

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF FORT EDWARD TOWN BOARD REGULAR MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2022 AT 7:00 PM

Supervisor Fisher called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL: Supervisor Fisher

Councilman Middleton

Councilwoman Collier

Councilwoman Mullen

Absent: Councilman Suprenant

OTHERS PRESENT: Stephen Davie, Brian Brockway, Kerri Culhane, Jason Black, Harrison Downs, Nina Lockwood, Shannon Gilroy, Katie deGroot, Therese Gillis, Melanie Dickinson, Michael Dickinson, and Deputy Town Clerk, Elizabeth O’Leary

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MOTION by Councilman Middleton, Seconded by Councilwoman Mullen to approve the minutes of the organizational meeting and regular board meeting on January 10, 2022 and the public hearing and special meeting on January 19, 2022
ALL AYES

APPROVAL OF REPORTS: MOTION by Councilwoman Collier, Seconded by Councilwoman Mullen to approve the following reports: Town Clerk Monthly, Town Justice, Building Inspector, Dog Control Officer, Highway, Code Enforcement/Zoning Officer & Supervisor’s Report as submitted **ALL AYES**

APPROVAL OF BILLS: MOTION by Councilman Middleton, Seconded by Councilwoman Collier to approve Abstract #2 in the amount of \$83,379.58 **ALL AYES**

ABSTRACT #2

GENERAL A: 10505-10512	\$51,501.88
GENERAL B: 10557-10559	\$ 6,632.52
HIGHWAY: 10560-10573	\$10,997.95
MUNICIPAL: 10513-10514, 10574-10580	\$ 6,732.63
SPECIAL LIGHTING: 10515-10519	\$ 4,689.18
SPECIAL WATER 1: 10520-10521, 10581-10588	\$ 1,790.59
SPECIAL WATER 2: 10522-10523, 10589-10592	\$ 1,234.63

TOTAL: \$83,579.38

RESOLUTIONS:

- **Resolution Number 15**

MOTION BY COUNCILMAN MIDDLETON

SECONDED BY COUNCILWOMAN MULLEN

WHEREAS, Town Boards are required by Town Law to audit the financial records of the Town Clerk, Tax Collector and Town Justice.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fort Edward Town Board audited the financial records of the Town Justice, Town Clerk and Tax Collector for the fiscal year January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 at a special meeting held on January 19, 2022.

DATED: February 14, 2022

Roll Call Vote: Councilman Middleton – AYE
Councilwoman Collier – AYE
Councilman Suprenant – ABSENT
Councilwoman Mullen – AYE
Supervisor Fisher - AYE

Aimee Mahoney, Town Clerk
Town of Fort Edward

BUSINESS:

Councilman Fisher announced that we are being audited by New York State Comptroller's Office. It's a periodic audit and our last one was in 2010. A formal report will be issued by the state sometime in the near future.

**Keystone Novelties, LLC
Keystone Fireworks
Peddling & Soliciting License**

Keystone Novelties submitted a Peddling & Soliciting License Application to the Town in preparation of their annual Fourth of July tent sale at 359 Broadway.

MOTION by Councilman Middleton, Seconded by Councilwoman Collier to approve the Peddling and Soliciting License for Keystone Novelties effective 2/14/2022-2/11/2023 **ALL AYES**

