

TOWN OF CLAVERACK

Regular Monthly Meeting

February 11, 2021

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Claverack, Columbia County, New York, was held remotely, as in past months, per Executive Order from the New York State Governor, due to COVID-19. The public has the ability to listen, comment and ask questions. Meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Supervisor Clifford Weigelt, who led in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Present remotely were:

Clifford Weigelt	Supervisor
Kathleen Cashen	Councilwoman
Stephen Hook	Councilman
Brian Keeler	Councilman
George Duntz	Councilman
Robert J. Fitzsimmons, Jr., Esq.	Attorney for the Town
Mary J. Hoose	Town Clerk
William Michael	Deputy Town Clerk

Absent:

Louis LaMont	Superintendent of Highways
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Motion by Councilman Duntz, seconded by Councilman Hook to accept minutes of Previous Monthly Meeting of January 07, 2021. Carried.

Motion by Councilwoman Cashen, seconded by Councilman Hook to accept minutes of Organizational Meeting of January 07, 2021. Carried.

In the absence of the Superintendent of Highways, Supervisor Weigelt reported that he is low on salt at the Highway Garage and will have to order some to get thru the rest of the winter weather.

Dog Control Officer's Report for January on file in Town Office for review.

Correspondence

Including, but not limited to:

NY Energy Solution – 2021 Project Update
Hecate Energy Columbia County Information on Shepherd's Run Solar Project in the Town of Copake
PILOT Agreement for Solar Energy Systems – ELP Claverack Solar LLC

2020 Town of Claverack Historian's Report

Claverack Library News – Want information on how taxes are coming in. They are considering a petition to place a 414 resolution on the November 2021 ballot to increase library tax funding.

E-mail regarding concerns with new 5G cellular systems.

Supervisor's Report

Gave report from Highway Superintendent LaMont – Would like to give call-in time for part-time men. Ever since we have used part-time men, we have paid them one-hour call-in time. He feels Town is lucky to have part-time men that he can count on.

Superintendent LaMont asked Supervisor Hook in January if he got the same benefits, such as Retiree Health Insurance, sick time, accrues cash-out. Does he still get jeans from Unifirst?

Superintendent LaMont reported he had checks for equipment that was sold thru Auctions International and scrap metal. These funds, in the amount of \$8,871.00, go into the Equipment Reserve Fund.

Letter received from Badger regarding water meters and program. Highway Superintendent LaMont is looking into this. There has been work on this project for quite some time. There also needs to be a new computer for the water program in the Town Office, which is also being looked into.

A bid of \$341,884.00 has been received for refinishing of the water tank. There will have to be two more bids before a decision can be made. Highway Superintendent LaMont will get the two quotes. The Town will probably bond the cost. The refinishing should be good for twenty plus years.

After short discussion, Councilwoman Cashen had a lease for the use of the former Claverack Library Building as a temporary place for the Town Court and other Town business that needs to be signed. Payments for the rental will not begin until all necessary work is completed and court can move there. Motion by Councilwoman Cashen, seconded by Councilman Hook to approve lease. Carried.

Supervisor Weigelt reported that all County Meetings are still being held virtual.

The Park Committee does have someone interested in taking care of the Park. Town will have to get someone to do mowing necessary outside of the Park area.

Town Board Member Reports

Councilman Keeler – Worked on A.B. Shaw/Churchtown Fire Companies boundary line dispute. There has been work on this for several years.

Went over solar PILOT agreements.

Worked on Town insurance coverage renewal with **Councilwoman Cashen**.

Reported that there has been a decrease in COVID-19 at the hospital the last few days. Gave some information on the vaccine. Should be getting more in the next few weeks.

Councilwoman Cashen – Worked with Councilman Hook and Town Attorney on lease for the former Claverack Library for temporary use for Town Court and other Town activities.

Followed up on Youth Winter Sports Program at Catamount Ski area.

Drafted Claverack Emergency Disaster Plan for review by Board Members and Department heads. Sent draft plan to management legal counsel for final changes before being sent to Teamsters Union for review.

Checked up on various personnel issues relating to Highway Department.

Worked with Town Attorney on PILOT agreement for solar projects and related issues.

Followed up on Settlement Agreement between Town and Clear Channel on removal of billboards on Rte. #66. Discussed agreement with Town Attorney and Building Inspector. A letter is being drafted to Clear Channel informing them of the timing for the removal of the four billboards.

Worked on 2021-2022 Town insurance renewal with Johnny Walker Insurance Company, broker for the Town. Worked on updates from the departments and hopefully able to be passed at March meeting. Renewal date is April 01, 2021. Will look into going out to bid next year.

Attended Scenic Hudson's Solar Mapping Tool Virtual Conference. There were also a couple of Town Planning Board members who participated.

