

TOWN OF CLAVERACK
Regular Monthly Town Board Meeting
July 13, 2023
6:00 pm

Board Members Present

✓	Clifford Weigelt (CW) Supervisor	abs	George Duntz (GD) Councilman
✓	Stephen Hook (SH) Councilman	abs	Douglas Colwell (DC) Councilman
✓	Kathleen Cashen (KC) Councilwoman		

Also Present

✓	Louis LaMont, Superintendent of Highways (LL)
✓	Robert Fitzsimmons, Jr., Esq, Attorney for the Town (RF)
✓	Mary J. Hoose, Town Clerk
✓	Vonda Teaney, Deputy Clerk

Public Hearing on Local Law #4 of 2023
Extension of Moratorium on Camps and Campgrounds

RF explained that the Town of Claverack needs to update zoning. This Moratorium would allow more time to finalize these updates. Resident, Stephanie Sussman, voiced her agreement with this extension.

Public Hearing on Local Law #5 of 2023
Establish a Tax Exemption for Volunteer Firefighters and Ambulance Workers

RF explained this exemption follows county's recently adopted exemption. Resident, Stephanie Sussman asked if an individual would need to be active member to qualify. RF explained that specific questions regarding qualification would need to be asked of the Town Assessor.

Public Hearing on Local Law #6 of 2023

Establish Tax Exemption Income Levels for Disabled and Low-Income Citizens

RF explained that this Local Law proposes changes to income requirements only. He again pointed out that specific questions regarding qualification can be made with Assessor.

Public Hearing on Local Law #7 of 2023

Establish Tax Exemption Income Levels for Senior Citizens

RF explained this exemption amends the sliding scale for income levels.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Town Board Meeting Minutes of June 8, 2023 and Special Meeting Minutes of June 15, 2023

Motion: KC **Seconded:** SH

Vote: Yes: 3 No: Abstention(s): Accepted Rejected Tabled

CORRESPONDENCE – Including, but not limited to:

Columbia County EMC – Patrice Perry – e-mail – Nomination of EMC Representative for 2 years.
CDPHP – Notice of Proposed Rate Change.
Nikki-Barmen – e-mail – Winter Ski Program at Catamount.
Claverack Library – Information to community.
Teamsters Local 294 – Re: Negotiations for contract.
Terence Duvall – Re: Upcoming Scenic Hudson Training 2023 Community Preservation Fund Training.
Partners for Climate Change – e-mail – Meadow Walk: Exploring Biodiversity – Wed. July 26 – 4:30-6:30 p.m. – Gallatin, NY.
Philmont Neighbors – e-mail – PCSC Newsletter
Philmont Climate Smart Task Force (PCSC) – Summer 2023 news.
National Grid – Guide to before and after the storm.
Philmont Library – e-mail – Summer Happenings.
Glenn Holzhauer - Thanking Town and County for repaving Fish & Game Road. But, hazardous now near Schroeder Rd.
Betty Clark – Card thanking Town for funding buses for Senior trips.
Social Security Administration – The Social Security Star for July 2023.

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT REPORT - *Removed eight trees on blind corner of Stever’s Crossing Rd in tandem with Host Tree Service - dug out stumps and widened corner. Replaced two culvert pipes on Stever’s Crossing Rd and prepared for chip sealing. Installed guide rail on Stever’s Crossing near Oak Hill Rd. Removed a tree at Town Park. Prepared Valley Lane for*

paving. Mowing on sides of roads in all zones. Installed new water meters – still have a few that remain to be switched.

DOG CONTROL REPORT – *On file with the Town Clerk*

SUPERVISOR REPORT – *On the County level, a Fitch report was done (EMS) to see how all can work together rather than independently. The study is being done looking toward future. CW commended PJ Keeler for doing a great job but the County needs to look ahead regarding staffing and personnel. The County is currently looking to fill a dispatch position for EMS. Columbia County Sheriff renewed agreements with all schools in the county for fall. A new water tank is being installed by the airport. County is investigating due to low water pressure. The County okayed refinishing the .5 miles on Fish & Game Rd – this section was not approved originally. The County put the money in to complete so the whole road will now be “new”. The target is for all work to be done by November 2023.*

