

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

Minutes of the Stratford Regular Board meeting held on Thursday, August 12, 2021 at the municipal building located at 120 Piseco Rd.

Present:

Heather VanDenburgh	---	Supervisor
Allan Perkins	---	Councilman
Tiffany Rutkowski	---	Councilwoman
Lawrence Staring	---	Highway Superintendent
Norman Wright	---	Code Enforcement Officer
Michael Albanese	---	Town Attorney
Lawrence Neely	---	Town Clerk
Michael Sokira	---	BTI Director
Moira Marshall	---	Town Historian
Karen Jaquay	---	Dog Control Officer

Absent:

Lorraine Rumrill	---	Councilwoman
Joan Ploss	---	Councilwoman
David Galarneau	---	Town Assessor

Residents in Attendance: Two

Supervisor VanDenburgh called the regular meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. with the Pledge to the Flag. She noted that the meeting was also broadcast on YouTube from a link on the township's home page. The Supervisor read a proclamation honoring the Jim Johnson who died Aug. 3. He had served the Stratford Community for nearly 15 years as the attendant at the town's Transfer Station before retiring due to ill health on July 12.

CORRESPONDENCE: None

REPORTS:

Highway Dept.: Highway Superintendent Staring reported the department has been short staffed due to one employee out on extended medical leave, another retired at the end of the month and used up his remaining paid leave, and a new hire left. He has a new employee with a CDL starting Aug. 16, but is still looking to fill additional openings, preferably with someone with a CDL.

He said they have encountered issues with beavers on Middlesprite and Irish Settlement roads and will be installing Beaver Deceivers before winter. They have patched potholes and dips as needed, but had to get more patch material.

He said they have all the material in the yard for the planned reprofiling and chip sealing. His crew will be assisting Oppenheim with their project the week of Aug. 16. They in turn will assist his crew on planned work in Stratford.

He also noted he had been able to get a large pile of blacktop millings for the cost of trucking. They will be used for shoulder repairs in areas where crusher run tends to washout.

The steel to complete the state-required repairs of the Irish Settlement Bridge has arrived. He had two bids for installing the steel and lowest was R&D Construction for \$11,360.

Motion made by Supervisor VanDenburgh, seconded by Councilman Perkins, to approve the bid from R&D Construction, was approved unanimously by those present.

ADOPTED Ayes – 3
Nays – 0

The Superintendent reported they have had a number of problems with their trucks. Truck 10 is down due to transmission problems. Utica Mack reported the replacement transmission was lost in transit and a new one had to be ordered. Truck 9 was down again with a radiator leak. This was the second after-market radiator to fail. Replacing with another after-market radiator would have taken a month and left him with only one truck on the road so he ordered a new one from Freightliner and had the truck back on the road the next day. He said the mechanic has been performing preventative maintenance on the trucks to keep the equipment in better shape.

He also reported that the survey work for Voorhees Road had been completed and there is enough room to move the road away from the slide. The engineer is working on the design.

The superintendent also reported he obtained several bids to replace the dump body on Truck 9 and the lowest bid was from Viking at \$59,635.50 installed with the town removing the old dump body.

A motion made by Supervisor VanDenburgh, seconded by Councilman Perkins, to approve the purchase the dump body from Viking for \$59,635.50, and was approved unanimously by those present.

ADOPTED Ayes – 3
Nays – 0

Staring reported he continues to stay in touch with FEMA and is down to the Voorhees Road project and the four large culverts that need to be replaced. He said he could purchase the needed culverts for \$21,775.07 under state contract, a price considerably less than today's market price for steel.

A motion made by Supervisor VanDenburgh, seconded by Councilman Perkins, to approve the purchase the culverts for \$21,775.07 under state contract, and was approved unanimously by those present.

ADOPTED Ayes – 3
Nays – 0

Town Assessor: The Town Supervisor reminded those in attendance the assessor will hold a public question and answer session for town residents in the town hall on Sept. 3 between 2-4 p.m. Any resident who has a question about their tax assessment or the assessment process is encouraged to attend.

Dog Control Officer: Signed off on two dog permit inspection. She had no calls or complaints. It was noted that the James A. Brennan Memorial Humane Society Shelter in Gloversville that is used by Stratford, had been rated "Satisfactory" after the most recent inspection by New York State Agriculture and Markets.

Code Enforcement Officer: During the month of July he attended one meeting, inspected a complaint call, issued a stop work order, assisted with a dog call and handled several phone calls. He said he expects the pace of work will increase in the coming months.

BTI Director: He reported treatment season is over for the year. He will be collecting stream reports from the applicators and will report on pesticide usage when that is completed. He said he will be trying to recruit one or two more applicators and hopes to have a 30-hour training class in January 2022.

Town Justice: Judge Rissmeyer submitted a copy of his monthly report to the State Comptroller's office.

