

**TOWN OF CLAVERACK**

**Regular Monthly Meeting**

**September 09, 2021**

The Regular Monthly Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Claverack, Columbia County, New York was held at the Town Hall, #836 Rte. #217, Mellenville, New York. Meeting called to order at 6:00 p.m. by Supervisor Clifford Weigelt, who led in a moment of silence in memory of two young men who recently passed away in a tragic car accident and known to many local residents, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Present:

Clifford Weigelt	Supervisor
Kathleen Cashen	Councilwoman
Stephen Hook	Councilman
Brian Keeler	Councilman
George Duntz	Councilman
Robert Fitzsimmons, Jr., Esq.	Attorney for the Town
Louis LaMont	Superintendent of Highways
Mary J. Hoose	Town Clerk

Motion by Councilman Hook, seconded by Councilman Keeler to accept minutes of previous meeting of August 12, 2021.

The Superintendent of Highways, Louis LaMont, was on vacation this week. No report from the Highway Department.

The **Dog Control Officer's Report for August** was received and on file in Town Office for review.

**Correspondence**

Including, but not limited to:

Columbia County Habitat for Humanity -e-mail – Review: Summer 2021  
Spyglass Locations – e-mail – Certificate of Insurance  
NYS Department of State – e-mail – 2020 Population Total – 6,058  
Samantha Umstad – e-mail – Resolution for Speed Limit Changes on Ret. 9-H  
Christine Vanderlan – e-mail – Columbia Land Conservancy Offers Community Solar Webinar

Series

Kyle Miller – Monthly Dog Report – August 2021  
Handwritten notes of apology from two of the boys involved in damage at the Town Park  
Village of Philmont – Fire District Budget for 2022  
Division of Local Government and School Accountability – Local Training Unit – e-mail – Re: OSC  
Webinar – Fiscal Stress Monitoring System Briefing for Local Governments  
Taconic Hills Central School District – 2021 -2022 Tax bill for property near Gahbauer Road

**Supervisor's Report**

At the County Board of Supervisors' Meeting, it was reported that Sales Tax was up.

County is looking for a Commissioner to take the place of Dean Knox. Speed limit requests also have to go thru the Commissioner. They are also looking for an engineer to oversee problems and requests.

In discussing the removal of the Town Hall/Town Court building, there are two ways for the demolishing – taking care of the asbestos by itself or go out for bid. Crawford & Associates will put something together.

### **Town Board Member Reports**

**Councilwoman Cashen** – Found out the Town is getting an additional \$1,823.30 of American Rescue Plan (ARPA) funds. Half of that amount was distributed last month (\$911.65). The Town has received the first half of the funds (\$224,204.45). The second half of the funds will be distributed to the Town by Summer of 2022, bringing the total to \$448408.90.

Grant submitted to NYSEDA for LED streetlights Conversion for \$5,000.00 was approved and a check has been received. The Climate Smart Committee was instrumental in gathering information for this grant. Still waiting for Mellenville conversion information from NYSEG.

Columbia County Economic Development Council released Broadband Report with unserved residences in the Town of approximately 60. Further discussions should take place as to possible funding sources to help bring broadband to these residences. Spoke to residents on Thielman Road about efforts to obtain Broadband services from Mid-Hudson Cablevision. Mid-Hudson received \$1,700.00 from each household for this. Poles have to be changed as they have to be a certain height.

Had a conference call with Labor Counsel regarding Highway Personnel/Union issues.

Attended September Planning Board meeting.

Discussed with other Town Board members at the monthly Workshop of switching Town health insurance broker to the same person, under new Company name. Board agreed and resolution will be made.

Followed up with Attorney Fitzsimmons on communication to homeowner that had a two-night party on August 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Letter drafted by him was sent via certified mail to the homeowner.

Received final agreement from Claverack Solar 1, LLC, that is building on Stottville Road. Town will receive \$4,375.00 in the first year of the 15-year agreement once the field is built. It will increase to \$5,772.72 the final year of the agreement.

**Councilman Duntz** - Spoke to others to get information regarding use of baseball fields.

Spoke with Matt Parker regarding B&B's.

**Councilman Hook** – Signed check at Town Office multiple times.

Did recycling many times for Town Office and food pantry.

Made trip to Albany to pick up electrical supplies for court building.

Met with a citizen regarding lighting complaint at former Ockawamick School building.

Made trip to Lowes for materials for court building.

Attended September Planning Board meeting.

