

# **NEW LISBON TOWN BOARD---MAY 12, 2015**

## **REGULAR MEETING—TOWN HALL—7:30 PM**

Present: Supervisor Robert Taylor, Councilwoman Connie Chase, Councilmen John Pegg, Joseph Gregory and Robert Eklund, Hwy. Supt. Bill Whitaker, Clerk Charlene Wells, Also: Sue Smith, Tom Riso, Donald Smith

Supervisor Robert Taylor opened the regular monthly 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 April 14, 2015 regular meeting as written.

The 2009 Freightliner Army surplus truck has arrived. Supt. Bill Whitaker presented a quote of \$103,286.00 from Tracey Road Equipment to set up the truck for use. The price includes a stainless steel dump body, Everest hitch, plow & wing, painting, etc. The price is based on an Oneida County Bid, so we wouldn't have to put out to bid. Supt. Whitaker noted that Tracey Road Equipment is a freightliner part dealer and they have locations in Binghamton & Syracuse. He also is getting a price for setting up the new truck from T & T Body of Latham, NY. They will be proposing a 13 ft. Tarco stainless steel body and Viking plow. Supt. Whitaker hopes that the truck will last us at least 15 years. In the past we have standardized with Viking plows, but Supt. Whitaker had no problem with an Everest plow as they are very similar. Councilman Robert Eklund questioned if they had experience putting a 13 ft. box on this type of truck and would they guarantee their work. He also questioned about going with stainless steel over a regular truck body. Supt. Whitaker noted that stainless steel would outlast a regular dump body and costs approximately \$10,000.00 more. He noted that typically T & T Body only mounts truck bodies, where Tracey Road Equipment is routinely a parts/repair service. A special meeting will be set up once Supt. Whitaker receives the second estimate. Hwy. Supt. Bill Whitaker also advised the Board that since the truck has an expected life over ten years we could pay for the cost to set up the new truck under the CHIPS program. We could do part of the bill or all of it. It would be taking money away from road repair projects but we wouldn't have to take from surplus funds. We have \$33,547.00 left in the Machinery-Capital Outlay budget line. The Board suggested that Supt. Whitaker firm up what CHIPS funds he has to use for road projects this year to see what would be available to use for the truck expenses.

Supervisor Robert Taylor noted that he has been working on the application for the State to get a small "Tax Freeze Credit" for residents. A government Efficiency Plan must be filed by June 1, 2015 in order to be eligible for this credit. The plan must show how we propose to save 1% of the tax levies in each of the following 3 years. Supervisor Taylor advised that we have to show a savings of \$6700.00. He is looking at the savings of hauling in materials ourselves versus having them delivered and/or how all surrounding towns help each other with paving projects. County Rep. Edward Lentz noted in his email that the Town may be able to join in on the County plan.

On his Washington DC trip with other Assoc. of Towns officials, Supervisor Robert Taylor noted that he met with Senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand and Congressman Chris Gibson. They talked about taxing internet sales, having Federal highway funds go directly to towns, not the State, grant information for fire departments, promoting local control, not increasing the control of the Army Corp of Engineers, etc. Supervisor Taylor noted that he provided the firefighter grant information to the Fire Company. They missed the last deadline for the program, but may hire a grant writer to help apply for a grant for the next round. He also found out that if a Town Board member videotaped meetings for his/her own purpose, it was considered a Town record and must be available for the public and FOIL requests. Supervisor Taylor requested that Councilman Joseph Gregory supply copies of all meetings that he has taped since becoming a Councilman to the Town Clerk.

Co. Rep. Edward Lentz advised of County information by email. He is hoping that a new bed tax plan will be approved which would give the Town about \$3200.00 in 2016. They are still looking for a site for the Solar City project. The County and OCCA have submitted their comments on the Edic-to-Fraser line to the PSC. There is a temporary ban on commercial haulers using the Northern transfer station as they were in danger of exceeding their permit tonnage and traffic was getting congested. The

new 911 center will be operational soon. Work will be done on the County Rte. 12 Bridge in New Lisbon and it will likely be closed most of the summer.

