

**State of New York
County of Fulton
Town of Stratford REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Municipal Building, 120 Piseco Road
February 8, 2018**

Present:

Allicia Rice	Supervisor
Richard Fogarty	Councilman
Allan Perkins	Councilman
Joan Ploss	Councilwoman
Lorraine Rumrill	Councilwoman
Heather VanDenburgh	Town Clerk
Norman Wright	Code Enforcement Officer
Karen Jaquay	Dog Control Officer

Absent:

Leigh Anne Loucks	Assessor
Michael Sokira	BTI Director
Charles Goodwin	Highway Superintendent

Number of Residents in Attendance: 10 (See attached attendance sheet)

Supervisor Rice called the Regular Board Meeting to order at 6:32 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC HEARING on proposed Local Law 1-2018. The public was given an opportunity to voice their opinion, but all declined to do so.

RESOLUTION 8-18 TO ADOPT NEW LOCAL LAW 1-2018, ESTABLISHING A REAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION FOR COLD WAR VETERANS

WHEREAS, the Town of Stratford enacted Local Law 1-2008, Establishing a Real Property Tax Exemption for Cold War Veterans;

WHEREAS, Local Law 1-2008, Paragraph (A) stated the Exemption provided of Local Law 1-2008 shall be granted for a period of (10) years;

WHEREAS, The Governor of the State of New York signed Chapter 290 of the Laws of 2017, which removes the 10-year limitation on real property tax exemptions for Cold War Veterans;

WHEREAS, Chapter 290 sets forth that any local government that has opted in to this exemption may choose to adopt a local law or resolution removing the 10-year limitation;

WHEREAS, this local law would override the 1-2008 Local Law Exemption Schedule (c) 10-year limitation by granting the exemption indefinitely;

RESOLVED, the Town Board of the Town of Stratford agrees to adopt new Local Law 1-2018, removing the (10) year limitation on Real Property Tax Exemptions for Cold War Veterans.

Offered by Councilwoman Ploss, seconded by Councilwoman Rumrill

**ADOPTED: 5 AYES
0 NAYS**

Rice, Fogarty, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill

Highway Superintendent Goodwin's February 2018 report was reviewed by the Town Board. (See attached). Due to recent heavy snowfall, it's been busy. Supervisor Rice mentioned that Superintendent Goodwin took the training from Jefferson-Lewis BOCES regarding drug testing, the cost being \$25.

Code Enforcement Officer Wright's February 2018 report was reviewed by Town Board. (See attached). CEO Wright stated that it was slow this time of year due to the weather. He stated that he testified in court regarding an ongoing case, which he will discuss in next month's CEO report. The Board asked CEO the status of the building demolition on 29A; CEO Wright stated that the owner had removed the danger by pulling down the walls and roof. He will be fencing in the demolished building and hopes to have a truck to remove debris soon. The Board requested that CEO Wright keep speaking to the owner regarding the actual removal of debris, as this is a more desired outcome.

There was no Assessor report for February 2018, but Assessor Loucks wanted the board to be aware of the Governor's Proposal for State Land. This proposal prevents State Land assessments from decreasing, which could stabilize revenue for the town. However, this could potentially harm the town because it also stipulates a limit on the increase allowed, which could hurt the town financially in the long run. Supervisor Rice will continue to follow the progress of this proposal and notify the public if there is a concern.

DCO Jaquay's report was reviewed by the Town Board (See attached). DCO Jaquay requested to the Town Board that she would like to have approximately 100 carbon copy Compliance Orders printed up so that the ticketed person, the Judge, and herself would all have the same copy. The only question remaining would be how many days the person receiving the ticket would get to comply. This will be discussed at a later date with Judge Gardner.

There was no BTI Director report for February 2018; Supervisor Rice stated that she completed the paperwork for the BTI permit.

Supervisor Rice's Report: The updated Town informational brochure is still in the works. Supervisor Rice also is requesting that Stratford residents notify her of any wait times they have, should they call an ambulance. She said a local resident waited over an hour for an ambulance, and she is concerned with the response times through MOVAC. She also updated the public about the Broadband Initiative, and mentioned that phase 3 awards went to areas, not individual townships. More information to come.

NYMIR Cyber Security: Supervisor Rice spoke to the Director of IT for Fulton County regarding the IT Security of our town computers. He recommended that all computers get on a backup schedule with an external hard drive. BAS backs up the Town Clerk's business records, but not other information. Assessor's work is backed up by Real Property Tax Service. Town Supervisor and Bookkeeper laptops are already backed up. Supervisor Rice and Town Clerk VanDenburgh discussed setting a minimum backup schedule of monthly but encouraged anyone doing backups to do them more often. Supervisor Rice and Assessor Loucks both have laptops for town business, but Assessor Loucks does not handle confidential information on hers. Supervisor Rice does on occasion does transmit confidential information, and the suggestion was to erase the information from her laptop after it's been sent. Lastly, we need to review our town Internet Policy and update it to reflect NYMIR's requirements.

