

**NEW LISBON TOWN BOARD---JUNE 9, 2015—7:30 PM**  
**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING---TOWN HALL, GARRATTSVILLE**

Present: Councilwoman Connie Chase, Supervisor Robert Taylor, Councilmen John Pegg, Joseph Gregory, & Robert Eklund, Attorney Martin Tillapaugh, Hwy. Supt. Bill Whitaker, Clerk Charlene Wells, Co. Rep. Edward Lentz, Co. Real Property Tax Director Hank Schecher, Assessor Kathleen Chase, Residents Sue Smith, Donald Smith, Tom Riso, Edward George, Lenny Melillo

Supervisor Robert Taylor opened the meeting at 7:30 PM. A motion was made by Joseph Gregory, seconded by Connie Chase and carried 5/0 to accept the minutes for the May 12, 2015 regular meeting as written. Supervisor Taylor noted that there was a newspaper article in the Freeman's Journal about New Lisbon residents Christina & Maria Noto and their sports and civic accomplishments.

Hank Schecher, Otsego County Real Property Tax Director and Assessor Kathleen Chase were present to discuss assessments. Supervisor Robert Taylor had asked them to look into our land values after the recent revaluation. Mr. Schecher explained about our equalization rate which is a state analysis of assessed value versus sales figures (currently 114%) and the level of assessment which is done by the assessor and should be about 100%. He submitted charts showing overall sales and land sales over the last several years. The figures average out to show that our assessments are on track with where they should be. Mr. Schecher advised that one option we could try to help keep our values current is trending. We would leave our inventory the same, but values could go up or down. The assessor would look at values for the types of properties (vacant land, commercial, residential and farms) and adjust a group based on current trends for that group. This could help to keep values more equitable and to stretch out the need for a new revaluation. We could use similar surrounding town's sales in addition to ours since we do not have a lot of sales each year. Our area has not seen much increase in growth over the last few years. The State suggests that every 6 years is the generally accepted time frame for completing new revaluations. Our last revaluation was done after a 20 year span which was why there was such a drastic increase in land values. Supervisor Taylor noted that our recent revaluation did not take into consideration the land topography, just the number of acres of the parcel. Mr. Schecher noted that we could look into digital maps that show contour lines to show the grades of property. Basically it comes down to how much we want to spend on a revaluation. It would cost more to do interior home inspections and assess land values by types. Co. Rep. Edward Lentz asked if we did a good job with trending then we might not have to do a revaluation. Mr. Schecher advised that the State would still want us to do a revaluation which would catch new data, as trending only updates existing data. He noted that he did a consolidated assessment study in 2008 which was not well received. His purpose was to find ways to increase efficiency in assessing. He suggested that in the future we could use satellite imagery every few years for the whole county and pick up changes that could be reported to individual assessors. He also noted that the State ORPS staff has decreased from about 800 to 200 people. Overall he felt that our assessed values were good and that using the trending option would help us.

Lenny Melillo questioned if we had received a support resolution from NBT in regards to their loan for the new fire truck. Attorney Martin Tillapaugh noted that he went back and forth with the bank and after about seven drafts he was happy with the draft that he presented to the Board. Lenny noted that because they only contract with the Town of New Lisbon they qualified with NBT for a lower rate. The bank requires a public hearing to make sure the Town knows what is going on with the Fire Department. Attorney Tillapaugh noted that the resolution is only in support of the Fire Dept. and that the Town would not be taking on any obligation for the Fire Dept.'s loan. After review of the documents, a motion was made by Joseph Gregory, seconded by Robert Eklund and carried 5/0 to schedule a public hearing for 7:30 PM on Thursday, July 9, 2015 for the purpose of the proposed financing by the Garrattsville Fire Department for a \$250,000.00 loan for the purpose of purchasing a new pumper truck. Lenny noted that they have an anticipated delivery date of January 2016 for the new truck. He also noted that the new radios they have to get will cost approximately \$15,000.00 to \$17,000.00. The County is supposed give each Fire Dept. \$10,000.00 towards the cost of the new radios and they will have to submit a receipt to the County by January 2016 to get reimbursed. Lenny noted

that with few suppliers of the radios they need, it may be hard to get what they need when everyone in the County will be ordering. The Fire Dept. is also going to try for a DEC grant to use towards the radios.