TOWN BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Councilman Hook - *Mobile Locksmith – Town office and park keys; Food Pantry; Transfer Station; Office – signed checks; Park with Derby; Worked with George on Water Tower; Special Meeting – Approving bid for water tower; Went to Old Building to meet with prospective bidders on asbestos removal; Went to Temporary Town Hall/Court regarding AC; Planning Board meeting; Worked on Comprehensive Plan; Attended PB/ZBA Meetings; Met with Bookkeeper to review bills; Met with Mobile Locksmith for park keys; Finalized updating of AEDs and Smoke Detectors in all buildings.*

Councilman Duntz - *absent*

Councilman Colwell - *absent*

Councilwoman Cashen – *Began discussions with health insurance broker on renewal of 2023-2024 policy for full-time town employees. Reviewed various laws from other towns to identify possible discuss changes to the Town’s Campground law. Communicated with Catamount Ski Area regarding the Winter Sports Program for Claverack. Attended the July 10 Planning Board meeting. Attended the June 12 Claverack Climate Smart Committee meeting. Responded to requests for energy data from town facilities for the Greenhouse Gas Inventory initiative. Reached out to employment attorney to schedule union negotiations with the Teamsters Union for the Highway Department employees. Commended Derby Shutts and his crew for the painting of the fence in the park.*

PROPOSED MOTIONS/RESOLUTIONS

Motion to accept proposed Local Law #4 of 2023 “*Extension of Moratorium on Camps and Campgrounds*”.

Motion: SH **Seconded:** KC

Vote: Yes: 3 No: ___ Abstention(s): ___ **Motion:** Accepted Rejected Tabled

Motion to accept proposed Local Law #5 of 2023 “*Establish a Tax Exemption for Volunteer Firefighters and Ambulance Workers*”.

Motion: KC **Seconded:** SH

Vote: Yes: 3 No: ___ Abstention(s): ___ **Motion:** Accepted Rejected Tabled

Motion to accept proposed Local Law #6 of 2023 “*Establish Tax Exemption Income Levels for Disabled and Low-Income Citizens*”.

Motion: SH **Seconded:** KC

Vote: Yes: 3 No: ___ Abstention(s): ___ **Motion:** Accepted Rejected Tabled

Motion to accept proposed Local Law #7 of 2023 “*Establish Tax Exemption Income Levels for Senior Citizens*”.

Motion: KC **Seconded:** SH

Vote: Yes: 3 No: ___ Abstention(s): ___ **Motion:** Accepted Rejected Tabled

Motion to accept the resignation of Joshua Miller as Counselors for the Summer Park Program.

Motion: KC **Seconded:** SH

Vote: Yes: 3 No: ___ Abstention(s): ___ **Motion:** Accepted Rejected Tabled

Motion to waive Park Use Fees and Deposit for COARC picnic to be held on September 8, 2023.

Motion: KC **Seconded:** SH

Vote: Yes: 3 No: ___ Abstention(s): ___ **Motion:** Accepted Rejected Tabled

Motion to award bid for repair/replacement of Salt Shed Roof at the Highway Garage building on Schoolhouse Road. Notice of Award issued to VAD.

Motion: KC **Seconded:** SH

Vote: Yes: 3 No: ___ Abstention(s): ___ **Motion:** Accepted Rejected Tabled

Motion to award the bid for asbestos removal from the Highway Garage on Route 217, on the recommendation of Ryan Loucks, Senior Engineer, Crawford and Associates Engineering, Inc., to Haven Property Solution in the amount of \$81,140. Also, for air monitoring services of the project to Paradigm Environmental Services at a daily rate of \$450/ half day rate of \$250 exclusive of the cost of air samples. The Town will provide a contingency fund of \$8,000, or 10% of the contract amount for any unforeseen expenses during the project.

This motion was tabled at this time.