PRESENTATION: Champlain Barge Canal
Presenter: Kerry Culhane

Kerry Culhane: I'm Kerry Culhane and thank you for entertaining my request this week and thank you to Katie (deGroot) for inviting me. I have prepared a handout with some links for more information. So if anybody has questions, my contact information is also on it. My husband, Jason Black and I live in Fort Miller between the Hudson River and the Champlain Canal. Its beautiful there but we also happen to be in the PCB hot spot courtesy of GE so we are acutely attuned to any other terrible ideas for industrial development. I'm also a historic preservation professional. I have recently secured \$45 million and \$25 million in state and federal tax credits for private developers. So, I am not anti-development. I am very much pro-development, but I also see that here in Fort Edward we have some tremendous historical assets that are not being properly valued, one of them being the Champlain Barge Canal. So the state Barge Canal system, of which the Champlain Canal is a part, is listed as a National Historic Landmark and that is the highest designation that our nation has for resources that are important to American history. I think that there are many better uses for sites along such a resource than what's being proposed by Hughes Energy. In 2017 the New York Power Authority and Canal Corporation started a competition called Reimagine the Canals which solicited better ideas for economic development opportunities along the canal site community. The winning entries were some pretty thought provoking ideas for some sites along the Hudson River. One of which was called the Canal site pocket development and that was done by Madison County out by Syracuse where they were developing walkable community adjacent to the canal, within walking distance to the village. It has multiple benefits, obviously increasing the tax base and the opportunities for people to open businesses downtown, increasing people who might want to open businesses downtown. I think about Schuylerville where they have developed Lock 5, Hudson Crossing Park which has become a very popular amenity locally. I ran into numerous people this summer who were camping at the Camp Rockaway at Lock 5.

I know you are being thoughtful about what opportunities exist for our local resources, but to see that there are resources for people out there to think about ways of approaching economic development on historic resources such as this. You can take a look at the fact sheet when you have time. My contact information is on there and I am happy to answer any questions or direct you to other resources that exist up there. I thank you for taking the time to listen.

Supervisor Fisher: Thank you.

Councilman Middleton: I have a question. I may have been misinformed, but when Reimagine the Canals was formed, I thought it was for the Erie Canal because that's where all the money went. At the time, we weren't offered any part of that for the Champlain Canal.

Kerry Culhane: That's right. That's something we should all be angry about because the Champlain Canal gets the short shrift from the Erie Canal and is just as important in so many

ways. There is actually a recent very small economic development grant that just came out for all canal systems for heritage tourism events along the canal, so that might be something you might want to take a look at. But the ideas are transferrable, so the ones at Reimagine the Canals really are ones that would work in our communities. There is very little difference in the issues of what we are facing versus what they are facing.

Katie deGroot: What limitations are there or are there any limitations if the canal is designated as National Historic Register.

Kerry Culhane: Great question!!! So when a property is listed on the National Register as well as being designated as historic landmark, any projects that requiring state or federal funds or permits are subject to separate of level of environmental review. So they would have to go through SEQRA anyway, but there would also trigger the State and Federal Historic Preservation Act which would be another level of review to assess potentially adverse impact to the resource, whereas SEQRA is looking at the impact to the community at large.

Therese Gillis: You are saying that we ARE on the National Registry?

Kerry Culhane: Yes. The canal is a national historic landmark which is an even higher level of significance.

Therese Gillis: I picked these up at the library today (calendars). They are of the Erie Canal with pictorial views of what is going on along the Erie. I think it really gives some inspiration for all of these residents in our region.

Kerry Culhane: It is beautiful to live on a canal and we see so many boats passing through coming from Canada and Florida. We are on the Empire State Trail so Fort Edward is almost the geographic center.

Supervisor Fisher: We see a lot of boats in the yacht basin.

Katie deGroot: Historically Fort Edward is the 'meeting place', that's the Indian word for Fort Edward.

Councilman Middleton: It's the 'Carrying Place'.

Katie deGroot: But that's because everyone who came here trading would go back downriver or up. Its been that kind of place for a long time and I think that I remember when the river was so awful when I was a teenager, there was brown scum, and now its so beautiful. Its something that we really, really have to think about before we even consider that we've spent all these years cleaning it up.

Kerry Culhane: Absolutely! On the bottom of this sheet, I did some numbers based on the numbers that Hughes Energy had given out publically for what energy demands and pollution of our water resources will be. If you actually pencil them out to more than their per hour rates that they give you, it's a huge huge environmental burden that they are proposing to Fort Edward.

I'm happy to email anyone who wants the sheet I passed out and if anyone has any questions on any way that I can help propose better ideas.

Harrison Downs: In the concept of promoting the canals, is there any room for commercial use?

