

NEW LISBON TOWN BOARD—FEBRUARY 9, 2021—7:30PM REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING—BY WEB CONFERENCE

Present: By Web Conference-Supervisor Edward Lentz, Councilman Brian Ryther, Councilwoman Flo Loomis, Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith, Town Clerk Charlene Wells, Land Use Enforcement Officer Tom Riso, Resident Edward George, By Phone: Co. Rep. Meg Kennedy, Absent: Councilman Bill Whitaker

Supervisor Edward Lentz opened the regular monthly meeting at 7:34 PM. A motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to accept the minutes for the January 12, 2021 Organizational meeting and regular monthly meeting as written.

Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith advised that they had had a possible COVID exposure and had come in only as needed. Now they are on a split crew, two on at a time unless all are needed for plowing and sanding. The new pickup truck has been received and is registered and ready to go. He will keep the salter on the old truck for the winter. The 2017 pickup has been having some electrical issues. The highway garage committee had met and had some revisions on the proposed building plans. They are waiting for the changes and the anticipated cost figures. Supt. Smith advised that he is going to meet with County Hwy. Supt. Rich Brimmer about the idea of combining a new facility with the County. There are some discrepancies with the State paved road inventory which the Hwy. Supt. will review in the Spring after making his own inventory. We haven't received any word from the State on the Card Road speed limit issue. Using town equipment at a fire scene was discussed as it had happened recently with another town's equipment. The issues of if it is legal to use on private property for this case and if our insurance would cover us for liability and any damages under this circumstance need to be confirmed. Supervisor Edward Lentz advised that in his research it looked like it would be legal because we would be assisting the fire department which would be a public use. Gates-Cole is checking on the insurance coverage in this situation. The Board voiced no objections to using our equipment on a fire scene if our insurances okays it, at the discretion of the Hwy. Supt. Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson will continue to track repair costs for the year and will start tracking milage for the pickups. The 2021 Highway Plan had been reviewed by the Board. A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilwoman Flo Loomis and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to adopt the 2021-2023 Highway Plan as drafted, with the understanding that the paved road status will be updated this spring.

County Rep. Meg Kennedy noted that the County Board increased the bed tax to 6% effective September 1, 2021. She advised that according to NYMIR, more municipalities are getting insurance for cyber attacks and developing cyber security policies. Otsego Now had a presentation on PILOT programs which are meant to help with economic development. They had a meeting on Broadband with Otsego Electric Cooperative president Tim Johnson. He advised that they have received 7 million dollars to continue their broadband expansion. Supervisor Edward Lentz will contact him to see where in New Lisbon they may be expanding. Rep. Kennedy noted that the County will be getting more Federal funds for the CDBG program administered by ORHA. They have given money to Cooperative Extension and Otsego Soil & Water. They have opened the search for a County Administrator and Director of Planning. They are working on updating the language in the recycling local law. They are looking into extensions on foreclosures because of state law changes due to COVID-19. Letters to our state representatives on the need for broadband might be helpful as residents struggle to work and school from home.

Land Use Enforcement Officer Tom Riso noted that another house and garage had been added to the assessment roll and he will keep on looking for projects to get added on by March 1st. There has been no response back from the letter that was sent to the Halls on Turtle Lake Road about the junk cars. Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson questioned if there are a lot of people doing projects without permits and Land Use Enforcement Officer Tom Riso responded that yes there are. If he finds a project, he checks with the County Code Enforcement Office to see if there is a permit.

There are always complaints each winter about plow trucks putting snow in people's driveways as this is a normal occurrence. Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith advised that there are multiple places in town where people put snow back in the road while clearing their driveways. This creates a potential hazard for other drivers and the person responsible could be held liable if there were an accident. A letter had been sent to Amie McLean about purposely placing snow in the roadway because she is not happy with

how the snow is being plowed into her driveway. If problems continue, the Sheriff's Dept. would have to be called in.

Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson advised that the CSC Committee met last week and they have accumulated half of the needed points. They have a path forward and hope to be able to file for bronze status by the end of summer.

Supervisor Edward Lentz noted that there is interest again in getting a meeting of local EMS providers together to talk about support for the Village of New Berlin as our EMS backup. We are still waiting for all our state certification approvals. Designating Petitions to run for office will be able to be circulated March 2-25. Independent petitions can be circulated from April 13-May 25th. The Primary Election if necessary, will be on June 22nd and Election Day is November 2nd. Supervisor Lentz advised that he has put out an RFP for banking services. Key Bank has advised that they do not want to submit a proposal. He received one from the Bank of Cooperstown and is waiting on a response from Community Bank and NBT Bank.

When Rich Dennis was fixing a broken vent pipe from heavy snow on the town hall roof, he noticed that there was no ridge seal under the ridge cap on the town hall roof. He gave an estimate of \$723.00 to fix the issue. A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and seconded by Councilwoman Flo Loomis to hire Rich Dennis to fix the roof vent seal for an estimated \$723.00. Discussion followed. Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith noted that there are some other issues that need to be looked at once the snow is off the roof including a leaning chimney and missing roof clips. This missing seal has been like that since the roof was put on, thus it was not deemed an emergency. The Town Board voted 4 Nays/ 0 Ayes to fixing the roof seal at this time, instead waiting until a full assessment of all issues can be done in the Spring.

Supervisor Edward Lentz mentioned that he had been asked if the old veteran's display in the town hall could be displayed. Also, it was questioned if any of the old "Welcome to Garrattsville" signs could be salvaged so that one could be placed on the corner lot. Hwy. Supt. Donald Smith noted that a few of the old signs were in storage in the highway dept. Supervisor Edward Lentz will take photos and circulate for further discussion on these two items.

A motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to sign the 2021 Polling Site Agreement with the Otsego County Board of Elections for using the Town Hall as our polling site for the June 22nd, 2021 primary and the November 2nd, 2021 General Election.

A review of the written and verbal recommendations from our insurance site visit showed the actions taken as follows: The Hwy. Supt. has signed up for the NY LENS Program to be able to review employees driving records. A flammable liquids cupboard was purchased. Authorized Personnel Only signs were installed at the Hwy. Garage. The Playground Policy was amended to add their suggestions, but the Board did not feel we needed a Park Ordinance. The hwy. dept. is keeping a log of daily tasks. The Town Hall use application will be reviewed and updated to include that no bounce houses are permitted. Fargo Alarms will be contacted to inspect the alarm systems at the Town Hall & Hwy. Garage. We will draft an incident form to use at the Town Hall for if someone is injured. The AED is tested monthly. The Board will consider drafting a social media policy at a later date. As far as a firearms policy, it was suggested that we follow state laws. The Hwy. employees have training on fuel tank emergencies and operational practices. All training will be documented and kept in employee files. Gates-Cole has questioned if we want them to shop around for rates or just get a renewal quote with our present carrier. They typically do this after five years, which would be next year. Our rates have remained steady, so it was agreed to wait and put out an RFP next year for insurance quotes.

Supervisor Edward Lentz noted that the Butternut Creek Assessment Report has been completed. The file is too large to email, so if anyone wants it, he can put it on a thumb drive. Doctor Ben Fridell has agreed to be a medical consultant for our Health Officer Theresa Berdon. The state is requiring a consultant for any non-physician Health Officer. We are waiting for a letter from him advising this that we can submit to the state.

