

Town of Canaan, New York

Town Board Regular Meeting Minutes:

August 14, 2023: 7:00 pm to 8:40 pm

Hybrid Meeting: In Person at Town Hall and via ZOOM

Note: internet connection was too slow to fully support ZOOM, video and audio had intermittent lapses.

Present

Supervisor Brenda Adams

Councilperson: Alan Miller

Councilperson Ginny Nightingale

Councilperson David Patzwahl

Councilperson William Powers

Also in Attendance:

Town Clerk Joshua Weisbuch

Town Highway Department Superintendent Stephen Van Tassel

Audience: (1 in audience, 2 online)

Moment of Silence recognized the passing of long-time resident Dr. Richard Gershon

Pledge of Allegiance

APPROVALS

MOTION: July Minutes

Councilperson Ginny Nightingale made a motion, seconded by Councilperson Will Powers to approve the minutes from the July Town Board Meeting. 5 AYES: Motion carried.

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

MOTION: July Bills

Councilperson David Patzwahl made a motion, seconded by Councilperson Alan Miller to approve the July 2023 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.

MOTION: YTD Financials

Some discussion about certain line items including library fees; some adjustments may be required in a couple of accounts including mortgage tax, and increases dues to the payroll company change and charges. The 284 agreement details were also clarified as to CHIPS funding.

Councilperson Ginny Nightingale made a motion, seconded by Councilperson Alan Miller to accept the financials as presented. 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’S REPORT / read by Town Clerk Josh Weisbuch

TOWN CLERK REVENUES	\$ 237.50
HIGHWAY FUND	\$ 275,041.07
HIGHWAY FUND CAPITAL	\$ 32,333.08
LIGHTING DISTRICTS	\$ 1,080.52
AMBULANCE AND FIRE DISTRICTS	\$ 300.00
BUILDING INSPECTOR	\$
PLANNING BOARD	\$ 300.00
RECREATION	\$ 3,498.49
COURT REVENUES	\$ 3650.00 *
* Court June Payments:	
Judges Ambrosio \$3650	
Dep<8/11/23	
(Judge Schaefer \$3083.00	
Pending Deposit –	
(8/11/23)	
ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS	\$
TAX COLLECTOR	\$

It was noted that the Report should be for the calendar month ending on the last day of the month; deposits or pending deposits the following month should not to be included.

RESOLUTIONS & MOTIONS

RESOLUTION 88 of 2023: to approve town use of CC fuel contracts

Columbia County went out to bid for ULS Diesel Fuel, #2 Fuel Oil & Kerosene, Liquid Propane, and Gasoline, all grades and awarded the contracts for ULS Diesel, #2 Fuel oil, & Kerosene to Long Energy; for Liquid Propane to Nolan Bottle Gas; and for Gasoline, all grades to Global Montello Group Corp. The

Columbia County contract with these vendors includes a provision for the successful bidder to provide other political subdivisions within the county the same goods or services upon the same terms and conditions. Therefore, the Canaan Town Board has determined that it is in the public interest to access the lowest price for the purchase of the materials whether through town bids or access through a third-party contract.

Be it resolved, the Canaan Town Board authorizes the addition of these vendors for the purchase of the materials noted above, for the period of July 1, 2023 through June 30, 2024.

Councilperson Alan Miller made a motion, seconded by Councilperson David Patzwahl to approve Resolution 88 of 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.

RESOLUTION 89 of 2023: to approve a social media (FB) use page & policy

The Town of Canaan intends to disseminate information to the public in the most effective ways possible including internet-based applications. This policy is intended to enable and encourage civil communication and positive engagement with the community via an “official” town-wide social media site(s). Guidelines need to be established for the creation and use of the Town’s social media site(s). The council recommended a few improvements in wording of the policy.

Be it resolved, the Town of Canaan adopts the amended Social Media Policy to establish a set of requirements and guidelines to support an effective method of communication while complying with applicable legal standards, and, to protect the Town, its employees, and its elected officials from the potential harmful conduct related to online communications.

Councilperson Ginny Nightingale made a motion, seconded by Councilperson Alan Miller to approve Resolution 89 of 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.

RESOLUTION 90 of 2023: to reappoint Brian Clark to the BAR

The term of Brian Clark, a member of the Town of Canaan’s Board of Assessment Review (BAR) since 2013, will expire on September 30, 2023. The Chairman of the BAR, Paul Deres, has recommended the reappointment of Mr. Clark for another five-year term, as he is a great asset to the Board with his extensive knowledge of the subject matter and dedication to the town, and further, has taken all required trainings to be a member in good standing,

Be it resolved that Brian Clark be re-appointed, effective October 1, 2023 to the Town of Canaan Board of Assessment Review for a five-year term ending September 30, 2028.

