

July 8, 2024

Minutes of the Regular Monthly Meeting of the Town of Otisco that was held July 8, 2024, at 7:00 PM at the Otisco Town Hall, 1924 Barker Street, Tully, New York with the following present:

Present: Supervisor Glenn Hall
Councilman Jesse Spaulding
Councilman Doug LaFrance
Councilman Roger Volles
Councilman Tyler Knapp

Others present: Highway Superintendent, Douglas Hoffman; Deputy Town Clerk, Cheryl Brunet, Financial Advisor, Thomas Chartrand; Attorney for the Town, Craig J. Billinson, and approximately 14 others in the audience.

This meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Supervisor Glenn Hall and the pledge to the flag was given.

Motion was made by Councilman Jesse Spaulding and seconded by Councilman Roger Volles to open the Public Hearing

All in favor, motion carried.
(Hall, Volles, Spaulding, LaFrance and Knapp) Ayes 5 Noes 0

PUBLIC HEARING ON ENACTING A LOCAL LAW TO ABOLISH THE ELECTED POSITION OF TAX COLLECTOR AND TRANSFER THE TAX COLLECTION FUNCTIONS TO THE TOWN CLERK.

Supervisor Hall read the brief description of the local law as follows:
The Town of Otisco Town Board desires to streamline operations, reduce costs, and improve efficiency in the administration of the Town's tax collection process. To Accomplish this, the intent of the proposed Local Law is to abolish the elected position of Tax Collector in the Town of Otisco and transfer all duties and responsibilities associated with the tax collection functions to the Town Clerk.

Olin Stratton asked about the reasons for this combining the positions. Reasons provided were difficulty in filling the Tax Collector position and the possibility of the County taking over the tax collection function.

Attorney Billinson spoke to the referendum date for August 27, 2024 and provided copies of the Legal Notice of Mandatory Referendum for posting to the town notice board. He will post to the newspaper.

Motion was made by Councilman Volles and seconded by Councilman Spaulding to close the Public Hearing at 7:18 pm.

All in favor, motion carried.
(Hall, Volles, Spaulding, LaFrance and Knapp) Ayes 5 Noes 0

RESOLUTION # 31

Motion was made by Councilman Roger Volles and seconded by Councilman Jesse Spaulding to enact Local Law No. 7 TO ABOLISH THE ELECTED POSITION OF TAX COLLECTOR AND TRANSFER THE TAX COLLECTION FUNCTIONS TO THE TOWN CLERK.

All in favor, motion carried.
(Hall, Volles, Spaulding, LaFrance and Knapp) Ayes 5 Noes 0

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion was made by Councilman Spaulding and seconded by Councilman Volles to approve the June 10, 2024 Monthly Meeting Minutes.

All in favor, motion carried
(Hall, LaFrance, Volles, Knapp and Spaulding) Ayes 5 Noes 0

INITIAL REMARKS FROM SUPERVISOR HALL

Regarding Wonderland Forest: The court case is still in process. The attorneys have met several times, and the Judge has moved the court date to August 22. The judge is encouraging compromise. Attorney Billinson noted that Wonderland has defied the court ordered concert end time. Supervisor Hall reported that data collection has been effective.

The question was raised asking if the town could levy fines for non-compliance. Attorney Billinson noted that the judge has advised the town not to issue fines while the court case is ongoing. However, progress has been made in that Wonderland has supplied us with temporary liquor licenses and insurance certificates.

Pete Sheedy asked who was paying the bill for the Sheriff Security Officer and vehicle at the “gate” of the closed end of South Cook Road. Supervisor Hall responded that Wonderland Forest pays the Sheriff directly. He also noted that our requested patrols under contract with the Sheriff’s Department often go unfilled when there is a Sheriff being retained by Wonderland Forest. County Legislator Rich McCarron sees this as a conflict of interest. Supervisor Hall stated that he hopes we can have more of our requests for patrols filled on a more regular basis.

The question was raised if there has been an uptick in fire calls at Wonderland Forest. Doug Bloodgood from the Otisco Fire Department was in the audience and he responded that over the recent 3 day event there were 3 or 4 calls. Mostly minor except for one around 3am on Saturday where a large tree branch fell on a camper and caused extensive injuries. He also stated that Wonderland did not have an ambulance on-site, just an EMT. Marcellus ambulance responded.

Mr. Bloodgood also raised concerns on behalf of the fire department that there were no clear roads through the campers to the site of the accident. The tents were all in a jumble. Mr. Bloodgood will attempt to facilitate a conversation between the fire department and Wonderland.

Responding to a question about the closure of South Cook Rd, Supervisor Hall said that he is in communication with Chief Police Deputy Matt Fisher as well as two deputies, Dan Pace and Jim McKenna, and has expressed his displeasure on this issue. Using a sheriff to close the road undermines the town's concerns that the road stays open for the residents who live in the closed area.

Jayne Baritell noted that the traffic from the venue is becoming very dangerous. Drivers are not abiding by the speed limit and even stop signs. Supervisor Hall said that we will work on this matter. If we receive the requested police details the town will be able to better address this issue. Financial Advisor Thomas Chartrand stated that the state is more responsive to speed limit change requests if they see a petition signed by citizens.

Supervisor Hall thanked everyone who helps him keep up with noise and other violations in the town.

State Legislator Rich McCarron recognized Supervisor Hall's hard work keeping up with these issues.

