

**Town of Westerlo Town Board
Workshop Meeting
of
Tuesday, May 4, 2021**

The Town of Westerlo Town Board held a workshop meeting on Tuesday, May 4, 2021 via Zoom ID # 91571318179. Supervisor Bichteman opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag at 7:00 PM.

Attending were: Supervisor William Bichteman Jr.
Councilman Joseph J. Boone
Councilwoman Amie L. Burnside
Councilman Matthew Kryzak
Councilman Richard Filkins

Absent were: None

Also attending via zoom: Highway employees Justin Case & Salvatore Spinnato, Planning Board Chairperson Dorothy Verch and member Edwin Stevens, Comprehensive Plan Committee member (CPC) John Sefcik, Town Clerk Karla Weaver and approximately six interested residents.

OLD BUSINESS

RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONING COMMITTEE PROGRESS

Councilman Kryzak mentioned that the Renewable Energy Zoning Committee met last evening and indicated they are well through the solar and wind sections of the new zoning which will be submitted to the Town Attorney for his review. The battery storage section will also be submitted to the Town Attorney.

REVITALIZING THE HERITAGE MUSEUM

Supervisor Bichteman advised that he just received the proposed resolution to establish the Museum which he will provide to the Town Board tomorrow however, there are some obvious things in it that are missing and need to be addressed.

AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN-COVID RELIEF FUNDING

Mr. Bichteman mentioned there is essentially no news regarding the American Rescue Plan funding but he has contacted the Association of Towns to find out if there are any updates on what the money can be spent on.

COMMUNITY BLOCK GRANT, COMMUNITY FUNDING GRANT, INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT

Supervisor Bichteman mentioned the Town has made the top ten list for capital region projects that have been chosen for federal funding through the Dept. of Agriculture for \$1,687,500 however there is a matching component the Town has to come up with. He indicated the Town is looking for letters from residents to our senators and to the chairman of the funding committees to try to get their support in funding our project. He mentioned the Town has the support of Chris Tague and Paul Tonko both of which have sponsored the program. It's just a matter of time to find out where the Town stands.

Mr. Bichteman advised that the Town qualifies for the Members T&I Infrastructure Improvement grant for a potential Town Park multi-use trail of \$200,000. This has also been pushed forward by Congressman Tonko.

Mr. Bichteman mentioned that the Town is eligible for \$50,000-\$100,000 for the CDBG-CARES Community Development Block Grant which is targeted for low- and moderate-income families.

Supervisor Bichteman thanked the BRC for their assistance in soliciting statistics and information in regards to the USDA grant. They have worked hard.

NEW BUSINESS

RESIGNATION/RE-INSTATEMENT OF CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER (CEO)

Supervisor Bichteman mentioned that the CEO is retiring from his full-time position in the Town of New Scotland and has to be off the Town of Westerlo payroll for a day due to retirement purposes. At Councilman Boone's request, he spoke to the Town Attorney regarding the resignation/re-instatement of the CEO. It's really a formality since there is no change in salary or to the position responsibility. The Town Board can accept his resignation and re-appoint him on the 18th. He will send a copy of his resignation to the Town Board. There is no need for advertising.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND RENEWABLE ENERGY ZONING REVIEW

Mr. Bichteman indicated that the CPC hopes to provide the Town Board with the draft plan by the end of next week. Even though the draft is not ready for the public hearing, the Town needs to send it to the County for their review.

EMAIL FROM TOWN CLERK REGARDING SECURITY AT THE TOWN HALL, BLINDS AND TRANSFER STATION DENIALS

Councilman Kryzak mentioned that the Town Clerk sent an email to the Board regarding the inability for her staff to view the camera system as they do not have access to her computer. He mentioned the possibility of getting another monitor in the Clerk & Supervisor's offices so the staff can view it if the Town Clerk or Supervisor is out. The Supervisor believed the risk has been exaggerated, it is rarely the case that anyone is alone in the offices. He mentioned that the software is programmable to be installed on any computer in the building and suggested that installing a separate monitor to the computer. The Town Clerk responded, the idea for the separate monitor came from the company that installed the camera system. Self Secured Networks LLC suggested having an additional tv screen on the wall so everyone in the room could glance up at it from time to time eliminating the need to have it on individual computer screens. The Supervisor advised that the control box and monitor was originally supposed to go in the Town Clerk's office but there was no room to put it. He indicated the problem isn't the monitors it's the cost of having the company come back to rewire. Councilwoman Burnside asked if there was access to the camera system by cell phone, Mr. Bichteman responded yes.

Councilman Kryzak mentioned he would like to see the Highway Department/Court and Transfer Station have cameras budgeted and installed in the future.

Blinds for the Town Clerk's office were discussed.

The Supervisor gave an update on two Transfer Station permit applications that had been denied recently. He indicated he spoke to one of the applicants and recommended he put his complaint in writing to the Town Board. A letter was received by the Town Clerk recently regarding the other denial which was forwarded to the Town Board. Mr. Bichteman indicated he didn't respond initially as he was doing research. He has since drafted a letter requesting permission to visit the site with the CEO and Assessor to make a determination however it appears there is no residence on the property.

UPDATE ON EXTERIOR ENTRANCE STEPS AT TOWN HALL

Councilwoman Burnside asked for an update on the renovation of the steps at the Town Hall. The Supervisor has a set of plans which were sent out prior to the steps being poured. The original plan was to put a platform down over the existing steps but when the engineer came out, they recommended removing and replacing them. Mr. Bichteman indicated the next steps to be worked on is the front entrance which will include the construction of a handicap ramp and the replacement of the sidewalk. Work will begin on the rear steps last.

Mr. Bichteman mentioned that the trash area will need to be relocated since it is currently house in the front entranceway. He recommended removing the two gas ranges in the kitchen and moving the garbage there. The ranges could be donated locally. Councilman Boone noted that in the past, the Town Hall has hosted events such as Hometown Heroes where food has been served; indicating the stoves were helpful. The Town Clerk suggested getting a shed and relocating the garbage outside the building.

Supervisor Bicheman advised that the Town has hired Jim Loux to do the demolition work on the steps.

MEETINGS

The Town Board briefly discussed future meetings with the potential of holding them at the Town Park or Town Hall. The problem is there needs to be enough seating to house everyone wanting to attend.

SOUTH WESTERLO TOWN PARK UPDATE

Supervisor Bichteman announced that the other project under design is the bathrooms for the So. Westerlo Town Park. He indicated an area was located at the park which will perk however the Town needs to wait until baseball season is over because the leach field will be in right field.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Councilman Filkins indicated many cars came into the Transfer Station over the weekend without their hang tags visible. Signs have been made to remind people to get or pick up their permits.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Councilman Kryzak made a motion to enter into executive session at 8:09pm for the purpose of conducting interviews for the two vacant positions on the ZBA and also to discuss union negotiations. Councilman Filkins seconded, all in favor motion carried.

Councilman Filkins made a motion to return from executive session at 9:21pm. Councilwoman Burnside seconded, all in favor motion carried.

ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

With there being no further discussion, Councilman Filkins made a motion to close the workshop meeting. Councilman Kryzak seconded; all in favor motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:21pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Karla J. Weaver
Town Clerk