Motion: **Seconded:**

Vote: Yes: ___ No: ___ Abstention(s): ___ **Resolution:** Accepted Rejected Tabled

OTHER BUSINESS

- Comprehensive Plan – SH advised the committee would like to consider hiring Nan Stolzberg who assisted us in the last update for continuity. KC asked if she would be willing to assist. SH advised the committee had a brief meeting and they decided they need assistance. RF advised no request for proposal would be needed in this case. RF recommended asking her to update pricing, since estimate we currently have is from several years ago, before awarding to her. Stephen King, resident, thanked the Board and SH for taking project on. Mr. King said the library will make its meeting room available for any public meetings as needed in this process. SH advised the committee would be focusing on certain areas – not rewriting the whole plan.
- Discussion of (dis)continuing Winter Sports (Ski) program – discussed during Councilwoman Cashen’s report. KC again advised that the Town is “holding” on discontinuing program – taking a “wait and see” approach to what Catamount offers after their meetings.
- Discussion of park use request/Ginsberg’s – Requesting to rent park for their employee picnic for up to 250 people. Highway Superintendent advised they would need to bring in port-o-lets to address water needs for that many people. Board to discuss at upcoming workshop on 7/31/23.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Stephen King, Resident – Spoke of truck traffic problem and resulting engine brake noise on 23B. He asked Town to advocate for lower speed limits and maybe sign to stop “jake brake” use. CW said he talked to the county engineer about lowering speed limit. CW wanted Mr. King to know he has tried in the past but is still advocating for this change.

Stephanie Sussman, Resident – Advised she attended the most recent Planning Board meeting – detailed by Scott Cole, Chairman, that they received a letter from homeowners regarding solar installation. Next Amp (company installing solar) has requested to make change how power comes off the site and Ms. Sussman asked what actions Town can take. RF advised he spoke with attorney for Next Amp forwarded letters to them. RF advised the Code Enforcement Officer not to issue an extension of permit. Currently we are holding permit to go back to Planning Board. RF stated he feels Next Amp doesn’t want to tarnish their reputation and they are trying to work with residents to come up with answer.

Selha Graham, Resident - Ms. Graham asked the Board to explore use of Taconic Hills school for inclement weather/high heat dates for Summer Park Program rather than closing. Ms. Graham said she helped arrange something like this in Hudson. She asked if the Town has ever looked into it. KC stated it sounds like a good idea to her. CW stated it would be worth discussing and looking into for the future.

Gary Davis, Resident – Mr. Davis advised the Board that the Shaw Bridge is the third most significant historic property in the Town. Mr. Davis advised he has spoken to three of the four homeowners near Shaw Bridge as requested by the Board. CW advised he would like all four property owners on board and in agreement with moving forward. Mr. Davis advised he has spoken to three but one is in Europe. He advises the three are open to clean up of the area but have some questions. Mr. Davis feels we should hold a Town Meeting to answer everyone’s questions. This would be Phase 1 Neighborhood Asks from his proposed timeline.

Mr. Davis stated that he was advised by Jeanne LaPorta, Historian, that prior to COVID the Town Highway department was cleaning the Bridge and surrounding area and it didn’t affect the creek. Highway Superintendent LL stated they only cleaned the Bridge once for unveiling of historic marker. Mr. Davis asks that the Town publish and host a town Meeting where people can ask/get answers regarding clean up only. CW questioned if the Town cleans the area and it is open to public – what happens then? CW feels parking/swimming will be an issue. CW stated the Town Board needs to discuss. CW invited Mr. Davis to come to July Workshop and they can talk things through. Mr. Davis asked the Board to schedule some sort of Town meeting to get some answers. Mr. Davis asked if the Town really has an interest in rebuilding this bridge. CW again suggested Mr. Davis come to the July workshop to discuss. Mr. Davis advised he will do what he can.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (*Health insurance*)

Motion to move into Executive Session: KC **Seconded:** SH

Vote: Yes: 3 No: Abstention(s): **Motion:** Accepted Rejected Tabled

Time moved into Executive Session: 6:52 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (*con't*)

Motion to Return to Regular Session: KC **Seconded by:** SH

Vote: Yes: 3 No: Abstention(s): **Motion:** Accepted Rejected Tabled

Time Returned to Regular Session: 7:45 p.m.

RESOLVED that the following bills were reviewed by the Town Board and are authorized for payment in the following amounts:

- General A - \$ 50,606.28
- General B - \$ 2,774.85
- Highway DB - \$ 59,216.16
- Water Dept. - \$ 7,906.39
- Highway DA – *none*
- Escrow Accts/Bills – *none*

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, on motion by SH, seconded by KC, meeting adjourned by Supervisor Weigelt at 7:46 p.m.

Date: Approved 9/14/23 _____

Supervisor: _____

Councilwoman Cashen: _____

Councilman Hook: _____

Councilman Duntz: _____

Councilman Colwell: _____

Town Clerk: _____