

TOWN OF WESTERLO
SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING
TUESDAY, MARCH 2, 2021

The Town of Westerlo Town Board held a Special Town Board on Tuesday, March 2, 2021 via Zoom #91571318179. Supervisor Bichteman opened the meeting at 7:01 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

ATTENDING WERE: Supervisor William F. Bichteman Jr.
Councilman Matthew Kryzak
Councilman Joseph J. Boone
Councilwoman Amie L. Burnside
Councilman Richard Filkins

Also attending via Zoom were: Planning Board Chairwoman Dorothy Verch and members Edwin Stevens, Gerry Boone & Beau Loendorf, ZBA Chairwoman Jillian Henck, Attorney Afzali, Town Clerk Karla Weaver and approximately eight residents.

EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR MATTERS RELATING TO EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE

Supervisor Bichteman made a motion to enter into executive session at 7:02pm. Councilman Kryzak seconded, all in favor motion carried.

Councilman Boone made a motion to return from executive session at 8:16pm. Councilwoman Burnside seconded, all in favor motion carried.

RESUMING SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING

APPROVAL OF TOWN BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Councilman Kryzak made a motion to approve the Town Board minutes of 2/2/21 and 2/16/21. Councilman Filkins seconded, all in favor motion carried.

TOWN PARK SECURITY AND SURVEILLANCE

Supervisor Bichteman advised that the Town has hired Self Secured Network LLC to install the video equipment at the Town Hall and Town Park. There will be three cameras at the Town Hall and two at the Town Park. People who are by themselves will have access to the cameras so they can see who is at the door. It will cost a total of \$4,496.99 and will be installed by the end of the month. If there is an incident, the Town must keep a copy of the video for three years, otherwise no backup is required. It has 20 TB of memory.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN- RENEWABLE ENERGY DRAFT

The draft Comprehensive Plan Renewable Energy section was reviewed and discussed by the Town Board. A copy was not available to the Town Clerk or the Public at time of discussion. Some comments were as followed:

- Supervisor Bichteman believed Wind and Battery storage should be separated on page 4.
- Councilman Boone questioned on page 3 if “affordability in the town” meant that solar developers realize they can get land for good prices in Westerlo? Others wondered the same.

- Attorney Afzali advised that the purpose of this discussion is for the Town Board to review the draft and provide the Comprehensive Plan Committee with comments/suggestions. The Committee can then choose to accept and incorporate these comments/suggestions into the draft or not. In the end, the Committee will provide a proposed final draft to the Town Board where the Board can either approve or make changes.
- The graphics on page 2 need to be enlarged.
- The Supervisor asked for clarity for which region the plan is referring to on page 10.
- Remove the word “pressure” from the “Town has experienced increased pressure from renewable energy producers” on page 11.
- Goals listed should be rearranged by priority.
- For goal 1 on page 12, Mr. Bichteman would remove the word “encourage” and would replace the word “promote” with “accept” under Objection 1.1. In 1.1.3. he suggests referring to the Comprehensive Plan instead of “the Town’s guidance and direction”. In 1.1.4. replace “advocate” with “promote”. Change goal 2 to goal 4, goal 3 to goal 1, goal 4 to goal 2. In 3.1 put a period after “exceptional beauty”.

Supervisor Bichteman would like the changes to be made and provided to the Town Board at the regular meeting on the 16th.

REVITALIZING THE HERITAGE MUSEUM

Mr. Bichteman mentioned there was no new information at this time.

MAIL DELIVERY

The Town Board discussed the mailbox versus a PO Box. Supervisor Bichteman advised that there will now be a camera pointed at the mailbox. Supervisor Bichteman made a motion to keep the mailbox. Councilman Kryzak seconded; a vote resulted as follows:

AYES: Councilman Boone, Councilman Kryzak, Supervisor Bichteman

NAY: Councilwoman Burnside, Councilman Filkins

Motion so carried.

SHARED SERVICES AGREEMENT WITH TOWN OF RENSSELAERVILLE

Supervisor Bichteman advised that he has received the Town of Rensselaerville Shared Service agreement and mentioned that the rate is the same as before. Councilman Kryzak made a motion to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS: The Town of Westerlo contracts with the Town of Rensselaerville for a senior bus/car, be it hereby

RESOLVED: The Town Board authorizes the Supervisor to enter into an agreement with the Town of Rensselaerville for the shared senior bus/car service.

Seconded by Councilwoman Burnside, a vote resulted as follows:

AYES: Councilwoman Burnside, Councilman Filkins, Councilman Kryzak, Councilman Boone, Supervisor Bichteman

NAYS: None

RESOLUTION # 35-2021 was thereby duly adopted.

SPEED LIMIT ON ANABLE & SLADE HILL ROADS

Supervisor Bichteman advised that speed was reduced to 45 mph on Slade Hill Rd between Anable and CR 412 and on Anable between SR 143 & CR 412. Speed was also reduced on Slade Hill Rd to 40 mph between SR 143 & Anable Rd.

NEXAMP

At the February 26th Town Board meeting, the Town Board passed a resolution to discontinue NEXAMP because of the amount of work involved. Mr. Bichteman now believes the credit will work out to be roughly \$1,200 a year. He also advised that the Town may be eligible for a credit on the Central Hudson bill for the street lighting districts as well. The Town Board discussed the potential for the Town's electric bills to be paid as part of future PILOT Agreements. Councilman Kryzak made a motion to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS: The Supervisor gave an update on NEXAMP credits, be it hereby

RESOLVED: The Town Board resume the NEXAMP discount.