Supervisor Hall announced that Amber fire Department No Parking signs have been installed in the correct, enforceable positions.

Councilman LaFrance will be collecting quotes on replacing the front porch and ramp at the Town Hall.

Commemorative park benches were discussed. Supervisor Hall suggests that the benches be the same as the first bench donated by the fire department for continuity.

The Republican caucus is scheduled for July 22, at 7pm. Councilman Tyler Knapp who was appointed to replace ex-councilman Peter Murphy and councilman Doug LaFrance who was appointed to replace ex-councilman Scott Eipp will be considered at the caucus.

Pete Sheedy asked if there was anything new on the wind turbines. Supervisor Hall requested Palmer Capital come in if there is any new news, otherwise they will come in to address concerned citizens in the fall. Electrical transmission line routes were discussed. Also underground v above ground electrical lines and the difference in compensation. A general conversation ensued regarding leases for turbines, electrical lines, solar panels and fracking.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Councilman Spaulding asked when the deadline was to spend ARPA funds. Financial Advisor Chartrand said the funds had to be spent or committed by the end of 2024. Still at around \$69,000 before current vouchers.... Councilman LaFrance is getting quotes for replacement of front entrance deck and ramp. Councilman LaFrance had questions about the defibrillators and their compatibility with the fire department and ambulance defibrillators. He will supply the make and model the Fire Dept uses.

Supervisor Hall inquired about online payments for online orders. Financial Advisor Chartrand explained the problems involved as regards sales tax. If we make purchases as a town and pay sales tax, we will eventually lose our tax-exempt status. Also, NY State law does not allow us to pay for purchases before we receive them. A town credit card comes with other problems.

HIGHWAY REPORT

Highway Superintendent Douglas Hoffman gave the following report:

- Signs at the Amber Firehouse are installed properly for legal enforcement
- The new park bench is being installed
- Basketball hoops on the agenda for installation at the community center
- Repairs and paving on Woodmancy will begin July 10th, weather permitting

SUPERVISORS REPORT

The Supervisor’s Report was given by Financial Advisor Thomas Chartrand. General Fund spending is at 49% and revenues are at 90%. Highway fund spending is at 31% and revenues are at 92%.

Motion was made by Councilman LaFrance and seconded by Councilman Knapp to accept the Supervisors Report.

All in favor, motion carried
(Hall, LaFrance, Volles, Knapp and Spaulding) Ayes 5 Noes 0

Motion was made by Councilman Spaulding and seconded by Councilman Volles to approve the following Transfer of Appropriations:

GENERAL FUND

From: A1990.4	Contingent	Contractual	\$ 2,000.00
To: A3620.4	Safety Inspections	Contractual	\$ 2,000.00

All in favor, motion carried
(Hall, LaFrance, Volles, Knapp and Spaulding) Ayes 5 Noes 0

Motion was made by Councilman Volles and seconded Councilman Spaulding to accept the Bank Reconciliation Statement presented to the Town Board by Financial Advisor, Thomas Chartrand.

All in favor, motion carried
(Hall, LaFrance, Volles, Knapp and Spaulding) Ayes 5 Noes 0

Motion was made by Councilman LaFrance and seconded by Councilman Knapp to pay the bills out of the proper funds. General Fund, Abstract # 7 \$20,265.70 and \$128,264.98 Highway, Abstract #6 \$20,113.16.

All in favor, motion carried
(Hall, LaFrance, Volles, Knapp and Spaulding) Ayes 5 Noes 0

Financial Advisor Chartrand stated that the budget worksheets will be sent out around the end of August for the September budget meeting. We will be having the budget workshop with the regular September meeting. Supervisor Hall will push out the Palmer Capital representative discussion until at least October.

CODES

Discussed the Paul Edinger property on Octagon Rd. A second house is being built on the and no building permit was issued. The second home qualifies the property as commercial and therefore subsequent structures need to be approved by the board. Supervisor Hall directed Robert Hayes, Code Enforcement Officer to issue a stop work order. Officer Hayes agreed and Deputy Town Clerk Brunet agreed to accompany him as a witness to post the order on the home in progress and/or hand deliver to the homeowner.

OTHER BUSINESS

The Sheriff patrol issue was discussed/clarified again. Wonderland secured a sheriff and a patrol car on July 4, 5, and 6. The Town of Otisco has a contract with the County and requested a Sheriff patrol on the same days, July 4,5, and 6. The town was able to get one patrol shift on the 5th of July. The sheriff on that patrol had worked 10 hours the day before, on July 4th at Wonderland.

Permitting is completed on the cell tower. Construction should start August and other cell providers have expressed interest. Driveways were also reviewed.

Supervisor Hall informed those present that the Town Board has to discuss certain matters relating to proposed, pending or current litigation involving the Town and these discussions should take place in Executive Session with the Board meeting in private since disclosure of these discussions at this time could have a significant impact on the Town Board's ability to properly defend such lawsuit in the best interests of the Town and the Public.

Supervisor Hall requested a motion to enter into Executive Session

Motion was made by Councilman Knapp and seconded by Councilman Spaulding to enter into Executive Session.

Executive Session began at 8:48 pm and ended at 9:30

Motion was made by Councilman Knapp and seconded by Councilman Spaulding to adjourn at 9:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted: _____
Cheryl Brunet, Deputy Town Clerk