Kerry Culhane: Yes, absolutely and I think that a big part of the original canal was commercial. There have been people who have been trying to figure out ways to efficiently use the canal for moving produce from Washington County. There's a man in Whitehall trying to develop a fleet for shipping produce. I think that even this site could even be a non-polluting commercial or industrial site, so its not about not wanting it developed, its really thinking about ways to develop Fort Edward without the down side of all of the soil and air and water pollution that we've seen traditionally in what is developed here. This is a community that is going to thrive. If you want people to live here you have to come up with projects that attract people rather than repel them.

Therese Gillis: Thank you. I have lived here since I was born in 1955. We just recently purchased a boat and so we have run the Hudson River corridor again, like I used to run in the late 1960's with my dad. The Hudson River even after being able to get through the drudgeing project, the Hudson River is coming back and there are people on it and people enjoying it. That wasn't there, and even when the paper sludge was floating down the Hudson, we were water skiing around it.

Supervisor Fisher: The Sludge Water Derby!

Therese Gillis: We lived through all of that and there is a strong community now. People are going through here.

Councilman Middleton: You've got to remember, in 2017 when this program was rolled out, for whatever reason, it seems like we are always on the wrong side of the river and none of this was offered to anybody in Washington County, or anywhere on the Champlain Canal.

Therese Gillis: Maybe we missed opportunities to know it was there.

Kerry Culhane: I do see a shift happening now. I think COVID has sent people out of cities and they are realizing what an amazing place Fort Edward and Washington County is and I think this also a way to figure out a way to control that development. I also used to do work for agricultural stewardship association in trying to protect farm land and to plan better for conserving the resources for people who have been here and lived through the bad times so they can enjoy the good times. I think that there are a lot of ways that we can think about this that aren't negative.

Katie deGroot: Maybe we could ask Carrie Woerner to come and meet with Kerry and you guys. Maybe we can invite her to a meeting and talk about this. Isn't that her job to come to meetings to talk to people?

Councilman Fisher: She is open to this.

Katie deGroot: Have you ever talked to her about this?

Kerry Culhane: I have not. I have spoken with Dan Stec and I have sent messages to Elise Stefanick but you know how that goes. Dan Stec actually, when I contacted him about canal related issues, it was about planning, I asked if the Champlain Canal could be included in the planning issue that was going on. He was very responsive and so I think that he definitely is someone also that we should be talking to.

Katie deGroot: I am also happy to talk to a bunch of Democrats running, hoping that they can take on Elise Stefanick and all seem really open to coming and talking to us. One of the things that I thought would be cool to just say what are your ideas for Fort Edward, specifically. We aren't cut out, we are still part of their district and I want to know if they have any specific idea, among the four of them. I would be happy to help organize that if there is a night, maybe next month. Would you guys be interested in something like that.

Supervisor Fisher: That would be fine. If Carrie is available, she is always welcome.

Katie deGroot: I am happy to do the contacting.

Councilman Middleton: I'm just thinking politically Katie, if we had candidates that were running coming to a public meeting. I would meet them outside the public meeting.

Katie deGroot: Could we have it afterward?

Councilman Middleton: The representative could come.

Supervisor Fisher: You can't have a campaign at a town meeting.

Katie deGroot: But we could have them meet afterwards in this room or not?

Supervisor Fisher: If there are three board members, then that's a meeting.

Katie deGroot: We can figure out some other way to do it.

Supervisor Fisher: Carrie and Dan can come to a meeting because they are our representatives.

Katie deGroot: I will work on them first. Have you spoken to Matt Lespale? He seems like a go-getter. Shall I invite Elise Stefanick? Why not? She'll say no.

Councilman Middleton: You can't say that. Back when I was supervisor, she sent her aide to the dewatering site. From their website, she is instrumental in helping the IDA get some grants to bring water and sewer in there. She knows we are here.

Katie deGroot: I am going to use that as a motivator for some other people. I will call all three of them and try to get them to come to the next meeting, if that's okay with you guys.

Supervisor Fisher: They are always welcome.

Katie deGroot: Maybe Kerry might consider coming to another meeting?

Kerry Culhane: Absolutely. I'm sorry that I haven't been more engaged in local efforts, but most of my work is in New York City. I really appreciate you listening to me tonight. Thank you.