Along with Councilwoman Cashen, met with Superintendent of Highways, Louis LaMont and Union officials.

Met with County representatives at the former Claverack Library, which will be used temporarily for the Town Court and other Town meetings until new building is constructed.

End of Board Member Report.

Motion by Councilman Hook, seconded by Councilman Duntz to accept JV Computer's new plan for 2022. Carried.

Motion by Councilwoman Cashen, seconded by Councilman Duntz for resolution for the Town's health insurance broker to remain the same, but a new company -Reiser Consulting. Carried.

Motion by Councilman Hook, seconded by Councilman Keeler, to accept draft January – August 2021, January – August 2020, draft August 2021. Carried.

Motion by Councilman Hook, seconded by Councilwoman Cashen to approve funds to be transferred in the 2021 Budget. Carried.

**Supervisor Weigelt** reported that at the County meeting yesterday there was discussion of a new building for Seniors and looking at the Commerce Park as a possibility. Also, the sewer line going to the Commerce Park should be completed in about two months.

Supervisor Weigelt turned the meeting over to John Bradley, Climate Smart Coordinator. Mr. Bradley has provided a synopsis of his report.

The Climate Smart Committee is planning a Community Solar campaign to enroll residents for Solar electricity. Benefits include a 10% electricity discount, bonus payments to residents and to the Town for a climate fund, and NYSEDA Grants for registering residents - \$15,000.00 for registering at least 25 new customers. It is a lot of work and will need more volunteers. The work-load can be eased somewhat by bootstrapping on the county-wide campaign. There are still issues to be resolved and the Town Board will be kept updated on the progress.

During the discussion, Councilwoman Cashen noted that one of the solar farms in the community will be marketing to all Town residents once they are up and running.

Mr. Bradley also discussed Climate Smart's July's recommendations on the path to Bronze Certification, noting there are many economic, environmental and quality of life benefits to the community for a green town hall, designed to the highest feasible level of sustainability. He emphasized the importance of hiring an architect with experience with high performance green buildings and good project management. Overall planning of the 5-acre site is important for creating unique amenity for the community. The natural beauty of the falls, creek and paper mill ruins, adjacent to the conservation area, can be developed into a nature and historic park. The entire project is a generational opportunity and will help Claverack compete with other towns, such as Chatham, Hillsdale and Copake. A god

planning process gives the board better control over this complex process and reduces waste and mistakes.

**Supervisor Weigelt** reported that the Town had received \$1,050.00 from the boys who were responsible for damage in the Town Park. Also received were letters of apology from two of the boys.

Discussion on the gathering on August 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> at a Rte. 9-H residence. Need to strengthen law for parking and for cars being towed. With Attorney Fitzsimmons, trying to write up some type of law, including unsafe fire hazard and health hazard. Have to be careful with people's rights.

Registered letter was also sent to the owners of the property.

Waiting on information and property owner information involved in the boundary line dispute in the A.B. Shaw and Churchtown Fire Districts.

An update on the temporary Court facility at the former Claverack Library – Working on the electric. Should be ready to use in a month or two.

Town working on a zoning change for private road in a subdivision. No more than 4 lots on the main road. Would not change regulations. Someone would own road. Town would not be taking over road. For 30' the grade can be no more than 3%. Would go to County Planning for review and then to Town Planning Board and ZBA.

Motion by Councilman Hook, seconded by Councilman Duntz to sign the AT&T lease for an antenna on the water tank. Carried.

Supervisor Weigelt spoke on the speed limit on Rte. #23-B. This request has been made several times, but we will try again.

Meeting opened to public:

**“Mike” Brandon** – Lives on Rte. #217, just below the former Ockawamick School: Was at Planning Board Meeting on Tuesday. What is being done at the school is totally different from what they told the Planning Board. Eleven tractor trailers there, blinding lights on Tishauser Road and trucks blocking road. Building supposed to be for art storage.

**Jeane LaPorta – Town Historian** – Took a moment to remember Kinderhook Historian, Ruth Powonka, who passed away August 02, 2021. She will be missed and remembered for her extensive work in preserving the history of Kinderhook and also throughout the area and the State.

Mrs. LaPorta is continuing work with the Columbia County Historian Group with meetings by Zoom. Don Meltz and Shari Franks are working with the group on a Historic Sites Map. Shari is uploading all the listings. Jeane submitted an excel sheet that can be added to over time with 20 historic sites, not just houses. The goal is to have a listing or more for each hamlet in Claverack. The map will be available soon.