Councilperson David Patzwahl made a motion, seconded by Councilperson Alan Miller to approve Resolution 78 of 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.

OLD BUSINESS

Status of Town Clerk 2022 audit / material incomplete / no August meeting to date/no update

Town Clerk Weisbuch said he is close to getting the first month of fifteen overdue months done and hopes to move forward. Supervisor Adams suggested the Town Clerk be given time, such as a week, free of other duties, including the phone and counter duties, to work on the audit without interruption and distractions, subject to the Deputy's Clerk's agreement. Discussion ensued about setting priorities, tracking time, and time management in the Town Clerk's office. Concerns were voiced by board members about the continued delays and the urgency to get on track with the 2022 audit and the first quarter reports for this year. The Town Clerk expressed that time is an obstacle to catching up and getting on track and is the explanation for the status of the files. The board reiterated the importance of completing the task, the priority to get the data from the files into the reports and to reconcile the reports and bank accounts. Suggestions were offered as to ways to manage time to stay on top of the data incrementally. Since April 1, 2023, the Deputy Clerk has taken on these duties for the Town Clerk, doing the data entry, monthly reports, reconciling the bank accounts and preparing the requisite checks, providing additional time for the Town Clerk to cure his 2022 reports / audit. This has provided a basis for current reports but has not solved the problem with the backlog. The Town Clerk agreed, subject to Deputy Clerk's availability, to focus on the audit and first quarter reports going forward. The Supervisor, Town Clerk and Deputy Clerk will meet as soon as possible to get this underway.

Review ongoing virtual or hybrid meeting considerations and mask policy

Board agreed no changes. Free covid tests and masks are available at the Town Hall.

284 agreement update / process

Following up the question about whether the 284 agreement and subsequent revised 284 agreement had to be modified again given that some paving expenses had come in under budget and eligible equipment purchases were being made to run out the funding; the Supervisor was advised that as the overall amount of the agreement did not change, further revision was not required.

Smoking / Vaping / Cannabis in Town Park & Municipal Buildings / reply from Attorney

Advice from counsel was that the town did not need to pass a local law prohibiting smoking, vaping or cannabis use in public parks and municipal buildings as NYS has already passed a law prohibiting those uses in those locations. Supervisor Adams recommended preparing a simple resolution for the September meeting to put up a sign posting the prohibitions in those locations.

BOARD DISCUSSION

NYS Grub Chuk Rd land donation (information gathering progressing)

Broadband grant update / unserved / underserved lists review again!

Ongoing discussion with Consolidated Communications about final list to be served and on the contract

list.

Request for private road (Fern Hill Road) donation to Town (information gathering underway)

There is no new information. A template has been requested.

Planning / ZBA report / Ginny

Two simple boundary line adjustments were approved. No new developments as to the lighting issues at the service stations.

Climate Smart Task Force / Will

A \$5,000 grant has been received NYSEDA Clean Energy Communities program to partially fund improvements included in the Building Energy audit at the Highway garage. The town will need to identify and complete a project or projects to use the funding.

Recreation / Alan

Swimming program ends on the 16th of August.

Supervisor Adams shared she was approached by the Town of New Lebanon about swim lessons at the lake for New Lebanon kids. Discussion ensued as to numbers of kids, costs and lifeguard coverage. The idea was considered worth pursuing; additional research will be done a part of the 2024 planning.

Transfer Station / David

Good news and bad news. Good news: 308 tons total, about 31.67 tons less than same time last year. Bad news: Household waste is up, about 84 percent, up 3.5 percent (nine tons) more household waste than last year. Bigger dumpsters may be getting some C & D, and pick-up trucks loaded up with many, many bags have been showing up. Also, it was discussed that some people have been disrespectful to staff about rules and hours. There is concern that our contract might not be renewed if there are ongoing issues with staff. Supervisor Adams was onsite to check stickers/observe on August 12th; board members Will Powers and David Patzwahl will be on site on August 19 and 26 respectively for the same purpose.

Community Day results

Supervisor summarized the success of the day. Supervisor Adams was applauded for her work.

Bench donation to Stoddard Field Town Park by Tim Wear in honor of his sister.

Once the new, native trees are planted the bench will be permanently located. Thanks Tim!

Maintenance projects, power wash & stain deck, power wash courts

Unbudgeted charges for the deck and tennis/basketball courts will be about \$2,250. The handicap ramp needs maintenance work to prevent buckling on ramp and to extend its useful life; the courts need annual maintenance to prolong the life of the surface. Supervisor requests a motion to move ahead with the maintenance projects; funding to come from the contingency line, work to be provided by the maintenance person. Councilperson David Patzwahl made a motion seconded by Councilperson Alan Miller to approve move ahead with the maintenance projects. 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.

