

State of New York
County of Fulton
Town of Stratford

Minutes of the Stratford Town Board meeting held on Wednesday, May 8, 2013 at the municipal building located at 120 Piseco Rd.

Present:

Robert Johnson Jr.	---	Supervisor
Allan Perkins	---	Councilman
Lorraine Rumrill	---	Councilwoman
Dawn Youker	---	Councilwoman
Diana Massicotte	---	Town Clerk
Charles Goodwin	---	Highway Superintendent
Peg Klages	---	Deputy Town Clerk
Norman Wright	---	Code Enforcement Officer

Absent:

Bernard Leavitt,	---	Councilman
Leigh Anne Loucks	---	Assessor
Lita Hillier	---	Bookkeeper

Supervisor Johnson called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm with the Pledge to the Flag.

Residents in attendance: Susan Fogarty, Chad Angus, Heidi Christiansen, Rodney Swartz, Peter and Mary Szczebak, Gary Rumrill, Joe and Pearl Subaniewicz, Dennis and Dixie Wickham, Paul Riley, Jane and George Dieffenbacher, Beth and Rick Sadlon, Marshall Scott, Ann Pierz, and Alicia Rice.

REPORTS

Code Enforcement Officer Norman Wright issued two permits, mailed two certified letters and worked on tickets issued last year. CEO said 11 out of 13 complied with tickets.

Superintendent Goodwin gave the following report:

During April worked on black patching roads, worked on trucks for summer use, dirt roads were graded and raked. Ditching started on Red House Road. East Shore Road is in bad shape, caused by snowmobile use. Discussion followed regarding the use of the trails and the roads for snowmobiles. Supervisor Johnson said he would talk to DEC regarding snowmobile trails and see if there was anything that could be done.

Received from Chips, \$113,000.00.

DEC signed off on the Barn property.

Superintendent Goodwin brought before the Board the information for a 1973 Ford Louisville Truck priced at \$4,500.00. He said if they had this truck, it would be easier to bring the downed trees along the roads to the barn and cut them up there. Superintendent Goodwin said he has somebody coming to look at the bucket truck. The best offer he has so far is out of a junk yard in Herkimer. Supervisor Johnson said we could still put it out for bid. Supervisor Johnson said we probably saved about \$6,000.00 this year in heating oil because of the new installation of the outside boiler.

Motion made by Councilman Perkins, seconded by Councilwoman Rumrill to purchase the 1973 Ford Louisville Truck for \$4,500.00.

ADOPTED Ayes 4 Johnson, Perkins, Rumrill, and Youker
Nays 0

Superintendent Goodwin said we should have the new truck sometime in June. The funds have been approved by the bank. Because we are in the Adirondack Park, we had to go through the State referendum in order to borrow money for the purchase of the truck. The town is selling a plow truck and plans to put the money toward the new truck.

Supervisor Johnson said he was not against the state owning land but was against them owning two-thirds of it in the Town. We have nowhere to grow. The State sets the equalization rate and valuation of the land.

Superintendent Goodwin said there was a tree in the park that should come down. Supervisor Johnson said he would have to get three bids.

Town Clerk Massicotte reported for the Dog Control Officer that 52 animals were vaccinated at the Rabies Clinic on April 27. The Town paid \$150.00 plus what was collected.

Clerk Massicotte stated there was a limited supply of Mosquito dunks available at her office.

PUBLIC SPEAKING

Peter Szczebak stated that the original Voorhees map showed that the property owners of Stewarts Landing deeded a 50 foot right-a-way to the town. The road is currently 26 feet wide with plenty of room for ditching and shoulders.

Residents asked about the BTI application. Mr. Szczebak said that it was only good in running water and right now the streams were very low. They received permission to start the third week in April.

There was discussion about the reval. Residents felt there were many discrepancies. The Assessor had mentioned at the last meeting that she would be available after May 1 to discuss the reval's with any resident who wanted to make an appointment to discuss their reval with her before grievance day.

