

TOWN OF CONSTANTIA
MINUTES - TOWN BOARD-December 17, 2014
7:30 pm Constantia Town Hall

Present: Charles Gilkey – Supervisor
Richard Colesante, John Metzger, Thomas Moran, Chad Whitney – Council Members
Clare Haynes – Town Clerk

Others Present: Wayne Woolridge - Highway Superintendent
Warren Bader - Town Attorney
Paul Baxter - Tug Hill Commission
Roy Reehil - County Legislator

CALL TO ORDER:

At 7:30 pm Mr. Gilkey called the town board meeting to order with the pledge of allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Mrs. Kline made a comment about the Hall property in Panther Lake, it does look terrible. Mr. Gilkey told Mrs. Kline that they working with Mr. Hall about the issues. The Town is going to use the Outdoor Storage Law to try get the property cleaned up. This law can have a fine of up to \$2,500. per violation.

WATER:

Hardship application was submitted on November 25th for the joint project with the village of Cleveland.

COUNTY LEGISLATOR:

Mr. Reehil:

At the December meeting of the Oswego County Legislature the annual budget passed along with the Highway Department's suggested rental fee schedule attached. The 2015 budget projects spending \$196,849,941.00 that is \$305,666 dollars less than the 2014 budget, but the tax levy is 1.15% higher due to lowering use of unallocated fund balance and decreasing revenue.

We started our budget process at a proposed generic tax rate increase of 6.9%, but ended up lowering that through cuts. The final increase in the Town of Constantia is 4.2% to \$8.64 per thousand of assessed value. Last year's rate was \$8.29 per thousand. That amounts to about a \$34 dollar increase on a \$100,000 home.

There are 3 components to the county tax bill. County Tax, Workman's Compensation and Community College. County Tax is up 3.6%, Workman's Comp. is down 3.9% and Community College is up 17.2%. Community College has to do with the number of Town residents attending Community Colleges across the State.

We initially anticipated not being below the Governor's Tax Cap, but in the end we were able to get there. That means that sometime during 2015, the State will send rebate checks to eligible residents in approximately the amount of your individual increase. To be eligible for the Tax Cap Rebate residents have to be STAR eligible, meaning their gross household income is under \$500,000 and the property is their primary residence. Commercial properties and 2nd homes or vacation properties are not eligible.

If anyone has any questions I can try to find out more at your request.

Mr. Reehil when giving his report mentioned that Workman's Compensation might be given back to the individual Town's to pay, currently Town's are covered under the County's policy. Mr. Metzger asked Mr. Reehil to look into this, Mr. Metzger is concerned that the Town would be a smaller size so the cost will be greater, with the County handling the policy claims are spread among more people so policy/losses do not cost as much as it would for a small pool such as a Town. Mr. Reehil will start conversations with the County to get more information.

MINUTES:

Mr. Metzger made the motion to accept the minutes of the November 18th public hearing, the November 18th town board meeting, seconded by Mr. Whitney.

Carried: Moran – Yes Whitney - Yes Colesante - Yes Metzger - Yes Gilkey - Yes

VOUCHERS:

Mr. Colesante made the motion to accept the following vouchers as listed on Abstract #12, Dated December 16th:

General Fund	389-439	\$ 27,915.66
Highway Fund	206-221	\$ 18,895.07
North Shore Water District	13	\$ 700.00

Seconded by Mr. Metzger.

Carried: Moran – Yes Whitney - Yes Colesante - Yes Metzger - Yes Gilkey – Yes

SUPERVISOR:

Mr. Moran made the motion to accept the Supervisor's report as presented dated November 30 2014, seconded by Mr. Metzger.

Carried: Moran – Yes Whitney - Yes Colesante - Yes Metzger - Yes Gilkey – Yes

HIGHWAY:

Mr. Wooridge reported:

- All trucks have been turned over
- Doing tree and brush work

- Have used 350T of salt already, way ahead of normal usage
- Have straightened up many road signs in the town

Mr. Whitney made the motion to accept the Highway Superintendent's report, seconded by Mr. Metzger.

Carried: Moran – Yes Whitney - Yes Colesante - Yes Metzger - Yes Gilkey – Yes

TOWN CLERK:

Mrs. Haynes gave the board two proposals to paint the court room at the town hall.

Dave Schwalm Painting, Constantia - \$800.00

V & R painting and Remodeling LLC, Central Square - \$794.40

Discussion followed on the engineering study for the town hall, Mr. Gilkey has spoken to Mr. Charles Cummings from Camden he has done work locally. When Mr. Gilkey spoke to Mr. Cummings, he indicated he was busy but is willing to look at the building, Mr. Gilkey will contact again to see when Mr. Cummings might be available.

Mr. Colesante made the motion to accept the proposal to paint the court room for \$800.00 this will include all labor and materials, seconded by Mr. Moran.