Town Procurement Policy: It was discussed whether the town should decide on competitive bidding with the lowest price offered, or based on the "Best Value." Since the majority of our high-priced purchases are for the Highway Dept., it would be beneficial to go over their records to see if this would be feasible. Councilman Fogarty took the time to ask Supervisor Rice about creating a policy to require two signatures on checks over a certain amount. Supervisor Rice said she would go over her records to see the largest check amounts to discuss the minimum amount in the future. There was also a

suggestion from Councilman Fogarty to lower the highway department's minimum amount needed to require bid from \$20,000, but Supervisor Rice stated that anything over \$10,000 still needs board approval. The point was made that competitive bidding was not needed on a public works project if we "piggyback" the county contractual rates, which we often do. The Town Procurement Policy is postponed until next meeting, at which time Superintendent Goodwin will provide 5 years of data to the Board to help them decide on a Best Value versus Lowest Price Bidding practice.

Contract with Stratford Volunteer Fire Company: Supervisor Rice and Councilman Perkins both abstained from the vote on the Fire Department contract as they are both members of the Stratford Volunteer Fire Company. However, before the vote could be called, Supervisor Rice noticed that the contract stated they could take a vote *after* a public hearing on the contract. Therefore, the vote on the Stratford Volunteer Fire Company contract is postponed until a public hearing is completed, which will be set for March 8th, 2018 at the Town Board Regular meeting.

Clerk's Office: A suggestion was made by Councilman Fogarty to add a Town Clerk's report to the monthly meeting. Town Clerk VanDenburgh notified the public and board that only two people should have keys to her office; herself and the Deputy Clerk. There was a discussion about keys still circulating for her office. Securing the Town Clerk's office is a priority to her, and board members agreed that a change of locks was in order. A discussion followed to purchase approximately (6) lockable mailboxes to mount to the Town Hall wall for secure correspondence between town officials. They will be \$15.99 each, and Custodian Aubin will mount them to the wall. Supervisor Rice also requested a lock be put on her door, and that the key will be the same as the front door or a new one provided to CEO Wright, Assessor Loucks, and TC VanDenburgh to access the restroom beyond.

RESOLUTION 9-18 TO PURCHASE SECURE MAILBOXES FOR TOWN BUSINESS

WHEREAS, The Town Clerk's Office will no longer be accessible to the Town Supervisor to secure sensitive information for Town elected and appointed officials;

WHEREAS, The Town of Stratford has sensitive documentation and mail passed between elected and appointed officials;

WHEREAS, a need to secure these documents within the public Town Office area is necessary to secure said documentation as well as help deliver documentation in a timely manner;

RESOLVED, that the Stratford Town Board agrees to purchase approximately (6) lockable mailboxes to mount to the Town Hall wall for secure correspondence between Town Officials.

Offered by Councilman Perkins, Seconded by Councilwoman Rumrill

ADOPTED: 5 AYES

Rice, Fogarty, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill

0 NAYS

Facebook Page: Town Clerk VanDenburgh suggested the Town of Stratford create their own Facebook page to help get important notices and public gathering to the public easier. There was a discussion on the design of the page. More investigation is needed.

Transfer Station Hours: After a resident came to Supervisor Rice with concerns on the later open hours of our transfer station and the elderly citizens using it, she spoke to Jim Johnson. He had concerns as well, and it was decided that the town should change the hours on Thursday from 3-6pm.

RESOLUTION 10-18 CHANGING THE TRANSFER STATION THURSDAY HOURS

WHEREAS, The Stratford Transfer Station is currently open from 5pm-8pm every Monday and Thursday, 8am-4pm Saturdays, and summer hours of 5pm-7pm on Sundays between the Fourth of July and Labor Day.

WHEREAS, The Town of Stratford has a large senior citizen population utilizing the Stratford Transfer Station;

WHEREAS, the later hours during the weekday seem to pose a safety issue for our senior citizens driving and utilizing the Stratford Transfer Station;

WHEREAS, the current Sunday summer hours are too late in the evening for many of our seasonal residents to utilize before leaving their lake and camp properties;

BE IT RESOLVED, The Town Board of Stratford votes to change the Stratford Transfer Station hours to 3pm-6pm Thursdays, and 3pm-5pm Sundays during the summer months to better accommodate the community as a whole.

Offered by Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilwoman Ploss.

ADOPTED: 5 AYES Rice, Fogarty, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill
0 NAYS

Resolution 11-18, to make necessary budget transfers to amend for appropriations paid as described below and to allow for necessary budget transfers to balance at time of AUD.

