

NEW LISBON TOWN BOARD---JANUARY 13, 2015—7:30 PM REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING—TOWN HALL, GARRATTSVILLE

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

Supervisor Robert Taylor opened the meeting at 7:28 PM. The December 16, 2014 minutes were amended to include the motion to accept the November minutes. A motion was made by Connie Chase, seconded by John Pegg and carried 4/0 to accept the amended minutes for the December 16, 2014 regular monthly meeting and the minutes for the January 6, 2015 Organizational meeting as written.

The Planning Board met on January 5, 2015 and recommended approval of site plan application #01-15 for Amy Dill for a beauty salon in her home on St. Hwy. 51 in Garrattsville. The application had to be forwarded to the NYS DOT because it is located on St.Hwy. 51. We have not heard back from them yet. A motion was made by Joseph Gregory, seconded by John Pegg and carried 4/0 to approve Site Plan Application #01-15 for Amy Dill to establish a beauty salon in her home at 4442 St. Hwy. 51 in Garrattsville to be known as Studio 51 Hair Design, subject to pending NYS DOT approval.

Sue Smith questioned if we were going to do a town wide clean up in April again. The Board will discuss this further at the next meeting.

The Board met prior to the meeting to review the bills. A motion was made by Robert Taylor, seconded by Joseph Gregory and carried 4/0 to approve paying General Fund bills #1 through #12 for a total of \$3099.70 and Highway Fund Bills #1 through #19 for a total of \$26,472.70. Supervisor Robert Taylor paid General Fund bills #234 through #237 and Highway Fund bill #222 for a total of \$7,676.33 with prior Board approval. The Supervisor's monthly report was submitted to the Board.

We have not connected with the Time Warner Cable representative to confirm that he will be able to attend the next meeting. We will schedule the public hearing on the cable franchise for either the February or March meeting as soon as we confirm his attendance. If we want to try to get our internet service free or at a reduced rate as part of the franchise agreement, we need to discuss that with the representative prior to the hearing.

County Representative Edward Lentz noted that he has been busy working on a deal/agreement for the County's proposed solar project with Solar City. Supervisor Robert Taylor invited him to join the Supervisor's Assoc. meeting on January 22nd, 2015 when Mike McNeilly from Comp Alliance will be coming to talk about Worker's Compensation.

The Board discussed what would be important for them to work on in 2015. Councilwoman Connie Chase felt that the two items that most people want are good roads and fire/ems service. She questioned if the fire department would accept the Board's help on looking for ways to save money and possibly find grants. Lenny Melillo responded that the Firemen meet every Monday night and they would welcome meeting with Board members. Supervisor Robert Taylor also invited Co. Rep. Ed Lentz to join in. He further thought we should talk with County Emergency Services Coordinator Kevin Ritton. Lenny further noted that they raised \$13,000.00 in fundraising last year, which is pretty good for our small town. Councilwoman Connie Chase also noted that we have wanted a highway maintenance log to track costs. Clerk Charlene Wells noted that she started a paper log of expenses per piece of equipment since Hwy. Supt. Whitaker notes on the bills which piece of equipment it applies to. She could expand on that idea if the Board wants more than the total cost spent on each piece of equipment. Councilwoman Chase also had concerns with issues brought up about Fair Week. Maybe we should consider shutting down for the entire week if we won't have enough workers to get anything done. Her last thought was on getting the public more involved with what goes on and getting them to come to Board meetings. She is going to try calling people to remind them of our meetings.

Councilman Joseph Gregory felt that we could save money by hiring a part-time mechanic. He questioned paying someone to come long distances to work on equipment at the garage. He felt we need to work on cutting our expenses. He also felt that roads and the fire department were the most important. Councilman John Pegg agreed that we need to stay up with things and improve our efficiency. It's hard to cut expenses, but there are ways to save money. He also thought we could find a maintenance log computer program to use. He had one he used in a previous job.

Supervisor Robert Taylor added that he would like to have one item per meeting to work on or gain information from in 2015. He will start by having Assessor Kathleen Chase and Otsego County Real Property Tax Director Hank Schecher come talk to the Board about what we can do to make our land values more equitable.

Clerk Charlene Wells has been contacted by a company GovPayNet which provides towns with the ability to accept credit/debit cards with no fees assessed against the Town. She is not sure on all of the details of how it would work. More people are asking about paying by credit or debit cards. She is not sure of how it would affect her daily balancing of funds. She will check and see how many area towns provide this service and get more information.

The Town Hall had a fire inspection done by the County Code Office in December. We have to move some stuff away from the fire extinguisher in the furnace room. They also noted that we need a relief valve on the pump. Supervisor Taylor will check with them to see exactly what we need to do and contact Stan Leonard.

With no further business, the Board reopened the meeting for public comment. Lenny Melillo felt that a big way to save money in the future is to adopt new employee hiring procedures and a new benefit package for future employees. He felt that our wages are comparable or better than surrounding towns. We should only provide medical insurance for the employee like most towns do. If the employee wants the family plan it would be available, but at the employee's expense. He also felt that 12 sick days per year is way too much. He felt that 2.5 sick days was the average and more acceptable. We should also check our insurance plan for the co-pay amounts. Sometimes the premiums go down by increasing the co-pay amounts. Lenny further noted that he felt we shouldn't be providing on the job training. He thinks we should be advertising for job positions and that applicants should meet all of the job requirements and have experience. We should work on this idea before present employees retire and we're looking for replacements.

County Representative Edward Lentz noted that the Board has wanted an equipment maintenance log for years and that in this day and age it should be computerized and the Board should consider hiring someone to provide this if we have to. He also noted that the County has a NAPA parts store at their hwy. dept. in Cooperstown. If we utilize it, it also helps out the County. He noted that the County does not have a mechanic. He feels that the Board needs to have a vision for our Town and think bigger and look for ways to bring in a bigger tax base as we can't keep raising residents' taxes. Even if we try to operate more efficiently, sometimes you have to spend money to make money. The Board may need to take the lead on projects and then pass them off to individuals.

Sue Smith questioned if it shouldn't be up to the residents, not government to develop things. Co. Rep. Lentz stated that he thought that Town Government should be the spark plug that gets things started. He also noted that the Cooperstown All-Star Village in Oneonta is expanding. Maybe they would be interested in upgrading and using our field as a practice field which could bring in money for the Town.

Lenny Melillo noted that he is not against having dealers' technicians coming here to provide service checks because they are more familiar with the equipment. He considers it good preventative maintenance for specialized equipment. Tom Riso also noted that he is in favor of having experienced technicians come in, especially if the equipment is covered by a warranty.

With no further business, a motion was made by Connie Chase, seconded by John Pegg and carried 4/0 to adjourn at 8:15 PM.

Charlene R. Wells, New Lisbon Town Clerk