Seconded by Councilwoman Burnside. A vote resulted as follows:

AYES: Councilwoman Burnside, Councilman Filkins, Councilman Kryzak, Councilman Boone, Supervisor Bichteman

NAYS: None

RESOLUTION # 36-2021 was thereby duly adopted.

CLERK TO THE ZBA/PLANNING BOARD

Supervisor Bichteman made a motion to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS: The Town Board interviewed a candidate for the vacant ZBA and Planning Board Clerk position at the last Town Board meeting, be it hereby

RESOLVED: The Town Board appoints Britta Biggs to the position of Clerk to the Boards to fill the unexpired term previously held by Jennifer Bungay. Term expires 12/31/21.

Seconded by Councilwoman Burnside. A vote resulted as follows:

AYES: Councilwoman Burnside, Councilman Filkins, Councilman Kryzak, Councilman Boone, Supervisor Bichteman

NAYS: None

RESOLUTION # 37-2021 was thereby duly adopted.

BAR APPOINTMENT

Supervisor Bichteman indicated he would like to appoint a candidate to the vacant Board of Assessment Review position and made a motion to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS: There is a vacancy on the Board of Assessment Review due to the resignation of Susan Cunningham whose term expires 9/30/2023, be it hereby

RESOLVED: The Town Board appoints Nicole Eagen to the Board of Assessment Review to fill the unexpired term.

Seconded by Councilwoman Burnside, a vote resulted as follows:

AYES: Councilwoman Burnside, Councilman Filkins, Councilman Kryzak, Councilman Boone, Supervisor Bichteman

NAYS: None

RESOLUTION # 38-2021 was thereby duly adopted.

PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF WATER DISTRICT REPAIR & HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT EQUIPMENT FUNDS

Mr. Bichteman mentioned that he sent the Town Board a proposal for the establishment of the Water District repair & Highway Department Equipment repair funds. These dedicated funds are to be used for major repairs and improvements. The Water District currently has a fund balance of \$44,000.00. He is proposing transferring \$35,000.00 of that account balance to the proposed Water District repair and improvements fund and also to apportion unused budget money at year end to be added to that fund annually. He also recommended using the \$10,000 in the Capital Outlay fund for Highway (DA5130.21) to create the Highway Equipment and Repair fund and simultaneously transfer 50% of any unused highway budget money at the end of the year to that fund. Supervisor Bichteman made a motion to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS: Funds need to be established for the repair of the Water District and for Highway Department Equipment and repair, be it hereby

RESOLVED: The Town Board authorizes the Town Attorney to create the resolution documents for the Public Hearing on March 16th.

Seconded by Councilman Kryzak. A vote resulted as follows:

AYES: Councilwoman Burnside, Councilman Filkins, Councilman Kryzak, Councilman Boone, Supervisor Bichteman

NAYS: None

RESOLUTION # 39-2021 was thereby duly adopted.

The Town Board discussed holding a public hearing for these on the 16th of March before they are instituted. Councilwoman Burnside made a motion to adopt the following resolution:

WHEREAS: The Town Board must hold a public hearing for the proposed Water District fund & Highway Department Equipment fund, be it hereby

RESOLVED: the Town Board schedules the Public Hearings for Tuesday, March 16th @ 7pm prior to the regularly scheduled Town Board meeting.

Seconded by Councilman Kryzak. A vote resulted as follows:

AYES: Councilwoman Burnside, Councilman Filkins, Councilman Kryzak, Councilman Boone, Supervisor Bichteman

NAYS: None

RESOLUTION # 40-2021 was thereby duly adopted.

HOUSEKEEPING RESOLUTIONS

The Supervisor advised the Town Board would be skipping this topic.

LITTLE LEAGUE FIELD MODIFICATIONS

Supervisor Bichteman advised that money was set aside as part of last years budget for modifications to be made to the little league field. He indicated he had been holding a check for the reimbursement for fencing because he was waiting to receive the purchase receipt/invoice but one was never provided so therefore the money was returned to the account and now it is part of the fund balance for the Town.

DEPUTY SUPERVISOR RESIGNATION

Mr. Bichteman advised that Councilman Boone resigned as Deputy Supervisor and he has appointed Councilman Kryzak to replace him.

ZBA VACANCIES

There are still two vacancies on the ZBA. An ad will be placed in the paper for two weeks and it will also be posted on the website.

MEMORIAL DAY PARADE

Supervisor Bichteman mentioned that there will be a Memorial Day Parade in Berne this year.

VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE FOR PARK ACTIVITIES

Supervisor Bichteman mentioned possibly forming an informal volunteer committee for park activities. He advised that Beau Loendorf has volunteered to be the chair and they are looking for volunteers.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Councilwoman Burnside mentioned that she has been working with Betty Filkins, William Bichteman and Dave Poole with the Albany County Sheriff's Department on a collaborative list of people who are in need of the COVID vaccine. Anyone who is in need can be put on the list.

Dotty Verch mentioned that the Planning and Zoning Board are not listed on the website as a department. Currently if people are looking for someone from those Boards, they have to contact the Town Clerk. Supervisor Bichteman mentioned he would look into it.

With there being no further business to discuss, Councilman Kryzak made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Councilman Filkins seconded, all in favor motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 10:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karla Weaver
Town Clerk