Edward George questioned if the concrete floor had been poured in the storage building addition yet. Hwy. Supt. Bill Whitaker advised that they got the floor dug out, put styrofoam in and they are getting it leveled and ready to pour concrete. They are working on it in between other jobs. Mr. George also asked if the army surplus generator we purchased has been hooked up yet. Supt. Whitaker advised that he's had it running and it runs good and should handle the entire hwy. garage. He still has to get Stan Leonard up to hard wire it into the garage and maybe he will pour a small concrete slab for it to set on. He had thought about having it set up so it would automatically switch over when the power went out. Lenny Melillo noted that he would recommend a manual switch since many automatic switchover ones have caused fires. Supt. Whitaker noted that he could just leave it on a trailer in cold storage so it's ready to pull out when we need it.

Hwy. Supt. Bill Whitaker advised that he had received an estimate of \$90,000.00 from T & T Body of Latham, NY to set up the 2009 Army truck with a 13 ft. stainless steel dump box with a rear discharge and plow equipment. The previous estimate from Tracey Road Equipment was for \$103,286.00 which was based on an Onondaga County bid. If we want to go with the estimate from T & T Body we will have to draw up specs and put out the job for bids. Supt. Whitaker advised that with his rollover from last year, he will have \$194,291.35 in CHIPS funds, plus an extra \$23,606.84 for severe winter recovery, bringing the available CHIPS total to \$217,898.19. He planned on doing 2.1 miles of Bardin/Parker Road this year costing \$163,515.55 and \$9,000.00 for guardrails on Bell Hill Road. That would leave approximately \$45,000.00 that could be used towards the 2009 Army truck, but would have to include the truck purchase, not just the equipment. Councilman Joseph Gregory stated that he would want to use CHIPS funds for the 2009 Army truck and suggested that maybe we could save some money by not having it painted. He also thought we should be on the watch for another Army surplus vehicle. After further discussion, a motion was made by Joseph Gregory, seconded by Connie Chase and carried 5/0 to have the Hwy. Supt. draft specifications for setting up the 2009 Freightliner Army truck with a box, plow ,etc. to be put out for bids to be opened at the July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015 meeting.

The 2009 grader started having problems over the winter. After they changed the filter it was okay for a while, but it started having problems again. A technician from Vantage Equipment thought it was the high side clutch pack failing. The parts to fix that would be about \$11,000.00 or \$31,000.00 for a remanufactured transmission. Now Hwy. Supt. Whitaker advised that they think it may just be an electrical problem, that something is not engaging properly. We have done all of the recommended service on the grader and it only has 2700 hours on it. They checked the filters and there were no contaminants. A transmission specialist from Vantage is coming to look at the grader free of charge. Councilman Robert Eklund noted that his research showed that this grader is notorious for having transmission problems. Lenny Melillo noted that we should get an estimate of the grader's value and see what problems other similar machines have had. He also noted that we should get Volvo and Vantage Equipment to diagnose the problem, tell us how they propose to fix it and how long they would guarantee the work. Councilman Eklund thought that Volvo should be able to tell what's going on with the machine. Hwy. Supt. Whitaker advised they have gotten messages on the machine, but no error codes. He will see what the next technician has to say about the problem and will continue to look for the solution.

Supervisor Robert Taylor noted that Justice Bruce Moskos has advised that he has some dog cases he needs to close out because the people have moved or the dog is deceased and he needs a letter from our attorney to close them. Attorney Martin Tillapaugh advised that he will contact Justice Moskos to see what he needs to have done. Supervisor Taylor noted that he did not get the details worked out for claiming the Tax Freeze Credit for residents. With the uncertainty of how the next budget will work out, Supervisor Robert Taylor suggested that we should ask Attorney Martin Tillapaugh to draft a local law to override the tax cap. Attorney Tillapaugh noted that many towns pass the local law to override the tax cap, which can be very complicated to figure out, just as a security in the event the budget doesn't stay under the allowed amount. After further discussion, a motion was made by Robert Eklund, seconded by John Pegg and carried 4/1 (Joseph Gregory against) to have Attorney Martin Tillapaugh draft a local law to override the state tax cap for the 2016 budget so it will be on record if we

need it. Town Hall cleaner, Robin Lasher advised that when she was washing walls, the paint was coming off so she would like to repaint. Supervisor Robert Taylor advised her it was okay to repaint since we had sufficient funds in the budget. The highway guys helped Assessor Kathleen Chase move out an old file cabinet that doesn't work properly. A motion was made by Robert Eklund, seconded by Connie Chase and carried 5/0 to declare the Assessor's old file cabinet as surplus and dispose of it. Supervisor Taylor noted that the snow salary account was heavily used this past winter so it may not be sufficient to cover November & December this year.

