

**State of New York
County of Fulton
Town of Stratford**

Minutes of the Stratford Regular Board meeting held on Thursday, April 9, 2020 at the municipal building located at 120 Piseco Rd. Meeting closed to all residents due to COVID-19 Virus.

Present:

Heather VanDenburgh	---	Supervisor
Allan Perkins	---	Councilman
Joan Ploss	---	Councilwoman
Lorraine Rumrill	---	Councilwoman
Tiffany Rutkowski	---	Councilwoman
Diana Massicotte	---	Town Clerk

Absent:

Lawrence Staring	---	Superintendent
Norman Wright	---	Code Enforcement Officer
David Galarneau	---	Sole Assessor
Michael Sokira	---	BTI Director
Karen Jaquay	---	Dog Control Officer
Moira Marshall	---	Town Historian

Residents in Attendance: None

Supervisor VanDenburgh called the regular meeting to order at 6:35 pm with the Pledge to the Flag.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

REPORTS: Given prior to April 9 meeting to be reviewed by the Town Board.

Highway Superintendent Staring's report read as follows:

We had four snow events, two different times sanding slippery spots.

Five ton road postings are up.

Roads are being swept, also picking up large debris while following the sweeper. Going to be a problem when we get to Pleasant Lake as I need all four men because the majority of the sand needs to be picked up.

I have been meeting with FEMA and DHS via conference call. I signed off on the Cat B temporary work that was completed last fall. We are finishing up the Cat A work, primarily chipping brush that was downed during the storm. We should be able to meet the threshold to get reimbursement for that work as well.

RESOLUTION #12-2020 FOR BUDGET TRANSFER TO HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACTUAL

WHEREAS, the Stratford Highway Department pickup truck is no longer safe to operate, and the repairs needed exceed the value of the pickup truck, and

WHEREAS, the Stratford Town Board has approved the purchase of a new pickup truck in Resolution 10-20, and are awaiting the delivery of said truck, but delivery has been delayed 60 - 90 days due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, the Highway Superintendent has been utilizing his personal vehicle to inspect the roads of Stratford until the new pickup truck is delivered, with mileage to be reimbursed at the federal rate of .575/mile, for mileage totaling 2,502 miles for a total cost of \$1,438.65;

WHEREAS, due to internet issues with the Supervisor, she was unable to process the Superintendent’s mileage voucher in time to be part of the April 2020 General Abstract;

BE IT RESOLVED, that the Stratford Town Board approves the following budget transfer to amend for appropriations to be paid as described below with additional funds to budget for future mileage until said pickup truck is delivered, and to process the Highway Superintendent’s voucher as a prepaid to be placed in the May 2020 Prepaid Abstract:

To:	A5010.4	Highway Superintendent Contractual	\$2,000.00	
From:		Fund Balance		\$2,000.00

Offered by: Councilman Perkins, seconded by Councilwoman Rutkowski

ADOPTED: Ayes 5 VanDenburgh, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill and Rutkowski
Nays 0

Code Enforcement Officer Wright’s report: None submitted

Sole Assessor Galarneau’s report read as follows:

March 6 – Picked up and signed off on State Land values. Entered exemptions and change of address requests. Sent out “notice of exemption removals” to some taxpayers whose income exceeded local limits, notably the school district.

March 20- Pick up mail. Gather documents such as sales, exemption applications and renewals to be entered onto database.

With closing of Town Hall and pandemic declaration. I have taken the laptop and documents home with me. I prepared hours of availability by HOME PHONE ONLY and email. Until end of April I will be working from home only.

If absolutely necessary I may revisit Town Hall if needed to ensure tentative assessment roll is ready to be printed as required for May 1. All necessary reports, values, and legal ads will be prepared and sent from my home.

Remainder of March – Phone messages returned, remainder of exemption renewals, applications, and sales entered onto database. Time dedicated to Stratford unknown. Limited messages and emails received at home. New construction will not be able to be collected or valued for 2020. Field visits are risky for all involved.

Dog Control Officer's report read as follows:

1. I had several calls for dogs running at large.
2. Two calls for lost dogs. Found three, the others were not found.
3. Issued a 2-count ticket. Appearance contingent on COVID Virus rules.
4. I took two dogs to Brennan.
5. The rest of the month I was on call.

BTI Director Michael Sokira's report read as follows:

1. Received our new business permit from the NYDEC.
2. Received 30 gallons of pesticide.
3. Held a meeting with applicators on March 14, 2020 to assign creeks and to go over all the rules with them.
4. All three new applicators received their ID. I treated with them the first time out. All did fine. Everyone has been out treating. Seeing a lot of larvae out there. Also seeing a high kill rate!!

The Town Board reviewed the photos of larvae submitted by BTI Director Sokira.

RESOLUTION #13-2020 FOR BUDGET TRANSFER TO BTI CONTRACTUAL

WHEREAS,

BE IT RESOLVED,

To:	A8090.4	BTI Contractual	\$ 400.00	
From:		Fund Balance		\$ 400.00

Offered by: Councilwoman Rutkowski, seconded by Councilwoman Ploss

ADOPTED: Ayes 5 VanDenburgh, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill and Rutkowski
Nays 0

Judge Rissmeyer submitted a copy of his monthly report showing an intake of \$375.00 for the month of March.

