

NEW LISBON TOWN BOARD---AUGUST 11, 2015---7:30 PM REGULAR MEETING---TOWN HALL, GARRATTSVILLE

Present: Councilmen John Pegg, Robert Eklund & Joseph Gregory, Councilwoman Connie Chase, Supervisor Robert Taylor, Clerk Charlene Wells, Co. Rep. Edward Lentz, Residents Lenny Melillo, Tom Riso, Sue Smith, Donald Smith, Tim Miller Absent: Hwy. Supt. Bill Whitaker

Supervisor Robert Taylor opened the meeting at 7:30 PM. A motion was made by Joseph Gregory, seconded by Robert Eklund and carried 5/0 to accept the minutes for the July 9, 2015 regular meeting as written.

We received the following bids for the advertised surplus items; \$555.00 for the back blade from John Pegg, \$101.00 for the old Oshkosh from Victor Lasher and \$260.00 from Lenny Melillo for the back blade. No bids were received for the 92 International truck. A motion was made by Joseph Gregory, seconded by Robert Eklund and carried 4/0 (John Pegg abstained from voting since he had submitted a bid) to accept the bid of \$555.00 for the back blade from John Pegg and \$101.00 for the old Oshkosh cab & chassis from Victor Lasher.

Hwy. Supt. Bill Whitaker was absent but told Supervisor Robert Taylor that the 2009 Freightliner Truck was going to T & T Sales to be outfitted and that they would be starting their paving project soon.

Tom Riso questioned if the Town gets reimbursed for the abuse of our Town roads while the County Bridge in New Lisbon is closed. Even though the detour signs send people to Morris and up Pegg Road many are using Bardin & Myers Mill Roads. Maybe we will be able to get some repair help from the County once the bridge is done, which is anticipated to be by Labor Day.

Lenny Melillo noted that bed and breakfast establishments in the Town could be located on the internet. Possibly this could be a job for the land use officer to find those who have not registered with the County. Co. Rep. Edward noted that in the future the bed tax money may be allocated only based on how much bed tax is generated by each town.

Co. Rep. Edward Lentz advised that the new ems system will not be fully implemented until next year, but they may start with the sheriff department first. There are three candidates that will go before the full County Board for the position of 911 Supervisor. The potential solar site in Laurens will only be half of the size of the original plans due to the capacity of the electric lines in the area. The sales tax collected is down countywide and is below budget projections. Anthony Gentile was hired as a Code Enforcement Officer. Co. Rep. Lentz noted that he was a building inspector and seems very personable. The County is loaning \$40,000.00 to the Beverage Exchange, owned by Cooperstown Distillery. It will be able to sell products from all places on the Beverage Trail, including Butternuts Beer & Ale. Grant money was provided for small businesses that applied for funding meeting IGA criteria. The County has hired a consultant to inspect the County jail. They are to provide information on what needs to be updated, ways to be more efficient and what the cost would be to replace the jail.

Supervisor Robert Taylor noted that he didn't like the format of the County Strategic Plan questionnaire. He doesn't understand how they will tally results. Attorney Martin Tillapaugh was asked to draft a local law to override the tax cap which will only be .75 this year. Drafting the 2016 budget will be hard with a lower tax cap amount and it will be difficult to make cuts since our budget is already tight. Supervisor Taylor advised that the Village of Ilion had someone break into their computer system and emailed them they could get it back for a fee. We will have to check with Steve Lawton about our computer security. Co. Rep. Lentz noted that the County is concerned about their computer security also.

We received notice that MB Campground (Yogi-Bear) has filed a petition with the Court against their assessment again. According to Attorney Tillapaugh the case has been stalled again because the campground said they haven't been able to find an appraiser to appraise the site. We received notice from the NYS Office of Real Property Tax services that our 2015 Final Equalization rate is 114.6. NAT has advised that they have filed comments against the Public Service Staff report that suggests that NAT's proposal not be considered any further.

