

Town of Fowler Regular Board Meeting & Public Hearing Minutes on proposed Local Law #3 of 2020 for December 14, 2020 at 6:00 PM.

The Regular scheduled board meeting and Public Hearing on proposed Local Law #3 of 2020 was held on the above date, at the Town Hall with all board members present. Also present were Town Clerk Tami Gale, Highway Superintendent Randy Durham, Assessor Chair Sherry Geer, Councilperson elect Scott Cleveland, Town Justice elect Tim Knowlton, Pavilion Committee member Richard Clement, and attending the meeting via teleconference was Councilperson Lynn Bishop, Assessor Phyllis Shaw, and Rachel Hunter, Editor of the Gouverneur Tribune Press.

Supervisor Newvine called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM, then proceeded with the pledge of allegiance and led a moment of silence to honor our military men and women, all healthcare workers, and to honor in special memory, a very dedicated public servant, former Town Clerk, Sherrie Williams, who passed away over the weekend.

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the November 5, 2020 Town board meeting. A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons, seconded by Councilperson Andrews. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

At 6:04PM Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to open the Public Hearing on proposed Local Law #3 of 2020 and read aloud the proposed local law repealing Local Law #1 for the year 1983 and providing for real property tax exemptions for persons over sixty-five (65) years of age in accordance with New York State Real Property Tax Law 467.

A motion was made by Councilperson Andrews seconded by Councilperson Simmons to open the Public Hearing. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Supervisor Newvine confirmed via Assessor Sherry Geer that the Local Law would go into effect this year if it is adopted and asked all in attendance if there were any questions on the proposed Local Law.

At 6:06PM, with no questions or comments on the proposed Local Law, Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to close the Public Hearing on Local Law #3 of 2020.

A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Andrews to close the Public Hearing. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION # 18 OF 2020

Enacting Local Law #3 of 2020

At 6:07PM Supervisor Newvine submitted Resolution #18 of 2020, a resolution enacting Local Law #3 of 2020 to the board for adoption.

A motion was made by Councilperson Andrews seconded by Councilperson Simmons to adopt resolution #18 of 2020 Enacting Local Law #3 of 2020. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED

AYES: 4 NEWVINE, SIMMONS, ANDREWS, BISHOP

NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION # 16 OF 2020

Speed Reduction request California Road from CR 24 to Pitcarin Line

Supervisor Newvine submitted Resolution #16 of 2020, a resolution to apply to the County to allow for the Implementation of a speed limit reduction request on the California Road, from County Route 24 to Town of Fowler/Pitcarin Line.

A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Andrews to adopt Resolution #16 of 2020. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

AYES: 4 NEWVINE, SIMMONS, ANDREWS, BISHOP

NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION # 17 OF 2020

Speed Reduction request Sibley Road

Supervisor Newvine submitted Resolution #17 of 2020, a resolution to apply to the County to allow for the Implementation of a speed limit reduction request on the Sibley Road.

A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Andrews to adopt Resolution #17 of 2020. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

AYES: 4 NEWVINE, SIMMONS, ANDREWS, BISHOP

NAYS: 0

RESOLUTION # 19 OF 2020

Adopting Revised Building Permit Fee Schedule & Application

*****RESOLUTION #19 of 2020 WAS POSTPONED UNTIL THE NEXT MEETING*****

Supervisor Newvine asked the board if everyone had a chance to see and review the revised building permit application and fee schedule. All board members answered they had not. Supervisor Newvine reported that he had seen and reviewed the revised application, but suggested postponing voting on the adoption of Resolution #19 of 2020 until the next meeting when all board members have had a chance to review the resolution.

PAVILION UPDATE

Supervisor Newvine reported for Pavilion Committee Chair Michael Cappellino who was not in attendance. He reported he is waiting for a cost to be determined for plumbing and the remainder of the job will be completed by spring.

TOWN DEPARTMENT REPORTS

Town Justice

Town Justice Tim Knowlton reported:

- The Courts are closed due to the Pandemic.
- Justice Dann is still in charge and will be doing some virtual arraignments the next day (the Town of Fowler’s regular scheduled court day).
- By December 28, the courts are switching to Microsoft Teams, instead of using Skype.
- The court has brand new computers and a new laptop for the court clerk to use for arraignments.
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Bookkeeper

Bookkeeper Barbara Finnie was not in attendance.

- She prepared and provided Cash Balance Month Ending November 30, 2020 reports for the board.
- She prepared 2020 budget transfers (Resolution #20 of 2020) to be adopted at this evening's board meeting, which was overlooked and will be presented to the board for their approval at the next meeting.

Supervisor Newvine stated he had spoken to Bookkeeper Finnie earlier and she is in our thoughts and prayers.

Assessors

Assessor Chair Sherry Geer reported:

- There has not been much going on.