Judge Rissmeyer asked if he could use three benches from the Community Hall in his office.

Motion made by Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilman Allan to allow the Judge to use three benches from the Community Center in his office.

ADOPTED Ayes 5 VanDenburgh, Rumrill, Ploss, Perkins and Rutkowski
Nays 0

Town Historian Marshall's report read as follows:

The COFID-19 Pandemic has changed all of our lives in such a short time causing an upheaval in how we live our day to day lives. Social distancing, travel bans, schools and businesses closing are just a few of the life changing events that we are experiencing through this historic time. How did we people of Stratford cope with the pandemic? Who were the unsung heroes that helped the town through these events and in times of need? How did students cope with a new way of learning from home? How did our stores/restaurants adjust to the needs of the community? These are stories that the future will want to hear and to understand.

I am hoping you will work with me in building the story of how the people of Stratford coped during this difficult time. Something that we can share with the future inhabitants of Stratford and beyond. It may be just a few words. A story about someone or something that occurred that touched you, or a journal with entries about what you experienced during this time. Anything that you would like to share I will gladly collect.

Please email me at mminstratford@yahoo.com. For those that do not have internet access handwritten notes would be great as well and can be kept for when the Town Hall reopens. If you would prefer not to add your name, that is fine too. I will gladly accept anything you would like to provide now or later when we return back to normal. If handwritten, I'll set up a drop box at the Town Hall when it reopens for collection.

Thank you for helping preserve the history of the Town of Stratford.

Town Clerk Massicotte reported that the Presidential Primary is postponed until June 23, 2020.

Tax Collector will be collecting taxes until May 15, by mail only.

Business is being conducted by mail only.

Supervisor VanDenburgh read her report as follows:

COVID-19 RESPONSE Measures:

On March 18, 2020 at 3:00 pm, the Town Board members discussed COVID-19 containment measures at an Executive Session. It was decided to declare a local State of Emergency to

implement safety measures for our township as conditions changed. The declaration was posted publicly on March 19, 2020. This declaration is due to expire on April 17, 2020. The Town Hall has been closed to the public, and our Town Officials have been notified of their responsibilities during this time. The Town Hall was thoroughly sanitized. The Highway Department was notified to cut staff by 50% during this time as well, to comply with the Governor's Executive order.

On Friday, March 20, we received 5 gallons of hand sanitizer from the CLEAN NY program through the Fulton County Emergency Management Office by request. I purchased approximately 100 small containers through multiple retailers and filled them and have been handing them out to our citizens. We also received 25 donated bottles, which were greatly appreciated. We have had a good response from this effort, and over 60 bottles have been picked up. We will continue to fill bottles for the public until our resources run out. I am also commissioning a local woman to make washable face masks that we can distribute to our essential workers in the community.

I was notified via email on April 1, 2020 by the Fulton County Treasurer's Office that our projected Fulton County sales tax revenue could be 3.6% (mild) up to 10.9% (severe) less than anticipated. County Treasurer Terry Blodgett has even indicated that these projections might not fully encompass the severity of the situation, and losses could be much higher. Therefore, with the power of the local State of Emergency order, I enacted a limit on purchases through contractual accounts that our town officials hold until we more firmly understand the financial impact this will have to our township. I am looking into further cost-saving measures as well.

The April 9 Town Board meeting will be closed to the public. Only the five Board Members and Town Clerk will be present at the Town Hall, and social distancing guidelines will be implemented. The meeting will be recorded and posted online on our Stratford Facebook page shortly after. Due to the satellite internet of our Town Hall, we cannot live stream our meeting without the threat of internet interruption.

The anticipated apex of viral infection is anticipated to be the middle to end of April. Coupled with the increase of cases in Fulton County, I recommend that the Stratford Town Board enact resolutions at this meeting to continue the course of Town Hall closures and instruction to our officials to cease public operations until the May 14, 2020 meeting or until further notice. We will be in a better position to assess public safety to resume normal operations when we see a downturn in the transmission of the virus.

I notified Mr. Michael Albanese that the Stratford Town Board is interested in retaining his services, and a resolution to that effect will be presented at the meeting.

I emailed Steven Coleman from National Grid, reminding him of his offer to replace the 10 street lights with LED lights to correct their error.

I emailed the NYS Broadband Program to seek out the status of the fiber upgrade to our community. I have yet to receive a response.

All FEMA site inspections have been canceled due to the COVID-19 threat. All Category A & B work is still being compiled and submitted for reimbursement.