Councilman Duntz – Has been working on getting workers for the Town Park for the coming season.

Worked on installing shelving in the storeroom downstairs of the Town Office Building for record storage.

Did some PR work at the Town Office Building. Would like employees there to describe the day-to-day duties that their jobs require

Councilman Hook – Did several runs for recycling materials from the Food Pantry and Town Offices.

Worked with **Councilwoman Cashen** on lease for temporary use of the former Claverack Library building to house Town Court and other Town activities.

Came to Town Office several times to sign checks.

End of reports.

Supervisor Weigelt then turned the meeting over to representative from East Light Partners Solar Project. She explained the PILOT Program which included payment to the School District, County and Town. During discussion, the Town stated the breakdown was significantly lower than the standard rates. It has been approved by the School and County. Some comments were:

Councilman Duntz – Is it negotiable?

Councilwoman Cashen – Taxes go up every year, but this PILOT does not.

Wendy DeWolf – East Light Representative – The amounts are standard for all projects – one not getting more than another.

Councilwoman Cashen – Seems unfair.

Supervisor – Feels Town should have been more aware of this.

Councilwoman Cashen – Does this have to be decided tonight? Would like to wait until March meeting and get more information.

Councilman Duntz – How does calculation work? Would like to know this before decision made.

Councilman Keeler – This is just beginning and a new adventure for the Town.

Wendy DeWolf – East Light Representative – Her Understanding was that the Town was on-board as is.

Supervisor Weigelt – Maybe have to take-it-on-the-chin and go on from here.

Town Attorney - This is within NYSERDA guidelines.

Supervisor Weigelt – Have to be more on-top-of-things next time.

Councilwoman Cashen – Wants to do more on our end.

Councilman Hook – Could this be done at workshop on February 22, 2021?

Wendy DeWolf – East Light Representative – May be able to negotiate separately from the School and County or leave the PILOT as is.

End of discussion.

Discussion on closing of Town Offices due to inclement weather. **Supervisor Weigelt** said that if one is closed, they should all be closed. Court should not have to work if other departments are closed. Either **Councilman Hook** or **Supervisor Weigelt** will make the call. **Councilman Duntz** questioned how will the time off be handled? The handbook states that either accrued time be used or decide to take time off and not get paid.

Attorney Fitzsimmons discussed the Churchtown/A.B. Shaw Fire Companies District mapping. Will get information together for companies.

Motion by Councilman Keeler, seconded by Councilman Duntz to accept draft January 2021, draft January – December 2020 Financial Reports. Carried.

John Bradley – CSC Coordinator – Gave Climate Smart Report for February with highlights from the January 25th Environmental Management Council (EMC) and Climate Smart projects status for the Town. They are working on three projects – **Greenhouse Gas Inventory, Streetlights LED Conversion and Hydropower.**

It was stated in the report that they could benefit from additional volunteers. Numerous additional initiatives have been suggested; many projects undertaken by neighboring towns could be appealing to Claverack. The committee's agenda can grow as more residents participate.

The next meeting of the Claverack Climate Smart Committee will be on Tuesday, February 23 at 6:00 p.m. on Zoom.

Meeting opened to public:

Stephanie Sussman – Feels County Police Reform Plan falls far short and is disappointing. Wants calling program for seniors. Columbia County Sheriff says word-of-mouth is unacceptable.

Brenda Shufelt – What can Town do? Discuss this with Sheriff. How can Town support Sheriff's Department?

Motion by Supervisor Weigelt, seconded by Councilman Hook to go into Executive Session at 7:30 p.m. Carried.

Motion by Councilman Keeler, seconded by Councilman Hook, to come out of Executive Session at 8:46 p.m. Carried

Motion by **Councilman Hook**, seconded by **Councilman Duntz** to raise the payrate for the wingmen positions at the Highway Department to \$15. Per hour, effective next pay period. Also, raise the payrate for Jodi Keyser, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) to \$15.50 per hour, effective next pay period. Carried.

All Board members agreed to send the lease to the Library Board for review and approval.

General A bills, totaling \$15,766.17 were audited and ordered paid from their accounts.

General B bills, totaling \$530.21 were audited and ordered paid from their accounts.

Highway DB bills, totaling \$9,688.11 were audited and ordered paid from their accounts.

Water District A bills, totaling \$448.00 were audited and ordered paid from the account.

There being no further business to be brought before the Board on motion by **Councilwoman Cashen**, seconded by **Councilman Hook**, meeting adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Date: _____

Supervisor: _____

Councilwoman Cashen: _____

Councilman Hook: _____

Councilman Keeler: _____

Councilman Duntz: _____

Town Clerk: _____