Jeane is serving on the America 250 Committee to develop a County-wide commemoration of semiquincentennial, the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S.A. Interested in volunteers. Suggestions so far are a countywide parade, history spots in each town, streetscape rejuvenation, planting or replanting lost trees along main streets. Towns are urged to set up an American 250 committee. It may seem far off,

but time will pass quickly and planting takes a lot of time. Also attended a Philmont Village Board meeting to talk about the history map and the America 250 planning.

Working with family at 571 Rte. 23B preparing for the National Parks Service Registry of Historic Places, to develop the history of the house. Should be ready by end of September.

The Conyn/Fuller house is being prepared for the William G. Pomeroy Foundation Historic Marker, which is ready to submit. It is already on the Register of Historic Places and will need the Supervisor's approval for the marker to be placed.

At the Greenport Conservancy, off Joslen Boulevard is the Mastodon Kiosk, made and placed in April 2020, that gives credit to the fact that that was Claverack when the skeleton was discovered. Would like that Board to consider having a similar kiosk reproduced and placed somewhere in the Town, perhaps the Town Park. Mrs. LaPorta thinks it gives credit to a major historical event that put Claverack on the world map. Kiosk is not very large and made of a heavy acrylic, weather resistant, without maintenance.

Mrs. LaPorta has also been attending Claverack library Room meetings and the Association of State and Local Historians virtual conference is coming up with several good workshops for Town Historians.

**Stephanie Sussman** – Objects to August meeting minutes.

Mr. Merante, Resident Deputy, did speak in March. But there is need for conversation with Sheriff's Department on what public and safety issues there are locally and residents need to be able to ask questions. **Councilman Duntz** said that he has been working on this and will ask if the October 14<sup>th</sup> meeting might be a good time. He will follow up on this. The Sheriff's Department is working on shortage of Deputies at the present time.

A type of Patriot sticker has been appearing increasingly throughout the County. Knows that it is a right wing supremacy group and is a concern.

Town needs a resolution about hate and violence.

**Councilwoman Cashen** stated that a Town Board Meeting is not the place for a meeting with the Sheriff's Department. It should be a stand alone meeting, maybe at the Village of Philmont Hall or one of the fire company meeting rooms.

**Supervisor Weigelt**, before having Ian speak said that he is meeting with an engineering firm and going to look at Shaw Bridge and get a quote for what needs to be done. Will see what the State expects before proceeding.

**Ian Nitschke** – Glad that Town is dealing with problems on Rte. 23-B again.

Also, remarked that the passing of Ruth Powonka was a great loss to the County and her work in preserving history in the area and throughout the State.

**Stephen King** - Requested that Supervisor Weigelt keep pressure on for the speed limit on #23-B. There was another accident, which makes it the 4<sup>th</sup> pole in about 5 years.

Former Ockawamick School building project is good P/R for the Town and asks that it be supported in the future.

A **resident** spoke regarding a complaint about the Gun Club. Was told that it was not at our Board Meeting – might have been the Philmont Village Meeting. They do a lot for the local youth and for the community.

**Brenda Shufelt** – reiterated about the loss of Ruth Powonka.

Questioned whether there will be a Town sponsored meeting with the Sheriff’s Department.

**Supervisor Weigelt** said that he will work on getting this to happen.

Climate Smart timetable planning should start now. **Supervisor Weigelt** said that we need a survey done to see what the boundaries are for what the Town owns.

**Donna Davi** – Regarding speeding on Stottville Road. Is there a way to lower speed limit from 40 mph to 30 mph? Maybe speed bumps or the digital speed sign being put up would help.

**Supervisor Weigelt** reported that the County has gone to virtual meetings. **Councilwoman Cashen** said that the Governor has given the option at this time. In two weeks, there may be a better sense of what to do.

General A bills, totaling \$7,096.30 were audited and paid from their accounts.

General B bills, totaling \$595.56 were Audited and ordered paid from their accounts

Highway DB bill, totaling \$107,330.88 were audited and ordered paid from their accounts.

Water District bills, totaling \$3,837.48 were audit4ed 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 Keeler, seconded by Councilman Hook, meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Councilwoman Cashen: \_\_\_\_\_

Councilman Hook: \_\_\_\_\_

Councilman Keeler: \_\_\_\_\_

Councilman Duntz: \_\_\_\_\_

Town Clerk: \_\_\_\_\_