Supervisor Fisher: Thank you.

Councilman Middleton: Kerry, I know one thing that has been brought up here by members of the board and other people, and that is, we would like to look into putting in a kayak dock here for access for people of the town over by the yacht basin. Is there is a way to obtain a grant?

Kerry Culhane: Let's look at that grant that just came out. I think one of them is maybe for access and for events. I think they are up to \$25,000 which might be in the range to do that and if not maybe we can look at other ways.

Therese Gillis: On that some note, doesn't it make sense that we should be able to have access to the river? How do they get a state launch all over and here we sit and we can't put our boats in except for the tiny launch left over from the dredging.

Supervisor Fisher: That's the one on the other side that is actually in the Town of Moreau.

Therese Gillis: We all live here and we all want to access the river. I love the 7 mile stretch.

Supervisor Fisher: You used to be able to put one in down by the pool.

Therese Gillis: Everywhere I go there is a beautiful state launch. It would be nice to have a parking area.

Elizabeth O'Leary: There is a tiny one on the lock road at the approach to Lock 7, just as you go around the corner to the lock. Its nothing fancy, but you can just launch it there.

Councilman Middleton: The one in Moreau, believe it or not is a state launch. There is a beautiful one at Lock 5 in Schuylerville.

Therese Gillis: But its not in Fort Edward!

Councilman Middleton: Once again, I agree.

Katie deGroot: Is there any money in the pandemic infrastructure money that the town got? Has it all been earmarked?

Supervisor Fisher: No. We are working on that.

Katie deGroot: Isn't it easier to get a grant if you are willing to come up with some of the money?

Kerry Culhane: Yes. That's sometimes how grants work, if you are willing to come up with matching funds in historic preservation. I think Carrie Woerner and Dan Stec could assist to facilitate a conversation with the Canal Corporation who are historically very opaque and hard to deal with to think about trying to get Fort Edward on the map as far as opportunity and actually try to think about reimagining the entire canal rather than just the Erie Canal. Maybe that could be part of the strategy.

Therese Gillis: Does the Champlain Canal include wherever those locks are that go around the falls in the river down by Fort Miller?

Kerry Culhane: Yes. The Champlain Canal goes from Waterford to Whitehall. Fort Edward is where it cuts off to go north, which is unlike any other place on the canal.

Supervisor Fisher: Any other questions for Kerry? Anything else from the public?

Brian Brockway: I have a couple things.

I got a letter from the Department of Transportation about generators for the lights. I spoke with Mike from the Town of Kingsbury, after I spoke with you this morning. They have denied it. If you read into the letter, it would be the town's responsibility to provide, store and maintain them. Why are we responsible? They are state traffic signals on a state highway. I don't believe that we should get involved in it. If we decide to get involved in it, we need to buy an insurance policy and it would be more money for the tax payers. They are state red lights and if they go black, they go black. The old way, it's a four way stop sign and you take your turn.

Supervisor Fisher: I would say that its NYSDOT, we don't own the signals.

Brian Brockway: I don't mind helping them out if there is a mass brown out, going up and doing something, I don't think its fair for the town to buy an insurance policy and generators and maintain them. We only have one 1000 watt generator, I think it might power one street light. We would need three of them. Schuyler Street, the old GE, and Market 32. The others are the village. They put it on our list, but they are village. I think we should opt out of it. Kingsbury has a number to call. There is no penalty to opt out. They won't stop a work permit to work on a water break or whatever on route 4. I think its just foolish to get involved in this because perhaps the generator would run out of gas, someone would have an accident and then there would be a law suit because the red light was out and we signed a paper that we would maintain it.

Supervisor Fisher: There is a contact number and we'll get together and reach out to them.

Brian Brockway: The other thing is, did Verizon notify you that they were doing work on the water tower?

Supervisor Fisher: No.

Brian Brockway: They have been up there doing some work. I originally thought it was DISH. But I knew they haven't finalized the contract. I think they have changed a few of their microwaves.

Supervisor Fisher: They said that they would contact us.

