

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

Minutes of the Stratford Regular Board meeting held on Thursday, May 14, 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
Lawrence Staring	---	Superintendent
Norman Wright	---	Code Enforcement Officer
Michael Albanese	---	Town Attorney
Diana Massicotte	---	Town Clerk

Absent:

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 6:32 pm with the Pledge to the Flag.

Public Hearing via telephone was open to discuss the updated Local Law 1-2020 at 6:33 until 6:45.

CORRESPONDENCE:

Town received the yearly contract for Verizon. Discussion followed. Councilwoman Rumrill and Councilwoman Rutkowski suggested renewing the contract for the year as we are not sure if Broadband will be in place by end of year. Month to month would be more expensive than yearly. Supervisor VanDenburgh said she is trying to get in touch with Verizon regarding early termination fees.

Motion made by Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilwoman Ploss to renew the Verizon Contract for the year.

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

REPORTS: Given prior to May 14 meeting to be reviewed by the Town Board.

Highway Superintendent Staring read his report as follows:

We had eight snow events. All roads have been swept twice. We are still cleaning up debris from the Halloween storm. This should be completed in the first part of next week, then it will be submitted for reimbursement. That will complete our Category A work from the storm. Next week we will finish preparing the large trucks for summer work.

I continue to have weekly conference calls with FEMA and DHSES. I met with Steve Santa Maria and we toured the Piseco Road north of the bridge. We identified 12 locations that need repair, the majority will be replacing gravel that washed away. There are locations with culvert pipes that will most likely need larger pipes. The Fulton County Soil and Water folks will help with that when the time comes. They are also working with me on the repairs to culverts; Kelly Road over Moose Creek, Piseco Road over Norton Creek, Red House Road over Norton Creek and Dugway Road over Dilly Creek. I am finishing up the paperwork with DEC and APA to get these repairs done.

I met with Andy Bell and Randy Bascome. They are working up a quote for repair of the Piseco Road bridge. It should come in between \$70,000 and \$75,000. That will be for repair of the two damaged wingwalls. Andy is also working on alternate repairs for the Edick Road over Stony Brook culvert. Trying to find the cheapest possible fix. All the information I can find shows the Town owns plenty of property along the curve on Voorhees Road to move the road away from the slide. It will require National Grid to move a couple poles. The original quote had repairs on Voorhees Road at \$350,000, we should be able to move the road for less than \$100,000. We need to look into funding for these projects. Knowing there will be a 75% reimbursement. Superintendent Staring is checking to see if we can use some of the chips money.

I will need to find a roller to use when we blacktop the washed out areas from last fall, I will try to borrow one first, if I can't, we will need to rent one.

Highway Superintendent Staring stated that the new pickup truck would be another two months before it is in. Since the Highway Superintendent will be using his own truck, the Town Board made the following resolution:

RESOLUTION #18-2020 FOR BUDGET TRANSFER TO HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT CONTRACTUAL

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;

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,

To:	A5010.4	Highway Superintendent Contractual	\$1,300.00	
From:		Fund Balance		\$1,300.00

Offered by: Councilwoman Rutkowski, seconded by Councilman Perkins

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

Highway Superintendent Staring said the salt requirements had to be in by May 15. He would like an increase to 350 tons. We have 56 miles of Town roads and 8.9 of County road.

Motion made by Councilman Perkins, seconded by Councilwoman Rumrill to increase the salt requirements to 350 tons.

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

Superintendent Staring stated he did not need the phone as he rather use his own. Supervisor VanDenburgh said she would shut down the wireless account.

Superintendent Staring felt there should be a permit issued to install driveway to make sure it is up to code. The reason being that if driveway is not built properly, it could interfere with drainage ditches. Attorney Albanese said he would look into the procedure.

Attorney Albanese said he would like to see the survey for the Voorhees Road where the town would like to change the road. Supervisor VanDenburgh stated she had sent him the survey.

Councilwoman Rutkowski asked when the men would be back on for 40 hours. Superintendent Staring said they would start Monday, May 18, 2020.

Councilwoman Rumrill asked Superintendent Staring if he was going to haul in sand; he said he was looking into prices.

Superintendent Staring would like to look into getting another water supplier. Crystal Rock charges a late fee and won't change billing date to coincide with our meeting date. Attorney Albanese said if a contract was not signed, the company could not charge late fees. Superintendent Staring said they could buy water locally.

Superintendent Staring said he would be getting bids on Piseco Road bridge. The contractor is on Fulton County's contract. Attorney Albanese said the Superintendent would still have to bring in the contract for the Board and him to look over.

