

TOWN OF CLAVERACK
Regular Monthly Town Board Meeting
September 14, 2023
6:00 pm

Board Members Present

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

Also Present

✓	Louis LaMont, Superintendent of Highways
abs	Robert Fitzsimmons, Jr., Esq, Attorney for the Town
✓	Michael Brandon, Town Judge
✓	Mary J. Hoose, Town Clerk
✓	Vonda Teaney, Deputy Clerk

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - *Town Board meeting minutes of July 13, 2023 and July 31, 2023 Workshop minutes*

Motion: KC **Seconded:** GD

Vote: Yes: 5 No: Abstention(s): ✓ Accepted □ Rejected □ Tabled

CORRESPONDENCE – Including, but not limited to:

- *E-mail regarding Churchtown Dairy
- *Joe Vining – e-mail – Regarding Annual MSP “Rate Adjustment.
- *NYS Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation – Re: 20 State Rte. 9-H – Listed the property on the State Register of Historic Places.

CORRESPONDENCE – continued

- *NYS Deferred Compensation Plan – Town is eligible to be a participating employer.
- *Alex Colwell – Director of Summer Park Program – Re: Claverack Park Summer Program 2024.
- *Laberge Group – Re: Budgeting and Planning for Grants.
- *Joe Vining -e-mail – Computers due for replacement in 2024.
- *Taconic Hills Central School District – Bill for property on Gahbauer Road.
- *Paradigm – Airborne Fiber Analysis on Highway Garage.
- *Budget Calendar from Office of the State Comptroller
- *Emeren – Re: Property at Schoolhouse Rd., for Energy Storage Lease Opportunity

HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT REPORT – *Cut back bank on Roxbury Road east end to widen narrow corner. Re-ditched from top of hill – blocked ditch and changed on culvert pipe to prepare for paving; Replaced a culvert pipe on Manor Rock Road where road was collapsing; Have been mowing road sides in all zones; Cleaning up debris from the storm on 9/7/23. LL praised Tony for all his help in covering while he was away on vacation. LL also praised the entire team for all the “extra” that they have been taking care of.*

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

SUPERVISOR REPORT – *On the County level– Claverack (AB Shaw) and Mellenville Volunteer Fire Departments have agreed on boundaries of old West Ghent fire protection district. Might take a year or two to finalize. The Town Board is also working to get to fire protection districts to be covered by Fire Districts, thereby taking the Town out of the “fire” business. Working toward getting Churchtown fire protection district to be covered by Claverack (AB Shaw) Fire District. Hoping this will alleviate duplication of equipment and expense to taxpayers.*

Fish & Game Rd is close to being completed. CW has State Police ready to move patrols there to help watch for speeding early on.

The airport wants to put up more hangars as they are getting more traffic. Obviously, the Town will be receiving more taxes from these additions. Also, looking to have a water storage tank for that end of the Town in this area. Currently working on grants to assist in expense for this.

Old Town Hall/Highway Garage – CW shared his feelings regarding issues currently being put out in the public. He gave history of what the Board has done regarding this location. Has been in process for two years – no one has contacted him to meet and discuss concerns until now. Working with County to qualify for Brownfield grant to help offset costs. CW was advised to remove asbestos in the meantime to help make moving forward faster. By law, the Town cannot leave any clean up to someone else – the Town is responsible as the last owner of property. He requested that people just communicate with him.

KW and LL are talking about tennis courts at the park. Need to go out for bid for work. LL will do removal and set up pads – it will sit for winter – bid for black top, coating and fence to be done in spring 2024. KC asked about LL getting bids for work so we can submit adjustments to DASNY.

Working to develop how funding awarded by MVP Health Care Community Wellness Award to Town would be best used. This award provides funding to supply items needed for adults/seniors to do physical fitness at park. MVP Award pays for everything.