Brian Brockway: Maybe we can send them a letter that in the future they need to contact us if they were doing welding or whatnot to protect the inside of it.

Councilwoman Mullen: Maybe they sent a letter to the former supervisor?

Councilman Middleton: All correspondence should come to the town clerk.

Steve Davie: Do you need a motion to opt out of that (DOT letter)?

Councilman Fisher: No. We will just call them. If we do, we can do it next month. It'll give us a chance to review it and talk to them.

Brian Brockway: If they want to provide the generators, I have no problem sending someone up to get them hooked up.

Supervisor Fisher: But, it would be their insurance and their generators. We do have to talk about a generator for the town highway building.

Brian Brockway: I think we started to look into if we could spend stimulus money on it.

Supervisor Fisher: Put that on the list, Terry.

Councilman Middleton: I wish we had more stimulus money. We have a great big list and not so much stimulus money.

Supervisor Fisher: The town pool is the big one. We have CT Male, we should have a report from them soon. I left a message for the engineer today.

Therese Gillis: That is one of the resources that the stimulus money is going to? Are there other projects on the list?

Supervisor Fisher: We had a firm in Buffalo do our lost revenue calculation. We just got that back. Now we know what we have to spend and I hope to have a committee of the board start a list. We have floated ideas around, but we haven't set anything in stone yet, so if anyone has any

ideas, we'd like to hear them. The pool is a huge item. It was put in in 1962, I think. We have been band-aiding it for 12 years and we were hoping to maybe...

Therese Gillis: Its too bad that we couldn't incorporation something right there on the Hudson to have more of the park area, but isn't that all private land?

Supervisor Fisher: The village has a little park there on the right with picnic tables, etc. but the water level down there is not great.

Brian Brockway: There isn't the dam now that used to hold the current back. Its now coming down through further.

Mike Dickinson: I understand last summer that Carrie said there might be a grant available for fixing the pool?

Supervisor Fisher: We started the process with Carrie. It's a long process. She said that the one she gave us is going to take a long time.

Councilman Middleton: We basically have to put up the money, complete the project, then hope. For example, I got one similar. We did a couple roofs and we still haven't gotten paid. That was about 4 years ago.

Supervisor Fisher: We had to resubmit the paperwork again. We thought we were all done and then we had to redo the whole thing. That one, we did file it. Jim Thatcher is looking into more grant opportunities for us for the pool. It will be a match, so we need to save some of the stimulus money for the match. Its hard right now, all of these pool places are so busy, that you can't get anyone to even look at it. We need to have a spec written so we can send it out to bid. A lot of kids have learned to swim there, so its well used.

CORRESPONDANCE:

Supervisor Fisher: We do have correspondence from R. Paul McCarty, Town and Village Historian. He gave his annual report which is attached for everyone to read. Is anything else from the public?

Therese Gillis: I have a letter that I'd like to read. I have a copy for everyone including the village board. It's a representation of affected property owners, not that we have adjacent properties to the old de-watering properties but it's the community of that area involved for years with GE.

“It has recently come to my attention that a company, Hughes Energy, has expressed interest and is being considered for the site previously known as the GE dewatering facility. An environmental group – Warren County Zero Waste has reached out to myself, neighbors and residents of neighboring villages and townships to share their discoveries regarding this business. They have been in close contact with Don't Trash the Catskills located downstate, where Hughes Energy has been trying to set up an operation. It is clear that Hughes Energy is being considered

and I feel at this point any information should be shared with this community. I believe both boards have been in contact with Hughes Energy and the WWIDA whom are instrumental in this happening. I have reviewed previous meetings, researched links provided to me and attended a few meetings in the past two weeks. I have questions, suggestions and concerns over conflicting information that I would like my elected officials to review, consider and respond.

I would like to invite a few members of the Fort Edward Town Board/Village Board, Promote Fort Edward, etc...to informally gather and share information, facts and findings we've researched and been enlightened to. It would give us a chance to have an open, not hostile, discussion to present your findings to us. We could all fact check before any future discussions or meetings. Every concerned citizen should reference the links provided to educate ourselves.

