

TOWN OF CLAVERACK

Regular Monthly Meeting

March 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.

Present remotely were:

Clifford Weigelt	Supervisor
Kathleen Cashen	Councilwoman
Stephen Hook	Councilman
Brian Keeler	Councilman
George Duntz	Councilman
Mary J. Hoose	Town Clerk

Absent:

Louis LaMont	Superintendent of Highways
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Motion by Councilman Hook, seconded by Councilman Keeler to accept minutes of previous meeting of February 11, 2021. Carried.

Supervisor Weigelt introduced and turned over the meeting to **Suzette Booy**, Director, Columbia County Real Property Service Agency. She explained the reval that has just been done by the County in the Town of Claverack. There are also other Towns that are involved in a reval. These revals have been ordered by the State of New York. Some of the points brought out were:

Increase does not mean increase in property owner's taxes. Value of the Town goes up and taxes would go down. There has not been a reval since 2010 and some properties have had improvements, new property purchased and homes built. The rule of thumb is 1/3 will increase, /3 will decrease and 1/3 will remain the same. It will make properties more in-line. If you do not agree with the new assessment, appointments can be made with the Real Property Office. The information from that will be sent to the Assessor, who will make the final determination to the property owner by phone.

If no satisfaction is reached, property owners may go to Grievance, which is held the fourth Tuesday of May, this year being May 25, 2021. It is the burden of the property owner to determine their opinion of value with documentation such as a certified appraisal, recent sales or on the market, or a list of three or four comparable recent sales.

Supervisor Weigelt stated that the preliminary notices sent out will tell the previous assessment and th4e change. It will not show the change in tax amounts. Town does not increase revenue.

Changes in assessments will also show in school taxes. Letters that property owners received do not show exemptions that some have. This is explained in the letter also.

Councilman Keeler said that it was good explaining by Suzette and people should refer back to the letter received. The Town has 3,300 +/- parcels, which is the second largest in the County.

Thank you to Suzette for taking time to help people understand what the reval is.

Councilman Duntz reported that the Town has a Resident Deputy. **Deputy Merante** covers the Towns of Claverack, Greenport, Ghent and Philmont and is present at the meeting this evening. This is to contribute to community relations and show a presence in these areas.

There will be a speed wagon on Fish & Game Road beginning tomorrow. A neighborhood watch is offered and senior program, where when called the senior just has to press "1" to let the caller know that all is okay and also a check on senior homes to make sure all is okay.

There is a Safe Child ID program and a free car seat program where the seats are checked for safety.

For Youth and Seniors there will be a setting up of summer programs, pizza parties.

Supervisor Weigelt thanked **Mr. Merante** for the report and also reported some vandalism at the Town Park. **Councilman Keeler** also reported several complaints from residents on Stone Mill Road.

Supervisor Weigelt, in the absence of Highway Superintendent LaMont, reported that sweeping, road patching and cleaning ditches being done by Department. They are also cleaning up a lot tree limbs that have fallen and garbage is already being thrown along the roads, which takes labor and time to clean up.

Supervisor Weigelt reported that the County passed the Police Reform. It was passed by all the County Supervisors and it was a job well done.

Town Board Member Reports

Councilman Duntz – Met with **Supervisor Weigelt**, and **Councilman Hook** and candidates for work in the Town Parks and Martindale Cemetery. Still waiting on a couple more candidates.

Met with **Highways Superintendent** to discuss concerns that he had.

Spoke with **Bett Holmes** who has been Director of the Summer Youth Program for many years to see if he was interested again this year. There was no Program last year due to COVID-19.

Working with Fire Departments directly on a couple of issues.

Supervisor Weigelt reported that the Town Park would be open for the baseball season. This will be discussed in Executive Session.

Councilwoman Cashen – Working with Attorney Fitzsimmons, Deputy Clerk Michael and Town Clerk on the Solar Agreement with EPL. There will be an additional \$15,000. To the Town over the life of the agreement.

With **Councilman Hook**, met with Claverack Library Committee regarding work to be done on the former Library building to be used as temporary space for the Town Court/Town Hall. Peter Fonda should be starting the renovations in April and should be able to open the end of June.

Worked on finalizing the Claverack Emergency Disaster Plan for Town Board approval.

Attended meeting on COVID-10 stimulus bill, sponsored by Congressman Delgado. Claverack should be getting \$617,572., and includes the Village of Philmont. It is based on population, will have parameters and no timeframe given.