TOWN BOARD MEMBER REPORTS

Councilman Hook - *Webb Rd Complaint with CEO Owner deceased trash and shrubs everyone worked to clean up; Met with Building Dept; Union Negotiations; Bank Trips/Deposits; Signed checks; Food Pantry; Working on transportation reimbursement for park; Worked with George Schmitt on water tower; Went on complaint on Old Lane; Along with Supervisor met with Philmont RE: DPW; Met with Air Quality company at old highway building; Attending ZBA and PB; Met with bookkeeper to review bills; Transfer station; Spoke with parent re: damage to pavilion and following up with Sheriff; Met with AB Shaw and Mellenville over boundary line. County giving reimbursement for transportation in the amount of \$12,289.80 – paperwork in process; Has been working with Building Department to go over and update fees – would like to have a public hearing next month.*

Councilman Duntz - *Interviewed ZBA candidates; received complaints - Manor Rock Rd; Received complaint about landowners doing “glamping” (motor home) sites on private properties. Questions about waste water and grey water – will be a discussion within the Town and maybe Dept of Health.*

Councilman Colwell - *Gave Summer program highlights. Director is looking for a budget line item to buy new games and equipment for the program; Has received compliments on fence at park; Attended workshop and Planning Board meetings; Doing interview for ZBA opening: Has quotes for cost of AV equipment which he shared with Board. Not the Owl system but for the cameras that Carl Nabozny brought in and was used during his demonstration. It would be a cart with a TV – just plug in laptop and the system will be up and running.*

Councilwoman Cashen – *Finalized details with health insurance broker on renewal of 2023-2024 policy for full-time town employees. Drafted possible discussion topics & changes to the town’s campground law and shared with Town Board, Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals members for comments. Communicated with Catamount Ski Area regarding the Winter Sports Program for Claverack. Attended the September 6 Planning Board meeting. Participated in two sessions for union negotiations with the Teamsters Union for the Highway Department employees. Began work on the FY 2024 Budget. Worked on Greenhouse Gas Inventory for Climate Smart certification.*

PROPOSED MOTIONS/RESOLUTIONS

Motion to set a public hearing for October 12, 2023 Town Board meeting to extend the Moratorium on Campgrounds for another three months.

Motion: DC **Seconded:** SH

Vote: Yes: 5 No: ___ Abstention(s): ___ **Motion:** Accepted Rejected Tabled

Motion to appoint Dino Zitto as a member of the Town of Claverack's Zoning Board of Appeals effective immediately through 2026 (to fill the term of August Abatecola).

Motion: SH **Seconded:** DC

Vote: Yes: 5 No: ___ Abstention(s): ___ **Motion:** Accepted Rejected Tabled

Motion to set public Hearing for October 12, 2023 Town Board meeting to approve updated fees for Town Building Department.

Motion: KC **Seconded:** SH

Vote: Yes: 5 No: ___ Abstention(s): ___ **Motion:** Accepted Rejected Tabled

OTHER BUSINESS

- **Brookfield Renewable** - Presentation and discussion by VJ Rahmany. The company is interested in leasing a piece of land near the current Town Highway Garage on Schoolhouse Road to develop an energy storage asset. Goal would be to lease 10-20 acres. Property would be used for battery storage which can be used to power the grid in case of failure. Construction would take one year. KC suggested Climate Smart Committee to help in these conversations. This property of interest because of location near the substation. If invited back, Mr. Rahmany indicated they will provide more specific information.
- **Discussion of options for the Town's Capital Needs** - KC stated options from accountants were given last month. KC spoke to Lisa Gill from UHY today. Two scenarios were presented – bond of \$500,000 for 10 years or use ARPA funds to offset costs for work done on the water tower. SH, DC leaning toward number one. KC said ARPA money cannot be spent in entirety on Water District. Needs to be used for the entire town not just a select few.

