

## **Town of Fowler August 14, 2023, Minutes of Regular Scheduled Board Meeting at 6PM.**

The Town of Fowler Regular scheduled Town Board meeting was held on the above date with all board members present. Also present were Town Clerk Tami Gale, Town Justice Tim Knowlton, Highway Superintendent Randy Durham, Planning Board Member Leo Knight, John and Deb Walsh, Richard Clement 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 those who have been lost since the last board meeting; Ted Lamar and Dave LaVack.

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the July 10, 2023, regular scheduled board meeting. A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland, seconded by Councilperson Simmons to approve the minutes. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

### **DOCK REGULATION DISCUSSION**

Supervisor Newvine asked if any board members had found any issues with the proposed dock regulations submitted by the planning board at the July 10, 2023 board meeting, after having had time to review them. Supervisor Newvine stated he had spoken to planning board chair Gale earlier in the day and discussed that he felt a wording change needed to be made to dock width regulations. After some discussion, a motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Bishop to approve the dock regulations. The proposed regulations will be sent to the Town Attorney to prepare an amendment to add to the Land Use Law providing for dock regulation. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED. Supervisor Newvine reported the amendment will be sent to the County Planning Board for review before a public hearing is scheduled to be held on the proposed dock regulation.

### **RETIREMENT**

Supervisor Newvine read aloud a retirement letter received by John Walsh announcing his retirement as of August 21, 2023. After some discussion, a motion was made by Councilperson Andrews seconded by Councilperson Bishop to accept John's letter of retirement with the best of luck in his retirement and with regrets.

### **Town Department Reports**

#### **Justice Department**

Town Justice Tim Knowlton reported:

- Presented the board with a summary report of cases for the month of July, stating it was a slow month.
- There were a couple of DWI's which will appear in court in the next month or two.
- Court Clerk Ashley has completed her mandatory 6 hours of yearly training.
- He has completed 10 of 12 mandatory hours for his yearly training.
- There is a full docket on the schedule for court on Tuesday.
- The new camera system is working very well.

#### **Bookkeeper**

Supervisor Newvine reported for Bookkeeper Barbara Finnie who was not in attendance:

- She had provided Town of Fowler Cash Balance Reports for Month Ending July 31, 2023, and Budget Balances for July 31, 2023 to board members for their review.

- She reported the Highway Department is doing well and has only spent 30% of their budget going into the 7<sup>th</sup> month of the year.
- She reported account payables have decreased this month.

## **Assessors**

Assessor Chair Kathy Besaw reported:

- It has been business as usual.
- They had been served a summons by the Supreme Court regarding the on-going Fowler Hydro lawsuit.
- She is looking for an appraiser to appraise the property in litigation, reporting hydro is a specialty and not everyone is qualified to do this kind of appraisal.
- She reported the appraisal needs to be done and sent in by October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. If either party fails to turn in their appraisal by that date, the other party will automatically win.
- She reported we are talking about huge money if they were to win.

Supervisor Newvine asked Assessor Chair Besaw if she was confident that it is assessed at what it should be. It was discussed that she didn't know the answer as she did not appraise it, and she is still gathering paperwork. Councilperson Andrews asked how long ago the hydro was assessed. Assessor Chair Besaw reported it had been done prior to 2015. It was discussed compared to the other Hydro's; it is assessed about the same.

## **Historian**

Historian Karen Simmons reported:

- She is working on gathering genealogy for the Fowler family.

## **Animal Control**

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

- A dog had been picked up on the Island Branch Road. It stayed one night in the kennel before its owner was located and the animal was returned to its owner.
- A dog on the Jones Road had been attacked in its yard by a Great Pyrenees dog, thought to belong to an Amish family living on the Country Club Road. The attacked dog needed to be treated for 18 puncture wounds and received multiple stitches. DCO Moyer retrieved a copy of the bill from the veterinarian to give to the owner of the dog, when it is determined who the actual owner of the dog is He will also issue appearance tickets answerable to Fowler Town Court for dog running at large, and for having an unlicensed dog. It was discussed that it is not known at this time if the owner of the dog belongs to the Amish family living at the residence, or if it belongs to the owner of the property. Councilperson Andrews reported the dog that was attacked belongs to his daughter. He said the dog is quite a mess and is lucky to be alive.
- There was another incident in July involving a dog being shot in the leg when it was running at large and entered a neighboring property.

## **Beaver Control**

Councilperson Karen Simmons reported for Moyer's Wildlife Control:

- He has been working on the upper Stone Road, Chub Lake Road, and County Route 22.
- He had to be called on the 30<sup>th</sup> of July as water was over the road on Stone Road. He was called again today to the lower end of Stone Road as beaver were active again there.
- He has removed his traps from County Route 22.

Hwy. Superintendent Durham asked if Moyer's Wildlife Control is all done working on County Route 22.

Supervisor Newvine reported yes, he is done working on County route 22. Councilperson Simmons reported

the area on County Route 22 is the County's problem and she wasn't sure what was going to be done, as everyone keeps coming to the Town of Fowler for the issues caused by beavers on that road. Supervisor Newvine reported he would get in touch with Don Chambers and let him know the area is the County's issue to handle now.

### **Code Enforcement**

Code Enforcement Officer Glen Besaw reported:

- It has been business as usual.
- There are a lot of new houses going up.
- The highway department had knocked down the dilapidated house that was declared a public nuisance at the July 10<sup>th</sup> board meeting.
- He had contacted the DEC to determine if there was anything that needed to be done with the debris and has not heard back from them yet.
- He reported the other situation with the trash on County Route 22, had made significant progress so he has held off issuing tickets so as to not discourage the cleanup.