Followed up on LOSAP credit resolution for Churchtown Fire Department volunteers.

Participated in a discussion with Mike Tucker and Climate Smart Committee regarding feasibility of hydropower for the new Town Court/Town Hall building, to be located on Roxbury Road, where the present building is.

Had discussion with a local architecture firm regarding new Town Court/Town Hall building. They are willing to discuss with the Town Board options for rebuilding and/or reusing parts of the old building for the new facility.

Followed up on the Settlement Agreement between the Town and Clear Channel on removal of billboards on Rte. #66. This Agreement was made many years ago.

Worked on renewal of Town Insurance with Johnny Walker Insurance Company.

Responded to question from residents on sewer hook-up on Rte. #66 and also a driveway complaint on Apple Lane.

Hosted March Planning Board Meeting via Zoom.

Councilman Keeler – Attended Planning Board Meeting. Lost power in Claverack that night. Wires burned hoe in pavement.

Spent much time reviewing many documents.

Councilman Hook – Several runs taking recycling materials from the Town Offices and Food Pantry,

Met with **Supervisor Weigelt** and **Councilman Duntz** regarding the Town Park and interviewing candidates for work in the Parks and Martindale Cemetery.

With **Councilwoman Cashen** met with Claverack Library Committee regarding work to be done at the former Claverack Library Building to be used temporarily for the Town Court/Town Hall while new building is being built.

At Town Office many times to sign checks.

No further reports.

Supervisor Weigelt will be talking with the Town of Greenport regarding the sewer line to the Commerce Park. It should not be a major problem. Also, trying to get a water tower towards the airport, maybe near Ginsberg's.

Regarding the water tower, a lease agreement should be made with AT&T to place antennas on Town water tower, but wait until painted as antennas will no longer be attached directly on the tower. Motion by Councilman Hook, seconded by Councilman Duntz to table until next month's meeting. Carried.

Regarding a letter from several residents concerned about the 5G lines, an e-mail will be sent with the information from our Town Attorney.

Mellenville Fire Company is asking Town to turn land across from the fire station on County Rte. 9 over to them. They have a 99-year lease and use it for excess parking during functions. Attorney Fitzsimmons will look into this as there seems to be some problems with neighbors and property lines.

Motion by **Councilwoman Cashen**, seconded by **Councilman Hook** to approve the Public Employer Health Emergency Plan. Carried.

Motion by **Councilman Keeler**, seconded by **Councilman Hook** to approve award LOSAP points to active volunteer firefighters in the Churchtown Fire Company during the COVID-19 Pandemic of 2020. Carried.

Motion by **Councilman Duntz**, seconded by **Councilman Hook** to write letter of support for grant for Churchtown Fire Company. Carried.

Motion by **Councilman Hook**, seconded by **Councilman Keeler** to accept draft January – February 2021, draft January – February 2020 and draft February 2021 Financial Reports. Carried.

Meeting opened to public:

John Bradley – Getting forms to request cost for LED lights.

Digging more into the economics of water power.

Stephanie Sussman – Glad Mr. Merante spoke. How many involved in Senior Program? Flyers should go in Food Pantry.

Attended Police Reform meeting- good first start. More than twenty speakers. Many comments repeated about shortcomings of Plan. One is supporting incarcerated individuals (less than 40 at present time). Jail is tremendous expense. Excess space in jail building could be improved for housing

No further comments.

Motion by **Councilman Hook**, seconded by **Councilman Duntz** to go into Executive session at 7:00 p.m. Carried.

Motion by **Councilman Hook**, seconded by **Councilwoman Cashen** to go out of Executive Session at 8:10 p.m. Carried.

General A Bills, totaling \$14,943.23, were audited and ordered paid from their accounts.

General B bills, totaling \$529.87, were audited and ordered paid from their accounts.

Highway DB bills, totaling \$30,954.30 were audited and ordered paid from their accounts.

Water District A bills, totaling \$221.10, were audited and ordered paid from the account.

There were no Highway DA bills.

There were no Escrow Account bills.

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, on motion by **Councilman Hook**, seconded by **Councilman Keeler**, meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Date: _____

Supervisor: _____

Councilwoman Cashen: _____

Councilman Hook: _____

Councilman Keeler: _____

Councilman Duntz: _____

Town Clerk: _____