

Workshop Meeting
July 26, 2021
836 Route 217, Philmont, NY 12565
6:00pm

Attendees:

Clifford Weigelt Supervisor	Stephen Hook Councilman
Katy Cashen Councilwoman	Brian Keeler Councilman
Attorney Robert Fitzsimmons	George Duntz Councilman - Absent
William R Michael Deputy Town Clerk	

Jane Case spoke to the board of a program at the Claverack Library called Turning Outward. The program reaches out to citizens in the community to ask what they would like in a community and how they feel our community measures up to others. Ms. Case stated that there were approximately ten to twelve meetings. The meeting participants consisted people of all walks, young, older, persons living here their whole life and persons new to the area. Some of the needs brought up often included, being connected to others in the community, friendly people that would acknowledge them, a walkable community, which came up again and again, and also a diverse community. One main concern some citizens had was that there was no town center. Some thought the town needed an updated comprehensive plan. Others would like to see speed limits lowered, which Supervisor Weigelt stated something may happen at some point on Route 23B. Ms. Case asked about having trails, possibly under powerlines, which she has seen other places. Supervisor Weigelt went on to explain possible rail trail expansion. He said he also knows people who would love to have more access to trails in the area. Ms. Case went on to say how some citizens stated they would like to see more events connecting people. She said that the Summer Concert Series that runs in the park Thursday evenings, was a perfect example. Ms. Case said the last thing that the groups were asked was who they trust. Their answer was the library and the town's elected officials.

Jim Cohan of Philmont Partners and Andrew Aubin of Crawford and Associate's spoke about using the old Ockawamick building. Mr. Cohan stated that a crew has been cleaning out the building, have had mold remediation come in to assess and that Crawford and Associate's has been hired to come up with a master plan where to go next. Mr. Aubin explained that HBO has approached the owners looking for a school building to film a series in. They would want to film periodically through March of 2022. The two were looking for permission from the town to be able to accomplish this. Town Attorney Fitzsimmons weighed in saying that he did not see a problem with the nature of the use because it is a temporary use. He stated that there are no current restrictions to prevent it. Mr. Fitzsimmons stated that although the school has been closed, it previously had children, teachers, buses and a lot of activity so although it may be a shock to neighbors when it happens, it basically would be returning to an activity level similar to when it was open. It was also discussed about the building ultimately being used as an art center. What is proposed is having the classrooms being transformed into space that artists could work in.

They also would like to have art displays inside as well as a secure storage area for art. Mr. Fitzsimmons stated that this is a change of use and would require a little more work in getting approved. Mr. Aubin stated at this time they are just looking for permission to have the filming at the school.

Motion to approve the filming made by Councilwoman Cashen, seconded by Councilman Hook, all in favor, carried.

Discussed yearly mandated sexual harassment and workplace violence given to town employees. Councilman Duntz, in an earlier discussion thought it may be better to coordinate if the training were given by Columbia County. Currently the county and town have an agreement for the county to provide the training if needed. Currently the training is being given by town employees. The training is required to be done in the summer months which the board determined that with the deadline so close, it may be best to have town employees give the training this year and look into going with the county possibly next year.

Discussed the Churchtown Fire Co and A.B Shaw Fire Co boundary lines. Attorney Fitzsimmons stated things are currently on hold waiting for mapping. He also stated that he has ongoing conversations with the county about software to finish up the maps.

Discussed the status of the old Claverack Library/temporary use for town court. Councilman Hook stated they are still waiting for National Grid to move the electric meter from the inside, which resulted when a bathroom addition was added, to the outside of the building so more work can happen. Councilman Hook also advised the board of a complaint he received for a sign that covers a storage container that the town has rented for file storage.

Supervisor Weigelt discussed having proposals sent out for bids to have the old Town Hall taken down.

Discussed pandemic relief money. Councilwoman Cashen stated she heard other towns have received funds. She stated that she has been informed that the town's application has been accepted but no word on when receiving funds. Attorney Fitzsimmons suggested she contact the county. She then stated that the public be involved for ideas of where the money could help citizens.

Discussed the status of the park grant that has been previously approved. Councilwoman Cashen stated as of now she has not heard nothing.

Discussed a park rental waiver request from COARC. This is for a one day event that happens every year.

Motion to waive fee made by Councilman Hook, seconded by Councilman Keeler, all in favor, carried.

Discussed having a refundable cleaning fee for park rentals. Councilman Hook advised the board of an incident where someone from a party renting the park, throwing bottles at signs and broken glass having to be picked up by park employees. The board will discuss more at the next board meeting.

Motion to enter into executive session to discuss potential litigation made by Supervisor Weigelt, seconded by Councilman Hook, all in favor, carried. 7:02 PM.

Motion to leave executive session made by Councilman Hook, seconded by Councilwoman Cashen, all in favor, carried. 7:29 PM.

Highway Superintendent LaMont advised the board his need to buy a new excavator. He provided the board with a quote of a new excavator after trading two older ones in. Councilwoman Cashen suggested looking into the town's equipment reserve fund. Highway Super LaMont also discussed an idea of abandoning Theilman Road behind the old Yorkshire and Park Street which borders the hamlet park. Supervisor Weigelt went on to say that he has also been in discussions with the state, who may also abandoned their section of road that also borders the hamlet park off of Route 23/9H. Mr. LaMont stated he had met with a water meter company who had shown him a new computerized system. He stated the current system is very out of date. The new system is cellular and is quoted at \$49,000.00. Supervisor Weigelt suggested this could possibly come out of incoming pandemic money.

Mr. LaMont expressed his need for the town bookkeeper to provide him with a spreadsheet showing bills and payments. Councilwoman Cashen asked if he received bills which he stated he does not get many bill. Councilwoman Cashen suggested a meeting with her, Councilman Hook, the town bookkeeper and LaMont to try to come up with a solution. Councilman Hook stated that incoming bills received by the town office be stamped by the Town Clerk before giving them to the bookkeeper.

Discussed a proposed speed limit on VanDeusen road. Councilwoman Cashen sent a memo to the county and will follow up.

Discussed proposed LED lighting conversion from National Grid. Councilwoman Cashen stated John Bradley from the Climate Smart Committee will do an analysis and get back to the board.

Motion to adjourn meeting by Councilman Keeler, seconded by Councilwoman Cashen, all in favor, carried. Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
William Michael