Supervisor Newvine thanked Assessor Chair Geer for moving so quickly on the Senior Exemption Local Law that was adopted this evening and for her efforts. He stated he has a new respect for data collection and the intensive process it entails.

Historian

Historian Karen Simmons reported:

- There is nothing going on up there.

Animal Control

Councilperson Karen Simmons reported for Animal Control Officer Dan Moyer who was not in attendance:

- He has answered 3 dog calls this month.
- 1 call involved a dog hitting the Town of Fowler Highway Superintendent who was driving a Town of Fowler truck on the Sullivan Road. The dog was not hurt, but the dog was not licensed, and the owner was given 2 weeks to get the dog licensed.
- He had a complaint on the Hull Road of neighbors complaining about the neighbor's dogs, again the dogs were not licensed and they were also given two weeks to get the dogs licensed.
- A call was received from a man who had picked up a dog on a back road, but it was determined the dog was actually picked up in Harrisville. The dog was taken to the Animal Control Officer's kennel and is being adopted by Gracious Friends Rescue.

Beaver Control

Councilperson Karen Simmons reported for Moyer's Wildlife Control:

- He is working on beavers on the Chub Lake Road and the Shantyville Road.
- Councilperson Simmons received a call from Highway Superintendent Durham later in the day that it didn't appear any work had been done on the Chub Lake Road. It was discussed that he would not be paid for the Chub Lake Road until the beaver dam has been removed.

Code Enforcement

Supervisor Newvine reported for Code Enforcement Officer Glen Besaw who was not in attendance:

- Things are going well in the Code Enforcement Office. The Planning Board has been busy.
- Supervisor Newvine congratulated Code Enforcement Officer Besaw and Planning Board Chair Stephen Gale on their handling of things in that department.

Town Clerk

Town Clerk Tami Gale reported:

- DEC Gross sales for the month were \$278.00 with the Town of Fowler Commission being \$15.32. She had licensed 24 dogs, handled 10 building permits, which 98 have been issued and Glen is on #99 for the year, had taken in \$11.50 in copies and had issued 5 death certificates.
- The 2021 Town of Fowler newsletter has been finished and sent to Ferguson Printing for 1,000 copies to be printed and readied to mail out with tax-receipts in January.
- She had attended Town Clerk Association 2020 Virtual Training On: 11/17/20 Birth, Death, Marriage Certificates, 11/18/20 Procurement Services & Contracts, 12/03/20 Managing Inactive Records Room.

- She had made 3 deposits into the Playground Fund totaling \$519.85 of which there was \$300.00 cash for scrap metal, and \$132.25 & \$87.60 in bottles and can donations.
- The JCAP grant submitted to the court for COVID-19 was received in the amount of \$853.36. The amount applied for was \$933.35, a thermometer in the amount of \$79.99 was not covered.

Highway Department

Highway Superintendent Randy Durham reported:

- On Veteran's Day there was a deer crossing sign stolen on the Chub Lake Road. The sign itself was \$62.00, and by the time he put all the money into it adding labor putting it back on it cost \$182.00.
- He has called BOCES and set up work to be done by them in January.
- He has been working on the financing for the grant for the new Plow Truck and has gone through another review and it looks good at this time.
- There is a new compliance request from the USDA that the Town adds to the bottom of our letterhead "This institution is an equal opportunity provider and employer."

Councilmembers

Councilperson Jeff Andrews:

- Asked if Truck 12 was coming back tomorrow. Hwy. Superintendent Durham replied it was.
- Asked if the trucks are still being washed when there is spare time. Hwy. Superintendent Durham stated that they do.
- Asked if the one -ways and the wings were still being painted yearly. Hwy. Superintendent Durham replied that they are and are all looking pretty right now.
- Asked if John Walsh was back to work. Hwy. Superintendent Durham replied that he was but is on vacation right now till the end of the year.

Supervisor Newvine asked if John Walsh was in good shape to be back to work. Hwy. Superintendent Durham replied that he had him on the chainsaw today and he seems to be.

Supervisor Newvine asked about Fran Cole. Hwy. Superintendent Durham replied that a lot of the accident reports that the board is going to be seeing is more near misses than anything, but they still write up an accident report to have a record in case something does develop from it.

- Asked how the oil is loaded at Mud Lake Stalls, (referring to the accident report on Fran Cole). Hwy. Superintendent Durham reported he usually gets the oil himself. He was not there. He stated they usually pick it up with a fork lift and put it on, but they had a different salesperson that they were getting the oil from, and she didn't know what she was doing, and stated Fran tried to yank the barrel and roll it on to the truck and that is how he tweaked his shoulder.

Councilperson Lynn Bishop:

- Asked about the different bills for springs to be approved for payment at tonight's board meeting. He stated the walking beams he knew had to be sent out but asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham if the front springs could be done by the highway department men. Hwy. Superintendent Durham stated the spring hangers were done on the back of Truck 91 and reported that truck 91 hadn't been worked on in 10 years.