Mr. Chad Angus asked who the Assessor reported to regarding her job. Supervisor Johnson said the Board did not have a lot of say as long as she is in her office for her hours and does the job she was hired to do. The State sets the law for the Assessors.

Supervisor Johnson said the State came out and did their sample assessment. He felt they were putting Albany prices on the property up here. They are putting \$1,000 to \$1,500 per acre on swamp land. He asked them if they got out and looked around, they said they did it from their car. Supervisor Johnson asked them how they could assess property from a vehicle.

It was asked why the Town hired an outside assessor. Supervisor Johnson said the Assessor has a big family in this town. He said in all fairness to her and every department head in this town, there should be a level of protection so there are not any false accusations. He said we needed a common ground. Supervisor Johnson felt hiring someone from the outside was the best way to go with the reval.

Councilwoman Youker said Assessor Loucks did not see the data collection until February. She knew there were things wrong then but had trouble getting Maxwell to come and straightened it out. Councilwoman Youker said the Assessor was pretty sure they had straightened everything out. She said the next step for the residents would be to go to grievance day.

Peg Klages stated that letters were sent out May 1 listing dates to meet with Assessor Loucks. Ms. Klages felt the Assessor was trying to do everything she could to accommodate everybody.

Supervisor Johnson said that ORPTS felt there were not enough complaints to throw the whole reval out and that Assessor Loucks had enough time to resolve the issues.

OLD BUSINESS

Diane Keck is having more of a problem with her leg injury than was anticipated. The Board will hold a special meeting to go over the applications once again.

Councilwoman Youker said there should be more people coming in to license their dogs and felt the Dog Control Officer should be contacting them. Clerk Massicotte stated she sends out a delinquent report to Karen every three or four months. A second delinquent letter is mailed to residents who have not paid for their license for the coming year. Clerk Massicotte asked the Board if they wanted to back charge the residents that haven't paid previous years. Councilwoman Youker said that the DCO should issue a ticket to owners who do not license their dogs. Supervisor Johnson said it was important that residents license their dogs so the Town can keep track of rabies shots which are kept on file with the Town Clerk.

Supervisor Johnson stated that the BAR could make recommendations, but it was up to the Assessor whether or not she would accept them. Heidi Christiansen suggested the residents bring whatever issues they had to the attention of the Assessor before Grievance Day and possibly they could resolve their issues and not have to go to Grievance Day.

The State owns 68% of the Town. The State sets their evaluation. The taxable land that the state owns is \$37,000,000.00. The State said they would pay more if the Town did a reval. The State pays 30% of our budget.

Supervisor Johnson felt there should be more than one day for Grievance. Ms. Klages said that the Assessor was collecting the paperwork to see if it would warrant an extra day. The paperwork has to be handed in before you can grieve.

The assessment rolls have been filed with the state. Supervisor Johnson said he would talk to the Town Lawyer regarding an injunction on the reval.

NEW BUSINESS

Supervisor Johnson said that the County was talking about putting in water and sewer lines throughout the County. They are also talking about consolidating the towns.

Supervisor Johnson said he was concerned about the Fire Department. He talked to Councilman Perkins about incentives to encourage young residents to volunteer. Would like to see a small building put up at Pleasant Lake to house pumper and have someone volunteer to man it until the rest of the men could get to the fire. Councilman Perkins announced that Brian Alling is the new Fire Chief.

Alicia Rice announced that there would be a Public Hearing on the School Budget on Tuesday, May 14, 2013.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion made by Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilman Perkins to approve the Board meeting minutes of April 11, 2013.

ADOPTED Ayes 4 Johnson, Perkins, Rumrill, and Youker
 Nays 0

AUDIT OF CLAIMS

Motion made by Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilman Perkins to approve the bills on Abstract #5

 Ayes - 4 Rumrill, Johnson, Perkins and Youker
 Nays – 0

General Fund	Voucher Nos. 75 through 91	\$3,922.33
Highway Fund	Voucher Nos. 55 through 67	\$4,566.64

With no further business, on a motion by Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilman Perkins, the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Massicotte, Town Clerk