Councilwoman Rutkowski asked if we could trade up the trucks about every nine years to save money and repairs. We could start with the new pickup. She suggested this so the Town wouldn't be hit with all trucks needing replacement at the same time.

Public Hearing for discussion on Law 1-2020 change of Grievance Day closed at 6:55 pm. There were no phone calls.

RESOLUTION #19-2020 TO SET THE DATE FOR HEARINGS BEFORE THE BOARD OF ASSESSMENT REVIEW

WHEREAS, The Town of Stratford has an Assessor who is also an Assessor for another assessing unit, then in that event and pursuant to Section 512 1-aof the Real Property Tax Law, the day for the Board of Assessment Review to hear complaints shall be the first Friday after the fourth Tuesday in May every year hereafter;

BE IT RESOLVED, this local law shall take effect immediately upon its filing with the New York State Department of State, and shall supersede Local Law No. 2 of the year 1996.

Offered by: Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilwoman Ploss

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

Code Enforcement Officer Wright's reports:

March 10 – April 7
One school day
Secretary of State report

April 8 – May 11
Two inspections
Issued one permit, renewal
Many calls

The Board was given a municipal complaint regarding the Abare property.

CEO Wright said there is one court case, judgment on property which has to go through County court. Attorney Albanese said he would look into it.

Dog Control Officer Jaquay's report read as follows:

1. I issued appearance tickets.
2. I took four witness statements and wrote two DCO depositions.
3. Searched for two lost dogs and spoke to three people about the disappearance of above dogs.
4. Posted on the internet information about the lost dogs.
5. Made and took a multitude of calls. On the two Huskies running at large and the damage they caused.
6. Looked at Town law and wrote in addition to what we have in place a Dangerous Dog clause. This was to clarify what constitutes a dangerous dog, and the actions to be taken by this law.
7. The rest of the month was quiet.

Attorney Albanese said he would check on the procedures for a dangerous dog law.

Sole Assessor Galarneau no report.

Chairman of the BAR wanted to know if they could still meet at the community center with residents on Grievance Day. The Assessor had stated, they would only be doing the appointments by teleconference.

BTI Director Michael Sokira's report read as follows:

1. Received the 20 extra gallons of pesticide.
2. We are continuing to monitor and treat our assigned creeks. Many were loaded with larvae. All assigned creeks have been treated once so far.

Judge Rissmeyer submitted a copy of his monthly report showing no activity.

Town Historian Marshall had no report.

Town Clerk Massicotte reported that the Democratic Presidential Primary will be held on June 23, 2020.

The final day for payment of taxes is May 15. Town Clerk Massicotte will be settling with the County next week. Democratic Primary Election will be held on June 23 from 6:00 am to 9:00 pm.

Supervisor VanDenburgh read her report as follows:

Continuing COVID-19 RESPONSE Measures:

At the April 9, 2020 meeting, it was decided through to continue the actions stated within our local State of Emergency through resolution rather than extending the local state of emergency. The Town Hall has been mostly closed to the public, although the Town Clerk can conduct business face-to-face if it is necessary. Our cleaner, Emma Baulch, has sanitized the tables and chairs within the town hall before and after every meeting held here. I have been open at least once a week (but often more) to allow our residents to pick up sanitizer and face masks, free of charge. This has been successful, and I have given away at least 60 masks and 3 gallons of sanitizer to the public. I will continue this program until supplies run out. Fulton County was notified that Phase 1 of the reopening will commence on May 15 applying only to certain businesses. Administrative jobs are included in the Phase II reopening, with a tentative date of June 1 if all requirements are met. The Board should consider a reopening plan, either at this meeting or a future meeting. Our Stratford Facebook page has also been highly successful in getting the word out to the public, and I thank the Board members from 2018 who allowed me to open it as the Clerk.

At the April 30 special meeting, John Ploss was appointed to the Board of Assessment review to finish out Peg Klages original term. Chairperson to the BAR Sue Fogarty requested that instead of holding the BAR exclusively by teleconference on May 29, she would like to open it up for people to attend in-person if they feel comfortable with it.

I received a complaint from a resident regarding the Abare property on Cty Rte 119. This will be discussed at the meeting with CEO Wright.

The Board was given a copy of the NYSAC May 2020 “Lost Revenue and State Aid Cuts, Coronavirus Economic Impact on Counties” for review. This printout compares mild and severe recessions and the potential impact this will have on our quarterly sales tax revenue. A 10% decrease, which is most likely a minimum to be expected, could create a shortfall of \$40,000 in our yearly revenue. I have presented a resolution to the Board to consider beginning cost-saving measures now. I implore our residents to bring their business to those within Fulton County, as those sales tax proceeds will trickle back to us.

