

DRAFT

The Regular Town Board Meeting was held January 10th, 2024 in the Benton Town Hall Conference Room, 1000 Route 14A, Penn Yan NY 14527.

Board Present: Supervisor	John Prendergast
Councilmen	Richard Harper, Deputy
	Alan Tomion
	Glenn Quackenbush
	Thomas Davie

Also Present: Jayson Hoover – Highway/Water, Thomas Fulkrod – Zoning, Susan Mastronardi – Deputy Town Clerk, Bobbi Wolfe – Town Clerk.

Public Present: Brian Murphy, Matthew Perry, Grant Downs, Wayne Hansen

Supervisor Prendergast opened the meeting at 7:00 P.M. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Approval of Minutes:

Motion was made by Richard Harper, seconded by Glenn Quackenbush to approve the following minutes as presented: December 13, 2023 Town Board Meeting, December 14th, 2023 Special Meeting. Motion was carried.

Assessor:

Decision needs to be made on days, hours for a new assessor, also pay and health insurance. The town board will be going into executive session at the end of this meeting. Assessors exit from the position will be discussed. Thomas Davie and Glenn Quackenbush will be in charge of searching for a new assessor.

Yates County Sales Tax Sharing:

The Town is expecting their first sales tax sharing February 2024 in the amount of approximately \$83K.

Delaware River Solar Project:

Supervisor Prendergast will be sending a bill out next month requesting the 2 ½ % interest and payment.

Solar: Aaron Martin & Nathan Horning Projects:

Discussion was held on any changes to the contracts before they are sent to attorney Jeff Graff. Items to be looked at #2 Annual Payment & # 6 Term, Voluntary payment changed to Community Benefit payments. First payment within 30 days w/mechanical completion – electrical engineer signs off, before hooked up to the grid. Motion was made by Glenn Quackenbush, seconded by Thomas Davie to approve sending the solar contracts to attorney, Jeff Graff for his review. Motion was carried.

Zoning:

Tom reported 199 building permits for 2023. T/Jerusalem and Penn Yan have hired a certified Code/Zoning Officers. He reported a CO2 call with a NYSEG call out, and another CO2 issue due to the wind.

Supervisor Prendergast wanted it noted that there have been two new accounts set up with NYCLASS.

New Business:

2024 Budget: Has been re-printed due to the Water District Capital figures being incorrect, please throw away the original budget.

NYSEG: A meeting was held with representative, Josh Sheldon regarding the expansion of the natural gas line thru Benton. The Yates County Highway project should be completed by June of this year and at that time there will more discussion on the expansion.

Bellona Fire Protection:

The taxable was left off the tax bill for residents in the Bellona Fire Protection District. The town will pay the fire department \$62,031.00 for the 2024 budget. In 2025 the residents will pay double for their fire protection.. Motion was made by Glenn Quackenbush, seconded by Richard Harper to use fund balance from either General or Highway to reimburse the fire department. Motion was carried.

Justice:

Justice, David Grace informed the town board that starting in February he will be changing times and dates that he holds court. The new days will be the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays @ 5:00 P.M.

Water District – Town of Torrey:

The question was raised by Councilman Quackenbush. “Due to the situation with the assessor, and that contract being broke by Torrey after 40 years, do we want to continue with billing plus O&M for the water”?

After discussion it was decided to continue with billing, O&M for Torrey’s water district # 1. The contract needs to be revised. Casey and Jayson will be present for all installations.

Water District # 3: (Bellona):

Town of Seneca has raised their water rates. Jayson Hoover met with Seneca water employees to negotiate on a gradual increase. Seneca kept the increase at \$4.75/1000 + 10%. Due to the increase from the town of Seneca. Motion was made by Richard Harper, seconded by Glenn Quackenbush to increase the water cost as follows: \$60.00/6000 Gallons, \$6.50/1000 over the 6000 Gallons. This increase will be put in place for the March 2024 water billing. Motion was carried. (Water District # 3 Only)

Water District # 5:

Discussion was held on closing out this district. The final debit needs to be determined once we receive all expenses. This information will be sent to attorney, Jeff Graff for the final paperwork. Motion was made by Alan Tomion, seconded by Thomas Davie to close out this district. Motion was carried. Jayson Hoover spoke on behalf of this district stating we never expected this to fail, just a thought that maybe the town could foot half of the approximately \$120K that the residents of this district will owe. Both supervisor Prendergast and Councilman Harper stated that this is a special district and only residents within that district are responsible for the payment. Prendergast will ask attorney Graff his opinion on this matter.

Water District # 7:

We are still received signed petitions, seven have been received so far.

Highway/Water:

Jayson reported that he purchased extra stone over the summer, the winter budget is still under, with \$16K to the good side. The new truck's chassis will be built in April 2024 with a fall 2024 delivery.

Water: We had our three year inspection with no major issues.

Town of Torrey – Grant Downs: (Projects Torrey is working on:

- 1) WD # 1 Meeting 1/16/24 (Thanked Jayson for being there)
- 2) Solar Projects
- 3) Solar \$100.00 Permits
- 4) No Community Host Agreement
- 5) Short term rental – next focus
- 6) Torrey Station Corner 14 & 54 sold and on the tax roll
- 7) Cannabis Law

Monthly Reports and Abstract of Vouchers:

Motion was made by Glenn Quackenbush, seconded by Richard Harper to approve the following Vouchers from Abstract # 13: General (A) Claims 258-275 Totaling \$11,618.29. General (B) Claims 345-348 Totaling \$621.24, Highway (DA) Claims 100-108 Totaling \$8471.44, Highway (DB) Claims 228-29 Totaling \$28,548.77, SW1 Claims 61-65 Totaling \$2773.96, SW2- Claims 110-115 Totaling \$511.44, SW3- Claims 71-76 Totaling \$5267.39. Motion was Carried.

Motion was made by Thomas Davie, seconded by Alan Tomion to approve the following Vouchers from Abstract # 1 of 2024: General (A) Claims 1-18 Totaling \$38,538.96. Motion was carried.

Town Clerk, Highway/Water, Zoning and supervisor reports.

Executive Session:

Motion was made by Alan Tomion, seconded by Thomas Davie to enter into Executive Session Under Public Officers Law, Section 105, Article 7, Paragraph (f) of a particular person at 8:40 P.M. Motion was carried. Motion was made by Glenn Quackenbush, seconded by Thomas Davie to enter back into the regular meeting @ 9:13 P.M. Motion was carried.

Motion was made by John Prendergast, seconded by Alan Tomion to approve the following for exit package for assessor Stephanie Holtz:

- 1) Pay one pay period in 2024
- 2) Pay (1) week vacation
- 3) Health Insurance paid thru January 2024

Motion was duly put to a vote: YES: Thomas Davie, Alan Tomion, John Prendergast & Richard Harper. NOES: Glenn Quackenbush.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion was made by Glenn Quackenbush, seconded by Alan Tomion to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 P.M. Motion was carried.

Bobbi Wolfe
Benton Town Clerk, RMC

January 22, 2024