### **Town Clerk**

Town Clerk Tami Gale reported:

- DEC Gross sales for the month were \$120.00 with the Town of Fowler's Commission being \$6.63. She had licensed 30 dogs, handled 5 building permit applications, collected \$240.00 in kennel fees, and had collected \$2.75 for photocopies.
- Bottle & Can money was received in the amount of \$168.50 and \$98.75.
- The Certificate of No Referendum for the USDA Loan was signed on August 10<sup>th</sup> and taken to the Town Attorney's office, and the Estoppel Notice will be in this week's edition of the Gouverneur Tribune Press.

### **Highway Department**

Highway Superintendent Randy Durham:

- Reported he and Supervisor Newvine had discussed the need to install "Town of Fowler Business Parking Only" signs in the town parking lot, as there have been issues with people parking their equipment over night.
- There has been an issue with stolen road signs in the Town of Fowler. He reported 2 stop signs in 2 days went missing from the West Shore road, and the cost to replace the signs is about \$700 a shot.
- 2 signs have gone missing from the Swiss Hill Road, 1 sign is missing from the Byrns Road, 1 sign is missing from the Smith Road, and 1 building permit required sign is missing.
- He has installed a camera to try to detect the thief or thieves who are taking the signs and the sign poles, and reported if we catch you...you will be prosecuted.
- The highway department will be taking OSHA training on August 31<sup>st</sup> at the Community Center in Gouverneur and will not be available most of that day.
- Paving is expected to begin on Thursday, or Monday at the latest. There are 23 town trucks lined up to help haul the product for the paving.
- He has been working on SAM grant paperwork, for Federal Loans, and has finally got that all figured out.

Supervisor Newvine asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham about the work being done on the Sylvia Lake Road. Hwy. Superintendent Durham stated they are cutting shoulders on the road, so water stays off the road. Supervisor Newvine asked if the highway stores any of the topsoil that has been removed while cutting the shoulders. Hwy. Superintendent Durham reported we store some and give some away to the public.

## Councilmembers

### **Councilperson Cleveland:**

- Stated, regarding the dog believed to reside on the Jones Road, that had attacked another dog, discussed previously in the meeting, he believes he knows who the owner of the property is and will contact them to verify who the owner is. Supervisor Newvine asked Councilperson Cleveland to coordinate his findings with Councilperson Simmons.
- Thanked maintenance worker Byron Woodward and Steve Gale for all their help installing the new playground equipment. He reported there was a lot of trial and error installing the expensive equipment that came with 50 cent instructions.
- He hopes to have the new rock-climbing wall completed by this Sunday and hopes to get the mulch on order.
- He is going to ask maintenance worker Byron Woodward to build more boxes to cement the two benches purchased previously, so they can be safely used at the playground.

### **Councilperson Lynn Bishop:**

- Had his questions answered earlier in the meeting and had no further commentary.

### **Councilperson Jeff Andrews:**

- Had his questions answered earlier in the meeting and had no further commentary.

### **Councilperson Karen Simmons:**

- Reported she has a final total of money that was raised from family day, reporting a total of \$7,415.25 was raised that day. She reported there was a great turn out of people, and everyone had a great time.
- The free rabies clinic was held last Thursday, and 71 cats and dogs had been administered rabies vaccinations. She reported donations at the free clinic totaled \$255.00.
- Reported she is going to start up her HAP Program again this Thursday. It was closed for 2 weeks in July and 2 weeks in August.
- She reported the HAP Program hours will be from 9:00AM to 12:00PM and from 1:00PM to 4:00PM.
- Reported she had received grocery deliveries in the last 3 weeks from Mr. and Mrs. Fackler, Mike and Melissa Tersmette, and Clark Porter.
- She is working on getting a delivery together for the SOS Program for the third week of September.
- Discussed she had spoken to several employees of the Town of Fowler regarding trying to have entertainment at the pavilion during the summer. Supervisor Newvine suggested a committee be formed to begin the process.
- Suggested the Town of Fowler should come up with a way to honor Zoe Griffith for her wrestling accomplishments. It was discussed that a sign to honor her accomplishments would be looked into by Supervisor Newvine.

### **Supervisor Ricky W. Newvine:**

- Thanked Councilperson Simmons and Town Clerk Gale for doing a great job with the rabies clinic, and Leo Knight and Roger Refici for their help with parking.
- Thanked Richard Clement for all of his help with family day, donating the food trailer, and for the great exhibit added this year, that many people enjoyed.

- Discussed, the beach is awaiting its second inspection and we are hoping for a much better one. The beach was cited for several violations that were promptly addressed and thanked Town Clerk Gale for her help taking care of the matter.
- Reported he had called the Housing Council to inquire about obtaining grant money for the Town of Fowler. He is awaiting a return call as the representative we work with is on vacation.
- Reported he is working on getting contact information for the heirs of doctor Twining concerning a possible boat launch site.
- Reported he had contacted the St. Lawrence County Attorney today to inquire what their rules and regulations are for ATV's and UTV's on county roads.
- Thanked Steve Gale for the volunteer work he does for the Town of Fowler.

### **Public Comment**

- Leo Knight asked if the fire extinguisher had been relocated to a better space in the beach building. It was discussed Supervisor Newvine will ask maintenance worker Byron Woodward to move the fire extinguisher and inspect it.

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

The bills audited for the General and Highway Fund were #291 to #333, with a total of \$34,757.61.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held on September 11th, 2023, at 6:00PM.

With no further business, on a motion of Councilperson Simmons, seconded by Councilperson Bishop, the August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2023, Regular Town Board meeting was adjourned at 6:36PM. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Tami Gale; Town Clerk