two meetings and there was discussion about a "floating history museum" along the river. There is continuation of the navigation hazards. Mr. Dietrich is still working on the Town website.

Community Development Director Report: Sarah Bullock reported that she has followed up with NY Main Street staff to discuss the feasibility study of the railroad depot. RFP has been developed and submitted to staff for review/sign off. Regarding the Northern Border Regional Commission, an application was prepared and submitted on May 14 to develop the recreational park at Herrings. Notification of award will happen later this summer if funded.

Town Highway Superintendent Report: Michael O'Shaughnessy noted that the highway crew has assisted Village of Deferiet, Village of Carthage, Town of Rutland and Town of Champion with trucks and equipment. Mowing of town lots and cemeteries is complete along with all county and town roads. Miscellaneous routine items were performed, and the men have been working on cutting trees and brush on Hickey Road. Villages of Carthage and West Carthage assisted with their chippers.

Dog Control Officer Report: None

Town Clerk Report: Water district collections for May were \$2331.58. Town Clerk fees for May were \$1478.00. Transfer site fees collected for May were \$3681.00.

Code Enforcement Officer Report: Terry McKeever noted that he has issued several permits and violation notices. He has been in contact with some people relative to certain condemned premises, and they have agreed to clean them up. The following are five properties that he has identified as unsafe structures and need to have a public hearing set for each of them.

- 1.) 43968 NYS Rt. 3, Natural Bridge – Motion was made by Councilman Gerber, seconded by Councilman Skvorak, to set a public hearing for July 12, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. Motion passed unanimously, carried.
- 2.) 36880 NYS Rt. 3, Carthage – motion made by Councilman Storms, seconded by Councilman Skvorak for public hearing on July 12, 2021 immediately following the previous one. Motion passed unanimously, carried.
- 3.) 23560 Boyd Road, Carthage – motion made by Councilman Britton, seconded by Councilman Gerber for public hearing on July 12, 2021 immediately following the previous one. Motion passed unanimously, carried.
- 4.) 44097 Lime Street, Natural Bridge – motion made by Councilman Skvorak, seconded by Councilman Storms for public hearing on July 12, 2021 immediately following the previous one. Motion passed unanimously, carried.
- 5.) 43869 County Rt. 41, Natural Bridge – motion made by Councilman Britton, seconded by Councilman Gerber for public hearing on July 12, 2021 immediately following the previous one. Motion passed unanimously, carried. Property owned by James Potter was condemned last week, and he has since passed away. His brother is cleaning up the property now.

Assessor's Report: Robert Ball, Assessor reported that there are 44 new sales/transfers since January 1, 2021. He has 44 open site visit/permits for the 2021 Assessment Roll and has closed out 17 permits last month. On May 25, the Board of Assessment Review met and reviewed four grievances and two correction of errors filed by the Assessor. All paperwork was submitted to the County to make changes on the Tentative Assessment Roll. Notice for the paper was given to Town Clerk that the final assessment roll will be available for inspection as of July 1. State has set the Equalization Rate for 2021 Final Assessment Roll at 100%.

Attorney's Report: Attorney Burrows noted that regarding the assessment challenge of the Carthage Energy matter, the Judge has set 9/1/2021 as a date for the appraisal to be done and filed. Regarding the Cannabis law, it was noted that the Governor has legalized the possession and use of cannabis for persons over 21 years of age, up to three ounces and in restricted areas and use. Mr. Burrows noted that the Town has the option to allow (opt in) or deny (opt out) the retail marijuana stores or bars before December 31, 2021. The local law would be subject to a Permissive Referendum. If the Town opts out now, we can always opt in later however, if we opt in now, we cannot opt out later.

Cemetery Matters: Lori Borland, overseer of Pierce and Sand Hill Cemeteries, noted that there has been a few phone calls, etc. regarding future burials and that she has taken a trip to each to get familiar with the areas of each. She has access to a website developed by Fort Drum for the cemeteries on Fort Drum, detailing all the people buried in each, at least those of which that can be identified. There is, however, no index to the pages, so finding a particular family is tedious work.

Town Supervisor's Report: Motion was made by Councilman Britton, seconded by Councilman Storms to approve the May Supervisor's Report. Unanimously passed, carried.

Vouchers: Motion was made by Councilman Skvorak, seconded by Councilman Britton, to approve the vouchers in Abstract #6 in the amount of \$113,802.82. Unanimously passed, carried.

#### Old Business:

Supervisor Smith noted that Mrs. Bullock, Community Development Director, is writing a grant application for the funding of the Herrings Wastewater Disinfection Project, which is DEC mandated.

Regarding the LED Lighting, there are differences of opinions as to who needs to furnish the Letter of Credit and the Insurance for the project to move ahead. Town Clerk will follow up.

New Business:

Regarding the Town of Wilna Housing Authority Board, Yolanda Skvorak's term has expired, and Greta Storms was approached to fill the position, and expressed interest.

**Resolution #14-2021** - Motion was made by Councilman Britton, seconded by Councilman Skvorak to appoint Greta Storms to fill the position left vacant by Mrs. Skvorak on the TWHA Board. Motion passed unanimously, carried. It was noted that Sean McDermid is the Tenant Rep for Brady Acres.

Regarding pending legislation on Battery Storage, Jon Storms, Planning Board Chairman, addressed the Council. He noted that the proposed new law would take into consideration both residential use and bigger solar panels. He has a proposed local law that is basically a "fill in the blanks" law and permit, which will be prepared by the Planning Board Secretary, then presented to the Town Board for discussion, public hearing and approval. The law is also needed for the Village of Deferiet and the Village of Carthage. The Planning Board will discuss this at their next meeting on July 7, 2021 and make recommendations to the Town Board.

Regarding the State Teamsters Union Contract, this contract is up for renewal, and Supervisor Smith and Councilman Britton will review the same and suggest language changes as needed. Mike O'Shaughnessy, Highway Superintendant is welcome to review the contract prior to negotiations with the Teamsters.

It was noted that the former Deferiet Papermill site is being reviewed as a Brownfield Site. NYSERDA has expressed interest for a solar project on this site. The Brownfield Opportunity Area (BOA) feasibility study would be applied for at the maximum amount of \$300,000 with a 10% match, or possibly less. Administration fees are included in that in the sum of \$50,000. Town of Wilna would be the lead agent in this grant, and splitting the match cost 50/50 with the Village of Deferiet.

**Resolution #15-2021** - Motion was made by Councilman Britton, seconded by Councilman Skvorak to go forward with the BOA application and to split the 10% match 50/50 with the Village of Deferiet. Roll call vote was taken, all voted Yes. Motion carried.

Supervisor Smith announced that Jim Yuhas, Bookkeeper, and his wife, Mary Ann Yuhas, Clerk to the Supervisor, will be retiring at the end of this year. Jim Yuhas has been with the Town of Wilna for about 42 years and they will both be sadly missed. It was discussed that the Town furnish one half of the insurance for Jim Yuhas after his retirement.

**Resolution #16-2021** – Motion was made by Councilman Skvorak, seconded by Councilman Britton, to have the Town of Wilna furnish one half of the insurance for Mr. Yuhas after his retirement. Roll call vote was taken, all voted YES. Motion carried.

There being no further business to come before the Board, a motion was made by Councilman Britton, seconded by Councilman Storms to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted:

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Lori Borland, Town Clerk