RESOLUTION #14-2020 FOR CONTINUATION OF COVID-19 CONTAINMENT MEASURES

WHEREAS, the Stratford Town Board PASSED A LOCAL State of Emergency order on March 18, 2020 due to the COVID-19 crisis in effect until April 17, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 virus is expected to peak during late April in the State of New York and community; therefore it is

WHEREAS, the Town Board understands the current COVID-19 crisis is an ongoing threat to our community, therefore it is

RESOLVED that the Stratford Town Board, after discussion, determined the best course of action will be to adopt by Resolution the directives stated under the March 18, 2020 local State of Emergency order, and

BE IT RESOLVED, that this Resolution will stay in effect until the State and the Stratford Town Board deems the COVID-19 crisis has dissipated enough to order the reopening of the Town Hall to the public without an imminent threat to the citizens of our community.

Offered by: Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilwoman Ploss

ADOPTED: Ayes 5 VanDenburgh, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill and Rutkowski
Nays 0

FINANCIAL REPORT

Monthly budget update report was given to the Town Board.

Supervisor VanDenburgh read the following temporary changes to the Procurement Policy:

1. All contractual purchases over \$50 must be pre-approved by the Stratford Town Board.
 - a. For any contractual purchase that exceeds \$50 that is essential to the program, the managing officer may appeal to the Stratford Supervisor for approval prior to the monthly meeting. The Supervisor will contact the Stratford Board Members pursuant to the current Procurement Policy, to deem whether the purchase is considered essential and/or mandatory.
2. Contractual vouchers submitted over \$100 must be pre-approved by the Stratford Town Board. This includes program purchases, training seminars, and mileage.
3. The Deputy Town Clerk is hereby ordered to cease working at the Town Clerk’s Office during this time, as the Town Clerk’s Office remains closed to the public.
4. Any vouchers with purchases made that violate this order after April 3, 2020 will not be paid.

AUDIT OF CLAIMS

Motion made by Councilwoman Ploss, seconded by Councilwoman Rumrill to approve the bills on Abstract #4.

ADOPTED Ayes - 5 VanDenburgh, Rumrill, Ploss, Rutkowski and Perkins
 Nays – 0

2020 General Fund	Voucher Nos. 40 - 48	\$ 1,633.78
2020 Prepaid Fund	Voucher Nos. 30 – 35	\$ 3,669.91
2020 Highway Fund	Voucher Nos. 27 - 35	\$114,515.77

PUBLIC SPEAKING

CANCELLED

OLD BUSINESS

Mid York Library mailers are complete and have been mailed or handed out.

Second Amendment sanctuary discussion to be tabled until regular meetings are reinstated.

NEW BUSINESS

The Highway Department Water Contract with Stratford Volunteer Fire Company was presented to the Town Board for renewal.

RESOLUTION #15-2020 FOR RENEWAL OF WATER CONTRACT BETWEEN THE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT AND STRATFORD VOLUNTEER FIRE COMPANY

WHEREAS, the Stratford Town by resolution adopted at a hearing has determined that it is in the public interest to obtain a water supply for the Town Garage and the Town Board has consented to the terms of this Agreement and has authorized its execution;

BE IT RESOLVED, in consideration of the provisions herein contained, the Town and Fire Company do hereby covenant and agree with each other. (copy on file in Town Clerk’s Office)

Offered by: Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilwoman Ploss

ADOPTED: Ayes 4 VanDenburgh, Ploss, Rumrill and Rutkowski
Nays 0
Abstained 1 Perkins

RESOLUTION #11-2020 FOR APPOINTMENT OF MICHAEL ALBANESE AS THE NEW STRATFORD TOWN ATTORNEY

WHEREAS, the Stratford Town Board interviewed Michael Albanese from Albanese & Albanese Law and discussed at length his qualifications and retainer fees on March 18, 2020; and

WHEREAS, the Stratford Town Board found Mr. Albanese to be competent representation for the Town of Stratford, and his retainer fee of \$1,000/month to be appropriate for the services he will be rendering; therefore let it be

RESOLVED that the Stratford Town Board, after interviewing Michael Albanese from Albanese & Albanese Law, unanimously appoint Mr. Michael Albanese to be the new Town of Stratford legal representation effective immediately; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Stratford Town Supervisor has permission to execute the contract for representation at a retainer cost of \$1,000 per month, for the remainder of fiscal year 2020.

Offered by: Councilwoman Rutkowski, seconded by Councilwoman Rumrill

ADOPTED: Ayes 5 VanDenburgh, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill and Rutkowski
Nays 0

RESOLUTION #16-2020 FOR BUDGET TRANSFER TO ATTORNEY CONTRACTUAL

WHEREAS, the Stratford Town Board approves the following budget transfer to amend for appropriations to be paid as described below:

To:	A1420.4	Attorney Contractual	\$1,667.00	
From:		Fund Balance		\$1,667.00

RESOLVED; the budget transfer to reflect increase of retainer fee for new attorney.

Offered by: Councilwoman Rutkowski, seconded by Councilwoman Rumrill

ADOPTED: Ayes 5 VanDenburgh, Perkins, Ploss, Rumrill and Rutkowski
Nays 0

With no further business, on a motion by Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilwoman Ploss, the meeting was adjourned at 7:18 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Massicotte, Town Clerk