Town Historian: She reported the Fulton County Historical Society will be hosting a History Fair on Oct. and she has signed up for a table to showcase Stratford history. She noted her research has shown there were once three hotels in Stratford: the Emmonsburg Hotel in Emmonsburg; the Bowley Hotel beside the present East Canada Stop and Shop; and the Pleasant Lake Hotel. She is working with the Pleasant Lake historian gathering information on that hotel and they are trying to locate photos. She would like to be able to get copies of the photos made.

She also reported work continues on locating information on the Leavitt Cemetery on Seeley Road. She said she knows of three people who are buried there.

Town Clerk: Clerk reported he is still searching for a deputy clerk. He also noted that state hunting licenses are available at the Clerk's Office.

Town Supervisor:

RESOLUTION #24-2021

RESOLUTION APPOINTING A BUILDING CLEANER

WHEREAS, Nikki Harper resigned her position as building cleaner effective July 31, 2021; and

WHEREAS, Karen Jaquay, being deputy cleaner, has expressed interest in becoming the building cleaner; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Stratford Town Board appoints Karen Jaquay as the new Building Cleaner at the rate set by the Town Board (currently minimum wage).

Motion to adopt offered by Supervisor VanDenburgh, seconded by Councilwoman Rutkowski was approved unanimously.

ADOPTED Ayes - 3 - VanDenburgh, Rutkowski, Perkins,
Nays - 0

The Supervisor reported that Fulton County had submitted a proposed contract in the amount of \$44,550 for the town to provide ice and snow removal on 8.9 miles of county roads within the township. The contract provided no increase in the rate over the previous year. Councilwoman Rutkowski expressed concern that with the current manpower shortages at the Highway Department that clearing of town roads might suffer as a result. She said she wanted to ask the county some questions and asked that the matter be tabled. The Superintendent concurred but noted a special meeting would have to be held later in the month to meet the contractual deadline.

The supervisor reported that the second quarter sales tax receipts in Fulton County were up by 43.03% over the previous year at \$2,398,924.17 and the Town of Stratford's share had increased by 36.09% over last year's second quarter to \$94,311.30.

RESOLUTION #25-2021

**ACCEPTANCE OF FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY AID
FROM DAMAGES PERTAINING TO THE OCTOBER 31, 2019 STORM**

The Stratford Town Board hereby accepts the following dated check numbers/amounts from FEMA pertaining to the damages to the town's infrastructure that have been repaired thus far from the October 31, 2019 storm:

July 13, 2021	Check # 08233893	\$145,358.36
July 29, 2021	Check # 08244467	\$ 29,418.27
July 28, 2021	Check # 08255974	\$131,671.77

The aforementioned checks totaling \$306,448.40 to be deposited in account DA4960 – FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY DIASASTER ASSISTANCE.

Motion to adopt offered by Supervisor VanDenburgh, seconded by Councilwoman Rutkowski

ADOPTED Ayes - 3 - VanDenburgh, Rutkowski, Perkins,
Nays - 0

FINANCIAL REPORT:

The QuickBooks monthly budget update was given to the Board by the Supervisor.

The Supervisor said given the sound financial position the Town is currently in that Board should transfer \$25,000 from the Highway Department's checking account to the Highway Department's savings account.

Motion made by Supervisor VanDenburgh, seconded by Councilman Perkins to transfer the funds.

ADOPTED Ayes - 3 - VanDenburgh, Rutkowski, Perkins
Nays - 0

AUDIT OF CLAIMS:

Motion made by Councilman Perkins, seconded by Councilwoman Rutkowski to approve payment of August's bills.

August 2021 General Fund	Voucher Nos. 62-66	\$ 2,741.10
August 2021 Prepaid Fund	Voucher Nos. 51-56	\$ 3,308.18
August 2021 Highway Fund	Voucher Nos. 62-78	\$ 25,048.94

ADOPTED Ayes - 3 - VanDenburgh, Rutkowski, Perkins
Nays - 0

PUBLIC SPEAKING:

Town Historian Moira Marshall requested the town consider taking ownership of the abandoned cemeteries in the township.

OLD BUSINESS:

Town Supervisor VanDenburgh said the Deferred Compensation Plan is now active and all eligible employees may participate.

NEW BUSINESS:

The consensus of the Board members present was the first of their budget work sessions for the 2022 fiscal year would be held as proposed by the Supervisor at 4:30 p.m. prior to the Sept. 9 regular board meeting.

The Town Supervisor announced she would be conducting the state-mandated sexual harassment on Wednesday, Oct. 6, at 12:30 p.m. All employees and town officials are required to attend.

With there being no further business to discuss, a motion by Supervisor VanDenburgh, seconded by Councilwoman Rutkowski, to adjourn the meeting was unanimously approved.

ADOPTED Ayes - 3 - VanDenburgh, Rutkowski, Perkins
Nays - 0

Respectfully submitted,

Lawrence Neely, Town Clerk