ORHA has submitted bids received for the Miller/Countryman rehab project for roof replacement, vinyl siding, electrical upgrades, windows and two doors. Due to the large investment this would be, the homeowners have agreed to increase their homeowners' insurance to cover this investment. The Board questioned on how we ensure that they keep their insurance coverage, which we will check back with ORHA on this. Due to the large investment ORHA has proposed that they would cover the siding and

electrical upgrades using Christian Brothers for \$17,500.00 through another grant program. They proposed using our CDBG funds to hire Christian Brothers to do the windows & doors for \$9,500.00 and to hire Premier Roofing to do the roof replacement at \$13,845.00. After further review, a motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve the bids of \$9,500.00 for windows & doors from Christian Brothers and \$13,845.00 for roof replacement from Premier Roofing for the Miller/Countryman project from our CDBG funds, with the siding and electrical for \$17,500.00 by Christian Brothers being covered by a different grant program through ORHA. The Board approved the three pages of bid specs for Mike Parsons rehab project for ORHA to put out for bids.

The Highway Committee discussed the proposed changes to sick days, paying for medical insurance when on disability and the Juneteenth holiday. They recommended leaving the sick days at being able to be accumulated up to 70 days, to not add Juneteenth as a holiday and for the Town to continue to pay it's share of the medical insurance while an employee is out on disability. Their reasoning is that we would have already budgeted the health insurance money and an employee doesn't get a lot when on disability. The employee would have to continue to pay their monthly medical insurance portion as is established at the organizational meeting. After further discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to amend the employee policy when an employee is out on disability to that the Town will continue to pay their portion and the employee will continue to pay their portion of the medical insurance premium as is set at the organizational meeting. The main reason to increase the insurance buyout option is that it's a savings for the Town if an employee has another insurance option. At \$2200.00 per year, an employee would be getting a lot less of a benefit than those taking insurance. Increasing the buyout to \$4400.00 would make it a cost of \$2.12 per hour compared to the cost of those on insurance which is \$4.33 and \$5.77 per hour. It was discussed to look at increasing the buyout amount later in the year after we see how the budget is holding up.

Discussion was held on a proposed Unsafe Properties Law. The law could be tailored to make household garbage a top priority, with health and environmental issues the main concerns. Definitions of garbage were reviewed. Other existing laws were mentioned including the state law on only allowing two unregistered vehicles on a property and our Local Law #1 of 1988, providing for the prohibition of the operation of dumps for the disposal of garbage, rubbish, demolition and waste materials. Supervisor Lentz noted that he had received comments from many who did not want to see anymore regulations, while some others liked the idea that properties should not be allowed to become eyesores which could affect surrounding properties. It was decided to take time to review what laws are already out there and how to enforce them. Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson suggested that it has been a stressful time for people during the pandemic and we should take time to make sure a new law would make sense and would be enforceable.

The Board members received the monthly financial reports and the abstracts of bills to review. A motion was made by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson, seconded by Councilman Brian Ryther and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to approve paying General Fund bills #22 through #36 for a total of \$30,428.40 and Highway Fund bills #14 through #20 for a total of \$43,705.45. General Fund bills #17 through #21 and Highway Fund bill #21 for a total of \$4,907.84 were paid by the Supervisor with previous Board approval.

Our Pandemic Emergency Plan as drafted by Emergency Preparedness Solutions with input from our committee, was completed and sent to the Board for their review. Supervisor Edward Lentz noted that he had sent a copy to the Mohawk Valley Economic Development District and they reviewed it and advised it was well done. After further discussion, a motion was made by Councilman Brian Ryther, seconded by Councilwoman Flo Loomis and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to adopt the New Lisbon Public Employer Health Emergency Plan as drafted.

The Planning Board will be allowed to use the town hall for their March 1st, 2021 meeting, following social distancing and mask guidelines. The Town Board will decide by the end of the month on whether we will hold our March 9th, 2021 meeting in person or by web conference. Supervisor Lentz has been tracking positivity rates and noticed some differences between state and county figures. Tom Riso commented that in regards to an Unsafe Properties Law, he doesn't like a law that puts liens on properties that people may not be able to overcome. With no further business or comments, a motion was made by Councilwoman Flo Loomis, seconded by Councilwoman Nancy Martin-Mathewson and carried 4 Ayes/ 0 Nays to adjourn at 9:58 PM.

Charlene R. Wells, New Lisbon Town Clerk

