

## **Town of Canaan, New York**

Town Board Regular Meeting Minutes

November 14, 2022: 7:02 pm – 8:39 pm

Hybrid Meeting: In Person at Town Hall and via ZOOM

### **Present**

Supervisor Brenda Adams  
Councilperson Alan Miller  
Councilperson Ginny Nightingale  
Councilperson David Patzwahl  
Councilperson: William Powers

### **Also in Attendance:**

Highway Department Superintendent Stephen Van Tassel  
Town Clerk Joshua S. Weisbuch

**Audience:** 3

**Attendees via Zoom:** 1

### **Moment of Silence and Pledge of Allegiance**

The Supervisor opened the meeting by recognizing the large turnout election this previous Tuesday where 1000 people voted in an off-year election: 750 voted in town hall and 268 voted early or by absentee vote. The Supervisor stated that she and board very much appreciated that so many residents came out to vote and she thanked the election workers, many of whom were there for long hours, some for the full 14 hour day. They were “friendly, knowledgeable and efficient.”

The Supervisor also thanked Canaan Highway Department for a fine job on Town Hall driveway.

### **Review October Meeting Minutes**

The Town board briefly discussed the meeting minutes from October, identified out a few errors and omissions, suggested changes and asked the Town Clerk to produce minutes earlier. The Town Clerk stated he would review the comments, review his notes, and make additions and corrections where appropriate. He also stated he is working to improve the process to get the minutes done earlier.

### **MOTION: Approve October Meeting Minutes as amended**

Councilperson Alan Miller made a motion, seconded by Councilperson Ginny Nightingale, to approve the amended minutes from the October 10<sup>th</sup> Town Board Meeting. 4 AYES: Motion carried.

Supervisor Brenda Adams – yes;  
Councilperson Alan Miller – yes;  
Councilperson Ginny Nightingale – yes;  
Councilperson David Patzwahl – yes; and  
Councilperson William Powers – abstain.

**NOVEMBER BILLS**

Councilperson David Patzwahl made a motion, seconded by Councilperson Alan Miller, to approve the October Bills. 5 AYES: Motion carried.

- Supervisor Brenda Adams – yes;
- Councilperson Alan Miller – yes;
- Councilperson Ginny Nightingale – yes;
- Councilperson David Patzwahl – yes; and
- Councilperson William Powers – yes.

**SUPERVISOR MONTHLY REPORT: Read by Town Clerk Josh Weisbuch**

TOWN CLERK REVENUES	\$ 250.24
HIGHWAY FUND	\$ 573,690.44
HIGHWAY FUND CAPITAL	\$ 72,935.14
LIGHTING DISTRICTS	\$ 375.79
FIRE DISTRICTS	\$ 300.00
BUILDING INSPECTOR	\$
PLANNING BOARD	\$ 300.00
RECREATION	\$ 3,498.25
COURT REVENUES	\$ 2,320.00
(Oct: One Judge Only)	
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS	\$
TAX COLLECTOR	\$ 0.00

The Supervisor stated that Planning Board members are required to complete four hours of training each year and the Planning Board has not met this requirement for 2022. The Supervisor requests the Town Board accept an upcoming 1.5 hour training on November 30<sup>th</sup> be considered as meeting the training requirement for this year with the understanding that the board will have the full 4.0 hours next year.

**Motion: Town Board to accept the upcoming 1.5 hour Planning Board training on November 30<sup>th</sup> as the full training requirement for the year 2022.**

Councilperson Ginny Nightingale made a motion, seconded by Councilperson Alan Miller, to accept the upcoming 1.5 hour November 30<sup>th</sup> training for the Planning Board as their full training for 2022 with the understanding that they complete their regular 4.0 hours of training in 2023. 5 AYES: Motion carried.

- Supervisor Brenda Adams – yes;

Councilperson Alan Miller – yes;  
Councilperson Ginny Nightingale – yes;  
Councilperson David Patzwahl – yes; and  
Councilperson William Powers – yes.

The Board discussed a 2022 outstanding payment issue with the vendor for the grader repair. The vendor performed additional work outside the scope requested / quote provided without the knowledge or approval of the Highway Superintendent or Town Board. Conversations to date have not reconciled the amount due. The Board is asked to approve payment of the approved expenditure; the Town will send a letter with the payment asking the balance be adjusted to reflect the work requested, quoted and approved.

**Motion:** Board authorizes payment of approved expenditure for the grader repair. Councilperson David Patzwahl made a motion, seconded by Councilperson Ginny Nightingale to move forward with partial payment of the disputed invoice for the amount of approved expenditure. 5 AYES: Motion carried.