Councilperson Simmons stated that there had been springs done on 3 different trucks included in the bills.

Hwy. Superintendent Durham stated springs were only done on one truck. Truck 91 had all the rear suspension re-done, because it was just time, everything was worn out back there.

- Councilperson Bishop asked about the work done to Truck 5. He stated there was an invoice for hinge brackets and rail toppers for \$6500.00 and asked what that was all about. Hwy. Superintendent

Durham stated that was for the box. When the box goes up it flops back and forth, and they had to do something with it because one of these times it will take the whole truck. He stated it was wear and tear as Truck 5 is 15 years old.

- Asked about Truck 91 and a bill that was almost \$4,000 and verified that it was for walking beams. Hwy. Superintendent Durham reported it was for the walking beams and the springs back there and everything.
- Asked about a bill for Truck 17 that reads replaced spring. Hwy. Superintendent Durham reported he replaced one of the back springs, he sure did.
- Councilperson Bishop stated that those 3 bills were almost \$12,000 and he wanted to know where all that money was going to.
- Asked if there was sand put up for the public to use. Supervisor Newvine answered that there was.

Councilperson Karen Simmons:

- Reported that SOS Program packages are going to be delivered this Friday the 18th, and this delivery there will be 80 households that they will be delivering to. She reported that this will be the last delivery until Easter, unless the Governor decides to shut the world down again.
- Asked about the playground equipment and if it has been put away for the winter. Hwy. Superintendent Durham stated he had already moved the picnic tables under the pavilion. Supervisor Newvine asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham to move them inside, as they are still exposed to the weather and he does not want to get into the habit of using the pavilion for storage.
- Asked what else needed to be put away for winter, the garbage cans and then asked about the swings and the benches.

Supervisor Newvine:

- Thanked maintenance worker Byron Woodward for putting together an office chair and new vacuum cleaner.
- Thanked Hwy. Superintendent Durham for picking up bottles from the Town Hall & Town Barn area, and thanked Town Clerk Gale for the same.
- Entertained an idea of placing a container at the Hwy. Department for people to drop cans and bottles into. After some discussion no further action was taken.
- Asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham to have an address sign made for the Town Hall as there is currently no numbers on the Town Hall to identify the address. He reported he was at the Town Hall when a delivery driver had to come inside to ask if he was at 87 Little York Road. Hwy. Superintendent will have a sign made.
- Reported the Town had received the bill for the year from Town Attorney Henry Leader for \$7,200, and he thought it was very reasonable.
- He had called and had corrected the Town of Fowler meeting time in the Watertown Times that was listed incorrectly.
- Reported the Town is looking into the possibility of a Solar Farm for the township and stated that the Town has 72 acres on the Sullivan Road, and it is his understanding that the qualifier is that you need 3-phase power, and there is 3-phase power in the airport property that butts up against it. He is speaking with a company and will provide more information at the next meeting about the prospect. He reported the Planning Board is currently working on a solar law to add to the Town's Land Use Law and Regulations.
- Reported the Davis property across from the Town Hall is underway.
- He has started to develop the Safety Plan that needs to be completed by April 1, 2021 for the Town as implemented by Governor Cuomo's Executive Order.

PUBLIC COMMENT

- Councilperson elect Scott Cleveland reported he has learned a lot about COVID-19 this week and shared some information for protection and stopping the spread by wearing a mask, social distancing, staying 6ft apart, if you are sick stay home, and if you don't have to be around someone don't be around them. He gave as an example the board room that this meeting is taking place in. If 1 person turned up positive, everyone in the room would be placed into quarantine, and that is with being 6 ft apart and wearing masks. The criteria involves a lot of things such as air flow in the room, if there were any windows open, it is really left up to the Department of Health to determine.
- Hwy. Superintendent Durham stated that would really mess things up for the highway department if this were to happen over there and asked if there was something else they should be doing.
- Supervisor Newvine stated no, we are following all of the protocols.
- Councilperson Simmons asked if the highway workers are wearing their masks, stating she has seen 3 or 4 workers in one truck, and no one had a mask on.
- Supervisor Newvine suggested that Hwy. Superintendent Durham remind and reinforce the mask wearing to the highway workers.

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to audit the bills. A motion was made by Councilperson Andrews seconded by Councilperson Simmons to audit the bills. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

The bills audited for the General and Highway Fund were # 412 - # 457, with a total of \$114,199.61.

Supervisor Newvine reported the need to set the year-end transfer meeting date and wanted to incorporate the date with swearing in people. After some discussion, it was determined the transfer meeting would be held on December 29, 2020 at 3:00PM.

The next regular scheduled board meeting will be the Organizational Meeting held on Monday, January 11, 2021 at 6PM.

At 6:28PM a motion was made by Councilperson Andrews seconded by Councilperson Simmons to adjourn the meeting. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Tami Gale; Town Clerk