Two 2022 unpaid bills / process for payment

The Town Clerk received two bills via email that went unnoticed and unpaid in December of 2022. The board has a choice to further revise 2022 budget or pay out of 2023 budget. It was agreed to pay out of the 2023 budget.

Referendum items filed with BOE

Superintendent Adams reported that the required documentation was filed with the Columbia County Board of Elections, by the deadline, to have the three referendum items on the ballot.

Revised Local Law #3 in September / firemen's exemption

Superintendent Adams explained the change. For the September board meeting Local Law #6 will capture the change and amend Local Law #3. A public hearing will be required for the September meeting.

Budget requests have been sent to department heads, vendors, and suppliers; responses are due by August 28.

Phone system / WIFI upgrade / park WIFI

Supervisor Adams explained that internet upgrades are needed to improve up and down load speeds at the Town Hall and Garage; preliminary information suggests that with new rates, higher speeds will actually cost less money. Community Day identified a need for internet in the park, costs for same are being explored. We are still trying to get quotes from Consolidated and from the County MIS Department for new phones; capacity and aging technology are an issue.

Beach pass distribution is in place.

The distribution of free beach passes for town residents began in July with a positive reception in the community.

Interest rates are going up.

Superintendent Adams explained that the Bank of Greene County will provide a higher interest rate, from 3 to 3.6%, as of this month for Canaan's municipal account, providing additional, small revenue for the town.

Some discussion ensued about roof insulation at the Highway Garage as a possible project for the NYSERDA funding above. The Supervisor, Highway Superintendent and liaison Dave Patzwahl will meet to review the projects in the building audit.

The Supervisor noted that she will need to clarify the purchasing process (per the procurement policy) for the trees to be purchased as part of the ecological restoration grant for Stoddard Field Town Park.

Councilperson Nightingale reported on the very fine Purple Heart Ceremony and expressed thanks to Dodie Gearing, Town Historian, for organizing the event.

ASSESSOR'S REPORT: See Attached

HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT REPORT: read by Highway Supervisor Stephen Van Tassel – Full Report Attached

There was discussion led by Supervisor Adams about including the full Highway Department Report or summarizing it in the minutes. Consensus was to have a summary in the minutes.

Summary of the Highway Department Report:

- 1974 John Deere Tractor was sold.
- 2023 Paving Projects have been completed.
- Speed Safety study report concluded there will be no need for a reduction in speed.
- The request for deer warning signs has been denied.
- The Town Garage boiler will be repaired.
- The estimate of \$316,000 for revesting the dirt roads in Canaan has been calculated.
- Thanks to our Inter-municipal Agreement the Columbia County Highway Department that brought us over their Vibratory Screen for road millings pile we have out front. This makes for a better finish and faster job.
- Town of Schodack Highway Department has offered their help with our shouldering jobs by lending us a truck with a shoulder machine on the back, including a driver to show us how efficient these machines work.
- Our 2023 Inventory list will be ready by the September 11th meeting. (Deadline September 30th)
- Asplundh Tree Service has been all around town trimming around the powerlines and by letting them park all their equipment at the Highway Department, they have offered to take problematic trees down for us to return the favor. They will here for approximately 3-4 months.
- We are beginning to try a method to create a drainage system that beavers have not seemed to be able to plug on a few of our roads where beaver activity is high.
- Thank you to Frank Lill at the Canaan Firehouse for assisting with unplugging a problematic cross pipe on Old Queechy Road, a spike in activity caused the water to flood into road which put this pipe at the top of the list to fix.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

There was a question and subsequent discussion about which town roads will be improved and how CHIPS money will be applied. It is all in process.

A Frisbee Street resident asked the Town Board if there was a “post mortem” about the spring storm clean up. She expressed dissatisfaction about the work of NYSEG crews on Frisbee Street, the trucks, the housing of crews, the poor communication, the poor handling of wires, etc. and suggested, as an alternative, to become part of National Grid. Supervisor Adams offered to meet with the resident to discuss further and get more information in order to prepare for a meeting with the fire chiefs. This will be arranged.

Supervisor Adams reminded the board that she will be involved in County budget meetings this week and will have reduced town office hours.

MOTION to Adjourn at 8:51 pm

Councilperson Ginny Nightingale 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.

Next meeting: September 11, 2023

Respectfully submitted,
Rebecca Nebesar
Deputy Clerk II