DECREASE:

A1110.4	Town Court Contractual	\$ 529.72
A1355.4	Assessor Contractual	\$1,221.56
A1910.4	Insurance Contractual	\$1,650.02
A9040.8	Workers Compensation Benefit	\$3,210.31
DA9040.8	Workers Compensation Benefits	\$2,040.99

INCREASE:

A1110.4	Town Board Contractual	\$ 181.63
A1220.4	Town Supervisor Contractual	\$ 829.85
A1410.4	Town Clerk Contractual	\$ 30.47
A1620.4	Buildings Contractual	\$1,650.02
A3510.4	Dog Control Contractual	\$ 201.05
A3620.4	Code Enforcement Contractual	\$ 56.24
A5010.4	Highway Superintendent Contractual	\$ 147.04
A6770.4	Program for the Aging Contractual	\$ 305.00
A9060.8	Health Insurance Benefit	\$3,210.31
DA9060.8	Health Insurance Benefit	\$2,040.99

RECLASSIFICATION OF APPROPRIATION (payment should have posted to both funds)

Decrease: A9040.8	Workers Compensation	\$3,000.00
Increase: DA9040.8	Workers Compensation	\$3,000.00

Resolution to approve the 2017 budget adjustments offered by Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilwoman Ploss.

ADOPTED: 4 AYES **Rice, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill**
0 NAYS

-Councilman Fogarty did not cast a vote-

MONTHLY BUDGET UPDATE REPORT, PAYMENT OF BILLS: Supervisor Rice clarified that buyouts go through payroll but not retirement, and federal/state taxes are paid on them. She also wanted to point out that a few prepaid bills do not have check numbers; this is due to auto-deductions and debit card purchases. The debit card use is limited for purchases online. There was a sharp increase in the National Grid public lighting bill.

FEBRUARY ABSTRACTS:

2018 GENERAL FUND	VOUCHERS 7-16	\$1,033.84
2018 PREPAID FUND	VOUCHERS 3-28	\$28,745.84
2018 HIGHWAY FUND	VOUCHERS 1-16	\$9,147.87

A motion was offered by Councilman Perkins and seconded by Councilwoman Rumrill to approve the payment of these vouchers.

ADOPTED: 5 AYES **Rice, Fogarty, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill**
0 NAYS

Resolution 12-18 APPROVAL OF THE 2017 AUDIT OF THE TOWN CLERK AND TOWN JUSTICE BOOKS

Whereas, The Town of Stratford Town Board conducted the 2017 Audit of the Town Clerk and Town Justice financial records on January 18th, 2018;

Whereas, The Town Board found the Town Clerk's records to be satisfactory;

Whereas, The Town Board, having received satisfactory answers to their questions in regard to the Town Justice books;

BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Stratford Town Board approves the 2017 Audit of the Town Clerk and Town Justice books.

Offered by Councilwoman Ploss, seconded by Councilwoman Rumrill

ADOPTED: 5 AYES **Rice, Fogarty, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill**
0 NAYS

Councilman Fogarty suggested that the person being audited be present during future audits to make clarification of records more expedient.

PUBLIC SPEAKING: Commenced at 7:43pm

Concerns rose on how supplies were trucked in to the Town Highway, and A resident suggested a few options. A general discussion ensued about the potential Facebook page for the town, along with other options to get the word out to our residents. Talk of lowering public lighting bill with LED bulbs. Snow banks are high, making visibility on corners poor. Town Highway is currently working on removing them. A suggestion was made regarding Stewart's Landing that will be passed on to the Fire Dept.

PUBLIC SPEAKING: Closed at 8:07pm

Resolution 13-18 TO CHANGE THE LOCKS TO THE TOWN CLERK OFFICE AND ADD A LOCK TO THE TOWN SUPERVISOR OFFICE DOOR

Whereas, the Town of Stratford Town Clerk's Office holds vital and sensitive information regarding the Town of Stratford;

Whereas, Town Clerk VanDenburgh notified the Town Board of Stratford that as Records Management Officer, only she and her Deputy Clerk should have access to the Town Clerk's Office;

Whereas, Town Clerk VanDenburgh has expressed her concern with the security of her office and keys still in circulation and/or possession within the public domain;

Whereas, Supervisor Rice also expressed concern regarding her office and the access available to the public;

RESOLVED that new locks to the Town Clerk Office will be installed, as well as a lock added to the Town Supervisor's office.

Offered by Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilwoman Ploss

**ADOPTED: 5 AYES
0 NAYS**

Rice, Fogarty, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill

OLD BUSINESS: The Bridges NY grant stipulates a minimum grant amount. The bridge on Piseco Road most likely qualifies, and we will need an Engineer to assess it. We will also need to make a case for how important the bridge is to hopefully be granted funds to fix it. Councilman Fogarty brought up roof at Town Barn, questioning the Cricket repair. He requested to rescind his vote regarding the repair. Supervisor Rice stated that they hadn't received the estimate regarding repair, and should wait until they do before making a decision on it.

NEW BUSINESS:

Motion to go into executive session for "Personnel Reasons" from Councilwoman Ploss, seconded by Councilwoman Rumrill at 8:16 pm.

Motion to resume regular meeting from Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilwoman Ploss at 8:52pm.

With no further business, on a motion from Councilwoman Rumrill and seconded by Councilwoman Ploss, the regular meeting was adjourned at 8:52pm.

-Heather VanDenburgh, Town Clerk