We received notice from the NYS Dept. of Taxation & Finance/Office of Real Property Tax Services that our 2015 Tentative Equalization Rate is 114.6. We received notice from CDPHP that they have filed for an 18.8% increase in rates for 2016. We received information on the power line project from the Public Service Commission concerning technical conferences.

The Board reviewed the bills prior to the meeting. A motion was made by Joseph Gregory, seconded by Robert Eklund and carried 5/0 to pay General Fund bills #89 through #107 for a total of \$20,512.23 and Highway Fund bills #92 through #107 for a total of \$21,294.37. Supervisor Taylor paid General Fund bills #85 through #88 and Highway Fund bill #108 for a total of \$7,690.04 with prior Board approval. The Supervisor's monthly report was submitted to the Board.

The Board continued working on the Employee Handbook. Under holidays, Washington's Birthday will be changed to Presidents' Day. To accommodate various religions, we will add that a different religious holiday may be taken in lieu of Christmas Day. Under political activity, Mayor will be changed to Supervisor. We will check with Hwy. Supt. Bill Whitaker to see how he handles Holiday pay when they have to come into work on a Holiday. We will add a section that states that it is okay for employees to leave work for fire & emergency squad calls without losing pay or time. The Association of Towns verified that the courts have found that Highway Law supports the Hwy. Supt. having the authority to hire and fire in his department. Because we have less than 50 employees, our employees are not eligible for the Family Medical Leave Act. As far as military leave, the Town must pay an eligible employee up to 30 days or 22 work days in a calendar year. We will leave jury duty leave and emergency situations as they were drafted. There are two sections left to complete, Compliance Policies and Safety. Any benefit changes will have to be decided. Then the final draft can be sent on to Attorney Martin Tillapaugh for his review.

A motion was made by Connie Chase, seconded by Robert Eklund and carried 5/0 to change the July monthly meeting to Thursday, July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015 instead of the normal date of Tuesday, July 14, 2015.

A motion was made by Joseph Gregory, seconded by Connie Chase and carried 5/0 to advertise for bids for diesel, winter mix diesel, unleaded gas, #2 fuel oil, kerosene and service contracts on our four furnaces, with two pricing options: Differential Factor & Fixed Price, to be opened at the July 9, 2015 meeting.

Councilman Joseph Gregory brought up his making copies of the videos of Board meetings he has made since becoming councilman. Since he owns the equipment, he is allowed to be reimbursed for making copies. He does not want to hand over the video cards since he has personal data on them. His device only makes DVDs. He suggested a price of \$10.00 per meeting DVD to cover his cost and time. Councilman Robert Eklund suggested that the data could be easily put on a computer thumb drive and it would cost less to transfer the data that way and be more accessible. Attorney Martin Tillapaugh noted that any reasonable cost of reproduction is okay. After further discussion, a motion was made by Connie Chase to pay Councilman Joseph Gregory \$10.00 per meeting DVD going forward since that is the only way he feels comfortable making copies. There was no second to the motion. A motion was made by Councilman Robert Eklund, seconded by Connie Chase and carried 5/0 to pay Councilman Joseph Gregory \$10.00 for each DVD of the past meetings since he has been councilman and to authorize Councilman Eklund to purchase a video card, up to \$25.00, to use in Councilman's Gregory camera so that future meetings can be downloaded to a Town computer, thus saving the cost & time in making the copies on a DVD by Councilman Gregory.

With no further business or comments from the floor, a motion was made by Robert Eklund, seconded by Connie Chase and carried 5/0 to adjourn at 10:08 PM. Charlene R. Wells, Town Clerk