I am requesting that the Town Board give me permission to install my WeBoost cell boosting system at the Town Hall.

Gary Rumrill came to me on May 12 with concerns regarding matters spoken about during Executive Session. This will be discussed with Counsel at the meeting.

I want to thank all our residents for their diligence and patience while the township copes with the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent requirements as handed down by the State. We hope to safely resume business soon.

RESOLUTION #20-2020 FOR COST-SAVING INITIATIVE FOR FISCAL YEAR 2020

WHEREAS, the Stratford Town Board recognizes and acknowledges that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, that our County and therefore, our community, will receive a substantially decreased amount in sales tax revenue for fiscal year 2020 from business shutdowns and layoffs; and

WHEREAS, being fully apprised of the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic upon our community our county, and our state, the Stratford Town Board understands that certain budgetary amendments need to be made to contain the losses to our township;

THEREFORE, the Stratford Town Board hereby implements the following cost-saving measures to our fiscal year 2020 budget and town officials:

- A) All town officials who utilize a contractual budget line will now need prior approval from the Stratford Town Board for purchases exceeding \$50, or vouchers in total exceeding \$100. For emergency purchases exceeding these amounts prior to the next Board meeting, the town official must notify the Town Supervisor of the immediate need and the Supervisor will notify the Board members for verbal approval. Any vouchers submitted that do not adhere to these guidelines are subject to being denied.
- B) The contractual lines listed below are hereby suspended from the 2020 fiscal budget:
 - A7510.41, Historian Contractual, \$300.00
 - A7310.4, Youth Program Contractual, \$300.00
 - A6772.4, Program for the Aging Contractual, \$1,150.00
 - A4540.4, Ambulance Contractual, \$1,000.00
- C) The Contractual line A1220.11, Bookkeeper to the Supervisor, will be amended as follows:
 - \$3,000.00/year for monthly bookkeeping duties including weekly/monthly payroll, disability statements, retirement reports, quarterly payroll reports to the IRS along with other daily duties not mentioned herein to be paid monthly at a rate of \$250.00 per month.

- \$1,500.00 to compile and process the yearly AUD for the Town of Stratford, to be paid in one lump sum after the AUD has been filed.
- \$500 to help create the yearly fiscal budget. This includes one trip to the Town of Stratford to meet with the Board. Any subsequent trips will be paid t the rate of \$100 per trip. This payment is to be made in one lump sum after the official budget for Stratford has been passed by the Town Board.
 - These changes will decrease A1220.11 by \$1,483.00

BE IT RESOLVED, these changes are effective immediately and will remain in place for the remainder of the 2020 fiscal year or until the Stratford Town Board rescinds these measures in a future resolution.

Offered by: Councilwoman Rumrill, seconded by Councilman Perkins

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

FINANCIAL REPORT

Monthly budget update report was given to the Town Board.

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. 49 -58	\$ 3,725.34
2020 Prepaid Fund	Voucher Nos. 36 – 44	\$ 6,860.59
2020 Highway Fund	Voucher Nos. 36 - 42	\$ 2,669.58

PUBLIC SPEAKING

CANCELLED

OLD BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

Councilwoman Rutkowski asked about the Stratford sign. She felt we should put up some message every so often that would make it more welcoming. Councilwoman Rutkowski volunteered to take care of putting up the information.

Councilwoman Rutkowski felt it would be nice to do something for the graduating seniors in Stratford; such as a card or letter from the town or picture of seniors in front of sign.

Councilwoman Rumrill felt they should go into executive session to discuss the BAR appointment. Supervisor VanDenburgh read following letter:

I feel like I'm being mistreated by the Stratford Town Board members. Next month I would like to meet with them in Executive Meeting to discuss a personal matter. If not, I will talk in Public Speaking to bring this matter to everyone's attention. Gary Rumrill

Motion made by Councilwoman Ploss, seconded by Councilman Perkins to go into Executive Session to discuss the letter from Gary Rumrill.

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

Councilwoman Rumrill left Executive Session at 8:53 pm.

Motion made by Councilwoman Ploss, seconded by Councilwoman Rutkowski to close Executive Session at 9:31 pm and return to regular meeting.

ADOPTED Ayes - 4 VanDenburgh, Ploss, Rutkowski and Perkins
Nays - 0
Absent - 1 Rumrill

With no further business, on a motion by Councilwoman Ploss, seconded by Councilman Perkins, the meeting was adjourned at 9:31 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Massicotte, Town Clerk