Carried: Moran – Yes Whitney - Yes Colesante - Yes Metzger - Yes Gilkey – Yes

Mrs. Haynes would also like to have a sign made for the town hall building, the current one is in disrepair. After discussion, Mr. Colesante authorized Mrs. Haynes to spend no more than \$150.00 on signage for the town hall, seconded by Mr. Whitney.

Carried: Moran – Yes Whitney - Yes Colesante - Yes Metzger - Yes Gilkey – Yes

Local law 1-2014 has been filed in the Office of the State.

New tax computer is up and running, Mr. Baxter of the Tug Hill Commission did the set up, thank you for your help.

Total receipts for the month of November were \$2,180.00. Mr. Moran made the motion to accept the Town Clerk's report as presented, seconded by Mr. Whitney.

Carried: Moran – Yes Whitney - Yes Colesante - Yes Metzger - Yes Gilkey – Yes

ASSESSOR:

As of the writing of this memo, the Department of Taxation and Finance are still unable to pinpoint a timeframe for the "Tax Freeze" checks to be mailed to the remaining school districts; including Central Square School District. DTF indicated in a phone call that those checks will continue to be mailed out through the beginning of the New Year. So for those of us that have not yet received the "Tax Freeze" check, apparently it's in the mail.

I would also like to point out to the Board a potential issue that you may or may not be aware about. The issue has to do with those properties that go through extensive renovations that are not subject to obtaining a building permit. In the November 16th real estate section of *The Post Standard*, the feature property was located in our Town. I performed a physical inspection of the property in 2007 at the request of the property owner, and made several notations on its condition, resulting in a reduction in assessment, and therefore, tax liability. Fast forward several years; now the property is the benefactor of over \$250,000 of improvements and renovations, and if not for the feature story in the newspaper, would not have been known. I point this out simply because issues like this create inequity. This property should have been revalued long before now, and adjusted accordingly. I am sure that this is going on throughout the town, where houses are being renovated and assessments not be adjusted, because we do not know of the changes occurring until such a time as the house sells; or perhaps we visit an adjoining property. We need a system in place where these renovations are being properly monitored and assessments being adjusted as necessary, to be sure that assessments remain as equitable as possible for our tax payers.

I would once again like to take this opportunity to wish everyone and their families a wonderful holiday season and happy new year. I will be out of the office on December 30, 2014 for holiday break.

With the information in the memo discussing renovations to properties, Mr. Gilkey brought with him the proposed building permit fee schedule dated June 21, 2011. Included in the fee schedule is a fee for alterations and repairs which would have covered the above property if it was approved. Discussion followed. Mr. Colesante questioned what would happen to properties that were decreasing in value because the owners could not keep up with the times? Mr. Gilkey responded that it is an option not to keep your property up, real property tax laws do not cover that. With a fee schedule the town would only be able to look at the homes that got a permit, what would happen to the residents/homes that do not, not a fair way to tax.

Mr. Moran made the motion to accept the Assessor's report, seconded by Mr. Colesante.

Carried: Moran – Yes Whitney - Yes Colesante - Yes Metzger - Yes Gilkey – Yes

CODE ENFORCEMENT:

Mr. Metzger made the motion to accept the Code Officer's report as received with total receipts for the month of November in the amount of \$1,084.90, seconded by Mr. Moran.

Carried: Moran – Yes Whitney - Yes Colesante - Yes Metzger - Yes Gilkey – Yes

DOG CONTROL:

Mr. Metzger made the motion to accept the Dog Control Officer's report as received, seconded by Mr. Whitney.
Carried: Moran – Yes Whitney - Yes Colesante - Yes Metzger - Yes Gilkey – Yes

PLANNING BOARD:

The September 23rd meeting minutes were received.

BOARD OF APPEALS:

Nothing to report.

JUSTICE:

Mr. Metzger made the motion to accept Justice Pelon's and Justice Simpson's report for November, seconded by Mr. Moran.

Carried: Moran – Yes Whitney - Yes Colesante - Yes Metzger - Yes Gilkey – Yes

CORRESPONDENCE:

None

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

BOARD COMMENT:

Mr. Moran hopes the planning board is still looking into having a public informational meeting on the results of the comprehensive survey, maybe in the first quarter of 2015.

TUG HILL COMMISSION:

Mr. Baxter reported:

- Assisted the town clerk with selection and installing a new computer for tax collection and DEC license issuance
- First meeting of the Tug Hill Commission will be Tuesday, January 20th 10am, tentatively in Cleveland
- NorCOG met Tuesday November 25th, one of the items discussed was the need to circulate and adopt a current inter municipal agreement. Next, NorCOG meeting Thursday, January 29th at 7pm likely in Constantia or Cleveland
- Conducted a SEQR training session on Monday, December 1st, if any particular training topics need to be covered in 2015, please feel free to contact Mr. Baxter
- 2015 Tug Hill Local Government conference, Thursday, March 26th at Jefferson Community College

ADJOURN:

At 8:53 pm Mr. Colesante made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Whitney.

Carried: Moran - Yes Whitney - Yes Colesante - Yes Metzger - Yes Gilkey - Yes