

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

Minutes of the Stratford Regular Board meeting held on Thursday, October 8, 2020 at the municipal building located at 120 Piseco Rd.

**Present:**

Alicia Rice	---	Deputy Supervisor
Allan Perkins	---	Councilman
Joan Ploss	---	Councilwoman
Tiffany Rutkowski	---	Councilwoman
Lorraine Rumrill	---	Councilwoman
Lawrence Staring	---	Highway Superintendent
Norman Wright	---	Code Enforcement Officer
Michael Albanese	---	Town Attorney
Diana Massicotte	---	Town Clerk

**Absent:**

Heather VanDenburgh	---	Supervisor
Michael Sokira	---	BTI Director
David Galarneau	---	Sole Assessor
Karen Jaquay	---	Dog Control Officer
Moirra Marshall	---	Town Historian

**Residents in Attendance:** Gary Rumrill, Peter and Mary Szczebak, Donald Vedder, Sonia Rissmeyer

Deputy Supervisor Rice called the regular meeting to order at 6:31 pm with the Pledge to the Flag.

Deputy Supervisor Rice announced that Supervisor VanDenburgh was in the hospital but was doing well. It was not COVID.

**CORRESPONDENCE:**

None.

**REPORTS:**

**Highway Superintendent** Staring read his report as follows:

Highway work for the month as follows: Finish repairs to the Piseco Road, including pipe replacement, placing bank run gravel fill, light and medium stone fill, grading and leveling, placing crusher run, grading raking to final grade.

Placed and compacted gravel, placed light stone fill, medium stone fill and crusher run to complete repair to the Piseco Road bridge. Begin left and end right wingwalls.

Cutting shoulders and ditching on Seeley Road.

Mowing Town properties, small mowers are pretty much worn out.

Got some roadside mowing on south side of Town complete, mower broke again.

Had a strong thunderstorm pass through Town 10/7 several trees down, we cleaned up the ones not on power or phone lines. Most likely will be some more work when National Grid completes their repairs.

Two trucks two days hauling blacktop for Town of Caroga.

Trucks 8 and 9 had to have walking beams rebushed to pass New York State Inspection.

New pickup has been delivered and is on the road. I would like to get a transfer tank and a toolbox for it.

We currently haul fuel in 5-gallon cans when the equipment is on the road.

FEMA weekly conference calls continue.

The Hawes Road Project has been paid.

The Edick Road project has been split into 3 Projects, Sites 1-5 were submitted today, Sites 6-10 will get submitted next week.

The Bridge Project and the Blacktop Repairs Projects will follow.

There will be a conference call with FEMA, NRCS and the Town coming up to discuss the Voorhees Road slide. I am keeping all options open as to the repair to that section of road. Trying to find all the outside funding available.

Still waiting for Bell Engineering to send the letter saying we can open the bridge.

Hauling 6500 yards of winter sand at a cost of \$19,000.

Motion made by Councilwoman Ploss, seconded by Councilwoman Rutkowski to purchase 6500 yards of winter sand for \$19,000.

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

Deputy Supervisor Rice asked about Nationalgrid cleanup. She said that if there are trees down on wires, call 911. Superintendent Staring said he would check the areas around Town regarding cleanup of down trees.

Councilwoman Rutkowski had a question on the Voucher for RB Construction. The contract was for \$87,000 but the overage brought the bill to \$102,000. Attorney Albanese will check contract for overages. Payment of voucher will be contingent upon Attorney review.

**RESOLUTION #29-2020 TO PAY OVERAGE ON VOUCHER 84**

**WHEREAS**, the Stratford Town Board at the Town Board meeting on October 8, 2020 presented Voucher 84 (DA5112.2) for \$102,186 from RB Construction,

**WHEREAS**, will be paid as long as there is enough money in Account DA5112.2.

**RESOLVED**, contingent upon and reviewed by Attorney Albanese, to pay voucher 84.

**Offered by:** Councilwoman Rutkowski, seconded by Councilwoman Ploss

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

**Code Enforcement Officer** Wright reports:

September 8 – October 5  
Ten Inspections  
Issued nine permits – New home, three septic systems, two wood stoves, porch, two renewals  
Issued three Certificates of Compliance  
Issued one Certificate of Occupancy  
Issued one Stop Work Order  
Two meetings  
Many calls

CEO Wright left the meeting at 6:40.

**Assessor’s report for August is on file, the September Report follows:**

September 11 – Sorted and purged some documents from other file cabinets. Returned phone calls received on various assessment issues. Met with taxpayer in office regarding assessment and exemption application.

September 12 – No calls received.