The Board worked on completing the Strategic Plan questionnaire from the County. The top three strengths of our Town were noted as our Natural Beauty/Resources, Good citizens, and volunteer fire department; with all working well together and many small businesses and 3 campgrounds. The top three weaknesses of our Town were noted as poor cell service and broadband, lack of significant medium sized business; a stagnant tax base and lack of a Town center with residents divided by 4 school districts. Discussion was held on finding out how many residents have Otsego Electric Cooperative and how many have NYSEG for electric service.

Lenny Melillo noted that the Garrattsville Fire Company is holding a fundraiser Golf Tournament on August 22, 2015 at Butternut Valley Golf and Recreation.

The Board reviewed the bills prior to the meeting. Councilman Robert Eklund felt that the bill for \$220.00 to Councilman Gregory for the meeting DVDs should be held until they can be reviewed. A motion was made by Robert Eklund, seconded by Connie Chase and carried 4/0 (Joseph Gregory abstained since he had a personal bill included) to pay General Fund bills #132 through #143 for a total of \$2,583.37 and Highway Fund bills #126 through #143 for a total of \$41,466.27, holding bill #135 for \$220.00 to Councilman Gregory until the DVDs he provided are reviewed. Supervisor Taylor paid General Fund bills #123 through #131 and Highway Fund bill #144 for a total of \$10,076.67 with prior Board approval. The Supervisor's monthly report was submitted to the Board.

Preliminary estimates for a new baseball backstop range from \$2300.00 to \$3000.00. Councilman John Pegg noted that he looked at our backstop and felt that we could just replace the bad post as all else seems okay. We would need to unhook the wire, remove the bad post and put in a new post and rehook the wire. Supervisor Robert Taylor asked Tom Riso to look at it and give us his input.

Land Use Enforcement Officer Tom Riso questioned what qualifies as a short term rental or bed & breakfast that he should be making a listing of. Co. Rep. Ed Lentz will get him the definition of what would apply. We may need to have a local law pertaining to short-term rentals.

Supervisor Robert Taylor got a quote of \$275.00 from Ed at Reese-Marshall to move the outside kerosene tank to inside the town hall so we could use fuel oil which is cheaper and it will get the tank away from the driveway. The tank would have to be set inside the double doors at the far end of the town hall. The County Code Office will have to be asked if there are any codes we would have to abide with by moving the tank inside.

A motion was made by Connie Chase, seconded by John Pegg and carried 5/0 to rent one table for \$10.00 at the Garrattsville Fire Dept. Barbeque on Sunday, September 6th, 2015.

The Employee Handbook was sent to Attorney Martin Tillapaugh for his review. Clerk Charlene Wells noted that she found out that we can have disability checks sent to us so that we can supplement them up to the regular amount of pay using sick time. This would help stretch out the employee's sick time and they would remain on the town payroll longer, thus keeping their medical insurance longer.

Councilman Robert Eklund expressed an idea to have the Town contact those companies who received the State approval to grow medical marijuana and tell them that our Town would be an ideal place to grow it. They could get lower electric rates, use vacant agricultural land, it would require less security than in a city setting and would help improve our tax base. After further discussion, a motion was made by Connie Chase, seconded by John Pegg and carried 5/0 to have Councilman Eklund get more information and to explore this idea further.

Discussion was held on using or selling the old dump site. In accordance with the state rules we had to follow when we closed it, we have to keep it since it cannot be used for anything and we have to keep it mowed down. Lenny Melillo questioned if all new hires will be subject to the new employee handbook. He noted that other places are giving out no raises and less benefits. All new hires and if a new highway supt. was elected will be subject to the benefit changes made in the new handbook, even though it hasn't been formally adopted.

With no further business, a motion was made by Robert Eklund, seconded by John Pegg and carried 5/0 to adjourn at 9:05 PM. Charlene R. Wells, New Lisbon Town Clerk