OTHER BUSINESS (con't)

- **Catamount Ski Program** – *Discussed during Councilwoman Cashen's report.*
- **Discussion on timeline for preparation of Temporary Budget** (due to Town Clerk by 9/20/23) – *All department wish lists are due. KC spoke with Lisa about parameters of Union negotiations to be addressed as well as health insurance costs. Town Clerk will advise departments and fire companies that are still needed to submit ASAP.*

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Stephen King – questioned about zoning codes and how they apply to the container field proposed by Brookfield Renewables. KC stated Towns can exempt themselves, not that they should be they can. GD said there are two other companies who are currently trying to do the same thing. KW feels this would be a great opportunity for community to get involved. GD said we need to use the Climate Smart Committee to help in these discussions.

Peter Johnson – Had a question about the roof of old highway garage on the addition that was removed. He stated that according to Crawford report it had asbestos and felt inspections were needed. Mr. Johnson questioned if, when this removal was done, these agencies involved. LL advised they were not as the addition had a rubber roof with no asbestos. Mr. Johnson queried whether anything was filed with DEC. He feels there is a lot that has disappeared from the building. Mr. Johnson feels there is a problem between a report and what actually happened. KW will talk with Crawford to verify information.

Jeff Kiplinger – stated he has spoken to Mike Tucker from DEC, who says there is no reason to move ahead. KW advised we have paid twice to have report done and we are moving forward based on Board vote. KW asked where were these questions in the past two years? No one came forward in that time to voice any concerns. KW said he is trying to do what is best for the community. KW stated he believes that the “north roof” referred to in the report would be the north bay of the building. What was torn down by the Highway Department was an added piece that was already removed when report was done.

KW said we're not going to slow the progression at this point. KC reminded that she voted against the motion to proceed. GD questioned the issue with the money being spent remediation - stating if the building falls down as it is now (without remediation) the clean-up cost would increase three-fold from the cost of just doing remediation.

Tracy Hennige – Questioned what type of Brownfield grant is it that the Town is applying for that KW spoke of? She questioned whether the cost for testing the ground could be paid for using those funds. GD clarified that this is a county grant, not a Town grant.

PUBLIC COMMENTS – (con’t)

Susan Bain – New to discussion of old highway building. Questioned what the long-term plan for that property is? Could it be used as a potential site for a new Town Hall? KW said while he wishes it could’ve been, given the contamination of the soil it would take so long to get the property ready for building, the committee charged with finding a site decided to look elsewhere. KW feels it could be used for many different things but there is much work that needs to be done first. Ms. Bain questioned If the long-term plan is sell, should we be spending money to clean? GD stated the Town cannot sell the property because it is aware of contamination. KW stated that the Town is required to do clean up because of this knowledge.

Mike Brandon, Judge – Judge Brandon spoke of the issue of parking at temporary town hall during meetings and impact on arraignments as needed. He stated there is a problem. He feels that some meetings overpack the size of the room and there is no maximum occupancy posted and he is unsure of the maximum. Judge Brandon still feels the Town has a need for a meeting hall separate from the Court.

Stephanie Sussman – stated she hears Judge Brandon’s passion in his statement. She agrees with his view of the problems of the temporary town hall and that this is not a good setting. She feels we need a better solution.

EXECUTIVE SESSION (*Discussion of Union Negotiations*)

Motion to move into Executive Session: KC

Seconded: GD

Vote: Yes: 5 No: Abstention(s):

Motion: Accepted Rejected Tabled

Time moved into Executive Session: 7:45 p.m.

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

Vote: Yes: 5 No: Abstention(s):

Motion: Accepted Rejected Tabled

Time Returned to Regular Session: 8:30 p.m.

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

- General A - \$ 48,979.86
- General B - \$ 2,252.85
- Highway DB - \$ 48,739.70
- Water Dept. - \$ 40,220.69
- Highway DA – *none*
- Escrow Accts/Bills – *none*

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, on motion by KC, seconded by GD, meeting adjourned by Supervisor Weigelt at 8:31 p.m.

Date: Approved 10/12/23

Supervisor: _____

Councilwoman Cashen: _____

Councilman Hook: _____

Councilman Duntz: _____

Councilman Colwell: _____

Town Clerk: _____