I have questions for Hughes Energy. Could we put them on the agenda for a future Town Board meeting open to all residents and interested parties. Perhaps it is already scheduled or being considered to schedule. We would need this meeting to have Zoom access in conjunction with an in person meeting. There are some people still not comfortable with open gatherings in that this is all just beginning to open up. We need to hold Hughes Energy accountable to address and answer questions they were presented with at CAAN meeting in November 2021 and have yet to reply.

In reference to Fort Edward Town meeting 12/13/21 – I feel Katie deGroot's concerns to be real and should be addressed. *I do not agree with Councilman Suprenant's comment that we can, but should not rely on that "DEC is on top of it". *Nor do I agree with Supervisor Fisher's comments – "This article.....Catskills." The CAAN meeting I attended with Hughes Energy was not talking about the Catskills site. He was talking about us. It was not just 'newspaper and cardboard'. * I do not have any understanding of comment to 'build a 115sf plant'. I believe that to be knowledge you have obtained and it should be shared. Could that be the same as the Wilson System that would then transport remaining waste to local landfills? * I agree that 'looking for an alternative is a good thing, but it has to make sense, but I do not agree with "and that is why the DEC has stepped in". I believe the responsibility of affected citizens and elected board members is to become involved.

WWIDA has taken steps to strongly move forward with this project. I feel fortunate that Mike Wild was present at a meeting I attended. He expressed concerns about several findings. First being Venture Capital, this corporation has habitually acquired funds and then failed. I am not aware there are other plants operational at this time. Next is corporate debt. How stable is this corporation financially? Lastly, he needs to know exactly how many jobs this will bring to the area, Hughes Energy in the Catskills keeps changing that number. Don't Trash the Catskills is available to us as a resource. They've been working on this for two years.

Hughes Energy gave an estimate that 450 tons/day of material would come to this site. Its my understanding that this is not a single stream recyclable product. I find green terms very misleading, in fact their representative had to change his language when called on it. Judith Enck was spot on. I'm sure you all remember her work with the EPA in our former dredging project. She's involved, but needs our support in this project. This site has access by not only a truck route, but rail and water via the Champlain Canal/Hudson River corridor from New York City to

Montreal, Quebec. This could access an immense source of product for whatever they need to bring in. It also has a connecting spur to the trash incinerator in Hudson Falls.

Is our sewer district set up to handle possible PFAS contamination if it is found in the discharge water being used for this autoclave operation? I would think it is for human and municipality waste, not industrial. Environmentalist and concerned citizens simply will not allow any further contamination of our Hudson River corridor after the exhausted efforts and success of the dredging project.

I do believe the best way to move forward through any of these projects is to present a united not divided front from this region. The history of past projects has proven it can be successful. Concerned citizens, environmental groups, boards and agencies need to stay open and involved. We need to unite together with information we have acquired to keep everyone informed. I realize development of this property is necessary for a multitude of reasons, but it has to be the right fit for Fort Edward/Washington County. This COVID pandemic has isolated and affected all of us. I apologize for recent lack of involvement with future vision of our community. I hope to become more involved with the Village Board, Town Board, Town Planning Board, WWIDA, and Promote Fort Edward, and whomever it was that was able to be successful at getting the Champlain Canal on the Federal Registry. I await your response. I can be reached at 518-955-7355 (cell) or email at tgillis@vreizon.net. Thank you for your time and interest.”

I will leave this letter with you and may I also give to you a copy to give to Village Board? I also have some points from affected citizens on my road via email. I am right across from there. There are a bunch of citizens very concerned out there. We have lived through the noise, the lights, the air, that we have lived through the dewatering project and came out the other side. Now that the river is cleaner, we are very concerned as to what goes there. I printed off the emails for you. Thank you for your time.

Supervisor Fisher: Thank you. Elizabeth will give the letter to the Village Board. Remember, only two board members may be present at a time at any meeting or it becomes a board meeting. Anyone else?

Katie deGroot: I do have one thing, Tim sent me a really nice email back after my rant and he pointed out that in fact, the IDA owns the property. That is something that we have forgotten.