Supervisor Brenda Adams – yes;  
Councilperson Alan Miller – yes;  
Councilperson Ginny Nightingale – yes;  
Councilperson David Patzwahl – yes; and  
Councilperson William Powers – yes.

**RESOLUTION #97** to authorize the Highway Superintendent to de-acquisition surplus highway equipment.

Councilperson Ginny Nightingale made a motion, seconded by Councilperson Alan Miller to authorize the Highway Superintendent to de-acquisition surplus Highway equipment. 5 AYES: Motion carried.

Supervisor Brenda Adams – yes;  
Councilperson Alan Miller – yes;  
Councilperson Ginny Nightingale – yes;  
Councilperson David Patzwahl – yes; and  
Councilperson William Powers – yes.

**RESOLUTION #98** to authorize the Highway Superintendent to send the surplus trailer to auction, pending receipt of new trailer, with the understanding it will be listed as “as-is” to reflect its current condition / limited capacity.

Councilperson David Patzwahl made a motion, seconded by Councilperson Alan Miller to authorize the Highway Superintendent to send the surplus trailer to auction, pending receipt of new trailer, with the understanding it will be listed as “as-is” to reflect its current condition / limited capacity.

Supervisor Brenda Adams – yes;  
Councilperson Alan Miller – yes;  
Councilperson Ginny Nightingale – yes;  
Councilperson David Patzwahl – yes; and  
Councilperson William Powers – yes.

**RESOLUTION #99** to authorize new Town Credit Card Policy.

Councilperson Ginny Nightingale made a motion, seconded by Councilperson Alan Miller to approve a Credit Card Policy for Town of Canaan. 5 AYES: Motion carried.

Supervisor Brenda Adams – yes;  
Councilperson Alan Miller – yes;  
Councilperson Ginny Nightingale – yes;  
Councilperson David Patzwahl – yes; and  
Councilperson William Powers – yes.

### **FIRE AND EMS CONTRACTS**

The Board discussed contracts with East Chatham Fire Company (2023-2025) and Chatham Rescue contract for 2023 which will be the focus of a public upcoming hearing and future vote by Town Board.

The Supervisor notes the Fire Company is a multi-year contract and the Chatham Rescue Squad contract is for one-year. EMS services in Columbia County have been stressed over the last few years; Chatham Rescue has been working to address concerns identified by the towns in its service area and the County is in process of a county-wide review of the complete EMS system. Given these issues a one-year contract seems prudent at this time.

### **Report from County Board of Supervisors by Supervisor Brenda Adams:**

- A 2023 Draft Budget has been distributed to the Board of Supervisors; a Budget Workshop has been scheduled for Wednesday, November 23, the day before Thanksgiving. The Draft Budget projects about a 2% tax increase; the tax increase will comply with the 2% tax cap.

- **Affordable Housing update:**

The Housing Task Force and Advisory Board have been appointed. Interviews for Housing Coordinator have started this week: 4 interviews scheduled.

- **New Gun Law Information Meeting at Columbia Greene Community College:**

The County Clerk, County District Attorney and County Sheriff held a public forum at Columbia Greene Community College to discuss the changes to New York State's gun laws. 300 people attended. There are areas of this law that are unclear or undefined and will require further work. Supervisors are working with County staff to identify areas of concern for discussion with state officials.

## **Old Business**

### **Town Covid Guide & Mask requirement**

The Town Board chose to stay with the lowered threshold for masks for Town Hall, *ie* masks are “recomended” rather than “required” at Town Hall. All board members voiced agreement. Board will continue to review status at a month to month basis. Supervisor reports that recently revised CDC guidelines were sent to all staff members.

**State Route 295:** NYS indicated that they still plan to replace the culvert this year.

**Phone System:** The contract with Blink has been cancelled. Blink continues to have tech problems with Consolidated and has admitted they will not be able to provide the services in the contract. The Board agreed the Supervisor should restart the process to find a replacement phone system.

### **Article 78:**

**Supervisor** spoke with the attorney for the town who expects the ongoing Article 78 will be dismissed but is waiting for a decision.

### **Local Law #2: Virtual Meeting status:**

The Supervisor asked Town Clerk for an update on status of Local Law #2. The Town Clerk agreed to make this a top priority and will follow-up and let the board know if the law has filed.

### **Broadband Grant USDA Application:**

Ghent is no longer in the grant, Austerlitz may return to the grant. Unserved households are being reconciled among agencies and a revised quote from Consolidated is underway.

### **Assessor's report:**

The Assessor recommends moving the town wide revaluation scheduled for 2023 to 2024 due to market fluctuations. The Board agreed this is a good idea considering that higher interest rates may negatively affect the current high market values. Moving the date will not incur any additional charges.