The NYS Dept. of Ag & Markets sent notice that the Pittsfield Vet Clinic passed their shelter inspection. A \$65.00 donation was received from Peter Martin & the Central NY Cyclists for using the town hall parking lot for their bike race. NYMIR sent notice of a Drive to Survive seminar in Norwich on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The Assoc. of Towns & the State Comptroller will be holding a Finance School on May 7&8<sup>th</sup> in Saratoga Springs and May 14&15<sup>th</sup> in Rochester. We received a \$100.00 donation from the Cooperative Extension for using the Town Hall for 4-H.

Sue Smith questioned why power line towers would be assessed, but go down in value. We will have to ask County Real Property Tax Director Hank Schecher who will be coming next month about that. The rates for utilities are set by the State.

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 #74 through #84 for a total of \$2,934.40 and Highway Fund bills #67 through #90 for a total of \$25,296.88. Supervisor Taylor paid General Fund bill #73 and Highway Fund bill #91 for a total of \$7,337.42 with prior Board approval. The Supervisor's monthly report was submitted to the Board.

Councilwoman Connie Chase and Town Clerk Charlene Wells have started working on an Employee Handbook and submitted the first 11 pages for the Board to review. Several items need the Board's input. It was decided to establish a full time employee as one working 40 hours a week and a part-time employee as one working under 40 hours a week. Several of the sample handbooks have the Town Board as having the final say on all hiring. We have always been told that the Hwy. Supt. had the right to hire & fire in the Hwy. Dept. and that is how the handbook draft has been worded. We will check with the Assoc. of Towns to verify this information. Several towns do not allow the hiring of relatives in the same department. After discussion, it was decided to state that the Town does not prefer to have relatives working in the same department, especially in a Department Head/Employee capacity. However, employee qualifications will be taken into account and determined on a case by case basis. The Board also wanted to add that we will require a check of an applicant's driving record prior to hiring in a department requiring a driver's license. Councilwoman Chase and Clerk Wells will continue working on the Handbook and submit further pages for the Board to review before the next meeting. Since it is going to take a while to complete the Employee Handbook, a motion was made by Robert Eklund, seconded by Joseph Gregory and carried 5/0 to advise any new hires that they will be subject to the new policies, benefits, etc. that will be established in the Employee Handbook as a condition of their employment.

A motion was made by Joseph Gregory, seconded by Robert Eklund and carried 5/0 to reappoint Daniel Morehouse effective June 1, 2015 to a new five year term on the New Lisbon Planning Board.

We received a proposal from Town & Country Tree Experts for trimming & shaping the pine trees in front of the Town Hall for \$450.00. A motion was made by Joseph Gregory, seconded by Robert Eklund and carried 5/0 to accept the proposal from Town & County Tree Experts and have the pine trees trimmed at a cost of \$450.00.

The Board briefly discussed cutting spending, using surplus funds, etc. for the next budget. Councilman Joseph Gregory felt that he needed to see where all the money is going. The Supervisor's monthly report shows all payments made either in payroll or contractual accounts, but Councilman Gregory wants to look at the bank statements. He also questioned who gets reimbursed for mileage. Legally any town employee using their own vehicle for town business can put in for mileage, but mostly we only pay the dog control officer and bookkeeper for mileage. Town Clerk Charlene Wells noted that when she started the Board then wanted her salary to include enough for mileage expenses. As far as retirement, all full time employees are mandatory members of the retirement system and all part time employees have the option of joining the retirement system. Besides the Hwy. Supt. & highway employees, the Town Clerk, Assessor and Historian are members of the NYS Retirement System. Supervisor Robert Taylor suggested that Councilman Gregory schedule a time with him to come in and see the records he wants to see to save the cost of making copies. Councilman Gregory questioned the

Land Use Enforcement Officer position. Thomas Riso noted that he feels that he earns his salary. He investigates problems/concerns for the Town and watches development. He can also put in for mileage.

Councilman Robert Eklund questioned if the Board would want to put in towards the reward for finding the person who shot a bald eagle in Town. Supervisor Robert Taylor didn't think so, as the Town can't make donations. Sue Smith thinks we should look into a ban of drones in the Town.

With no further business, a motion was made by Robert Eklund, seconded by Connie Chase and carried 5/0 to adjourn at 8:50 PM.

Charlene R. Wells, New Lisbon Town Clerk