September 18 – Small claims assessment review case held in the Bleecker Town Hall. Wayne Miller was the hearing officer. The “Buckwalter” case is about the lack of highway maintenance at the North end of Avery Road. Evidence presented does indicate the road exists and is kept open by the highway department, but not plowed in winter months. I suspect the hearing officer will lower the assessment again, even though the grievance board lowered it in 2019 for the same reason.

September 25 – Pickup up mail. Made several address change3s. Met with two waterfront property owners about their assessments. A number of people have indicated to me they still believe their values should remain at the level before the failed reassessment in 2012 or 2013. I will be reviewing these two properties with others in that area to see if their assessed values are out of line. Recent waterfront sales, prompted by the pandemic, are showing a spike in values. If this continues the equalization rate will decline at a faster rate.

Continue sorting through and purging files of disposable documents. All disposed documents remain in the office for anyone to inspect. At some time in the future these documents should be discarded.

From January 1, 2020 to June 1 there have been 5 residential sales. Sale prices average about 2% above assessments. Since June 1 there have been 3 residential sales with prices about 40% above assessments. This is a small sample and the sales are pandemic driven. There is no plan to increase assessments other than from building permit activity.

NOTE: If additional time is worked during this month it will be noted in next month’s report.

**Dog Control Officer Jaquay no report**

**BTI Director Michael Sokira no report**

**Judge Rissmeyer** submitted a copy of his monthly report showing receipt of \$250.

**Town Historian** No report.

**Town Clerk Massicotte** handed in her quarterly report to Board.

Councilwoman Rutkowski asked about parts for truck. Highway Superintendent Staring said the parts wear out over time and need to be replaced over the life of truck.

Deputy Supervisor Rice asked Highway Superintendent Staring if there was a minimum bid for truck. He said \$2,500. Councilwoman Ploss asked if they could rebid if they rejected bid. Attorney Albanese said they would have to put it out to bid.

The bids for the 2011 Dodge Ram pickup truck with plow were read by Deputy Supervisor Rice as follows:

Jarred Daley	\$1,550
Bradley C. Allen	\$1,000
Brett Sherwood	\$1,000

### **RESOLUTION #28-2020 TO ACCEPT BID FOR 2011 DODGE RAM PICKUP**

**WHEREAS**, the Stratford Town Board at the Town Board meeting on October 8, 2020 read bids for the 2011 Dodge Ram Pickup with plow,

**RESOLVED**, to accept the bid of \$1,550.00 from Jarred Daley.

**OFFERED BY:** Councilwoman Ploss, seconded by Councilman Perkins

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

**FINANCIAL REPORT**

Monthly budget update report will be given to the Town Board at a later time.

Budget discussion regarding a difference of \$2,000. Councilwoman Rutkowski suggested that they should have another workshop with the Bookkeeper.

Motion made by Councilwoman Ploss, seconded by Councilwoman Rutkowski to schedule another budget workshop with the Bookkeeper before the next meeting.

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

**AUDIT OF CLAIMS**

Motion made by Councilwoman Ploss, seconded by Councilman Perkins to approve the October bills.

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

2020 General Fund	Voucher Nos. 110 - 120	\$ 5,089.16
2020 Prepaid Fund	Voucher Nos. 72 - 76	\$ 3,378.05
2020 Highway Fund	Voucher Nos. 71 - 84	\$151,285.96

**PUBLIC SPEAKING**

Public Speaking opened at 7:26.

Donald Vedder speaking for his son, Todd, had a complaint regarding the CEO’s handling of inspections. Attorney Albanese said the case was resolved. He said he could only talk to Todd’s attorney. Deputy Supervisor Rice said this could not be resolved during public speaking.

Mr. Vedder commented that he did not think the CEO was doing his job because of the residences in town that have been in disarray for years. Deputy Supervisor Rice said that when she was Supervisor, she tried to resolve these issues with the APA and DEC. She said these items are not being neglected.

Attorney Albanese reiterated that during Public Speaking there is no discussion. Residents can comment but the Board does not have to respond. Attorney Albanese said the meeting is to conduct Town business.

Councilwoman Rutkowski suggested that she would be happy to meet with Todd and discuss any issues he has.

Gary Rumrill made a few comments.

Public speaking closed at 7:55 pm.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Councilwoman Ploss asked about filling the vacant position on the BAR. Deputy Supervisor Rice said the Board would fill it at the Reorganization meeting in January.

**NEW BUSINESS**

None

With no further business, on a motion by Councilwoman Ploss, seconded by Councilwoman Rutkowski, the meeting was adjourned at 7:56 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diana Massicotte, Town Clerk