The Supervisor will ask if a resolution is required to adjust the timeframe of contract with contractor.

### **Zoning & Planning update: Councilperson Ginny Nightingale:**

Last month the ZBA moved forward three items; the new farm store on Route 22, a pool on Shaker Ridge Road and a garage on Queechy Lake, issuing variances where necessary. The Planning Board approved work to the gas station across from Love's and are looking to stamp site plans for the farm store.

### **Climate Smart Task Force report: Councilperson William Powers**

Councilperson Powers was unable attend the meeting this month but plans to attend next month; he will facilitate minutes from that meeting as soon as possible. The Supervisor states that Becky Meier is working on a heat pump campaign to bring before the board soon. The Town has completed the paperwork to join the Columbia County Climate Vulnerability and Adaptation Plan pilot program.

**Transfer Station report by Councilperson David Patzwahl:**

This month's report indicates Canaan usage for the month is down 10.5 tons compared to the same month last year.

**2023 Transfer Station Pilot Program.**

In response to public requests, the Board agreed to initiate a 2023 pilot program that would increase the number of stickers from one to two for qualified households. Each sticker will be tied to a license plate, be numbered, have a space for a license plate and be required to be attached to the vehicle.

**MOTION: 2023 Transfer Station Two-Sticker Pilot Program.** Councilperson Alan Miller made a motion, seconded by Councilperson William Powers, to approve a 2023 Transfer Station Two-Sticker Pilot Program for qualified households where the stickers will be numbered, have a license plate written on the sticker and be required to be attached to the vehicle. 5 AYES: Motion carried.

Supervisor Brenda Adams – yes;  
Councilperson Alan Miller – yes;  
Councilperson Ginny Nightingale – yes;  
Councilperson David Patzwahl – yes; and  
Councilperson William Powers – yes.

**Traffic Safety Committee report by Councilperson David Patzwahl:**

Councilperson Patzwahl reports the next committee meeting is Thursday November 17<sup>th</sup>.

**Retirement payment December or January.**

The Town historically makes the annual retirement payment in December as there is a small savings for an end of year payment. The retirement payment for 2022 is \$47,284. The 2023 payment expected to increase to \$53,000.

**The Planning Board has suggested a review of their fee structure** after many years of not increasing fees. The Board Chair is putting numbers together.

**Sexual Harassment Training update:** This year the number of staff / volunteers taking the training increased to plus or minus 50 people. As of today, less than half have been trained requiring a third reminder email.

**HIGHWAY REPORT:**

**Superintendent Steven Van Tassel**

Highlights include: seasonal road maintenance is underway including leaf removal, tree trimming and removal, trucks are being transitioned to winter mode, the new equipment trailer has arrived, salt and sand have arrived and been mixed in the salt shed, and the new salt depot is ready. The Top of Dean Hill Road, past the 911 address of 134, is being designated a "seasonal limited-use highway" which means snow/ice removal and maintenance will be temporarily discontinued from November 1st until

April 1st. Final CHIPS reimbursement requests have been submitted and confirmation received that requests are being processed. Payments are expected by December 15th.

Councilperson Ginny Nightingale let the Superintendent know that a tree had fallen into Indian Creek creating a water dam which might overtop County Route 24. Superintendent agreed to talk to the County to see if they could remove the tree.

### **Public Discussion**

Greg Hickok thanked the town board for implementing the new microphone and speaker system.

Lauree Hickok asked if the OWL video system should be raised to see the rest of the room. The Board agreed the OWL seems to be working as positioned but agreed to keep eye on the situation.

The Supervisor said that the new microphone system should be dedicated to the memory of Vivian Vispo who attended town meetings for many years and made multiple requests for a sound system.

Wendy Dwyer asked for an update regarding the intersection of County Route 22 & State Route 295. Councilperson Patzwahl agreed to take this up again at the next Public Safety meeting.

**The Board scheduled a Public Hearing before the regular December meeting on December 12 at 6:45** to allow for public comment on proposed new contracts with East Chatham Fire Company (2023-2025) and a Chatham Rescue contract for 2023.

**Next Town Board meeting will be held on December 12 at 7:00 pm.**

**Motion to Adjourn at 8:39 pm.** Councilperson David Patzwahl made a motion, seconded by Councilperson Alan Miller, to adjourn the meeting. 5 AYES: Motion carried.

Supervisor Brenda Adams – yes;  
Councilperson Alan Miller – yes;  
Councilperson Ginny Nightingale – yes;  
Councilperson David Patzwahl – yes; and  
Councilperson William Powers – yes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joshua S. Weisbuch, Town Clerk