Supervisor Fisher: They own it and its zoned industrial. That doesn't mean that we can't influence them. I'm just telling you the way it is.

Mike Dickinson: I am very disturbed that they would consider bringing in another trash plant when we already have one down the road.

Councilman Middleton: I would just like to say one thing. The way it was explained to me and the presentation that I watched, was to take away from the trash plant and actually recycle. That's how it was presented to us.

Supervisor Fisher: We have not been contacted by Hughes.

Councilman Middleton: I just want to throw this out. It's like your neighbor's house is for sale and you want to tell your neighbor who he can sell it to. Well, we all hope that we get a good neighbor but at the end of the day, if the person comes in and has the money to do it, and does everything legal, there's not a lot we can do.

Everyone: I totally disagree.

(Everyone was speaking at once, transcriber could not differentiate what was being said or who said it)

Councilman Middleton: Our voices as a town comes in, when they come in, if they are actually interested, they will start the process with the planning and at that time we have a say.

Supervisor Fisher: They have to have a public meeting.

Katie deGroot: You mean that going to the IDA and start talking to them now won't have any influence, Terry? I totally disagree.

Kerry Culhane: Don't you have a representative on the IDA? Don't supervisors have a position on the IDA?

Councilman Middleton: No.

Shannon Gilroy: There are many, but Fort Edward does not have one on the board. Chestertown does. We can contact Chestertown.

Katie deGroot: Lester (Losaw) was on the IDA.

Councilman Middleton: He was the Treasurer of the IDA.

Supervisor Fisher: We can still speak to the IDA. Obviously they are not only talking to Hughes, they are talking to others. They don't let us know until they have someone.

Therese Gillis: You already know.

Supervisor Fisher: I do not. The only firm I know is Hughes.

Therese Gillis: Seriously? You have not talked to Hughes?

Supervisor Fisher: We did the Zoom thing that Katie attended. It was on three different nights and we made sure that we attended different nights.

Councilman Middleton: I attended the night that Katie did.

Shannon Gilroy: There are communications between the company and the IDA looking at this site, so it is a serious consideration at this point that they have invited them to the site.

Supervisor Fisher: That's why I brought the article from the paper. I felt it explained what's out in the public.

Therese Gillis: How did you have a reference as what the sf15 type system? That's in the minutes of your last town meeting.

Supervisor Fisher: That was on the Zoom. That was the point, in our defense, that's all we have seen. They have not contacted us. The IDA has not contacted us. The IDA is soliciting. When Dave O'Brien, in that article in the Post star, says he has not spoken with them since November.

Katie deGroot: But if you listen to the stuff from the Catskill people, Hughes Energy after that ZOOM meeting, were like 'oooooooooh' and they completely changed the next Zoom meeting and shut it down completely differently. You can tell the CEO is like 'wait a minute. These people have questions'.

Supervisor Fisher: I think it's a good thing that they are doing it in Dutchess County right now. We can learn a lot from it.

Therese Gillis: The only concern that I have is that I wouldn't want them to head where they have the least resistance. I feel that we have to be careful. If they are getting shut down in the Catskills, we may be the next spot on the map they are looking at. I would expect that elected officials and planning boards are on board with being sure that this is a viable operation for us here, with all those environmental concerns. You guys are interested. You aren't going to wait until they knock on your door, are you? We are going to give you links that you can go to. Why can't they be proactive?

Kerry Culhane: I think its about articulating a vision about what Fort Edward wants to have happen in Fort Edward. And then communicating that to the IDA and if that means Fort Edward says 'this isn't a good fit for us, its going to tax our sewer and tax our water. Its going to tax our everything' then the town does have a tremendous say in what happens there. It's not just a matter of being at the will of the IDA.

Shannon Gilroy: Wouldn't you have to allow them to alter the sewer system? If they are going to pay for an upgrade to the sewer, the town would have to grant that permission?

Councilman Middleton: Actually, that's not the town either, that is the Sewer Commission.

Shannon Gilroy: Washington County would have no say in that?

Therese Gillis: You don't want a hand in this, Terry?

Councilman Middleton: Right when it first came out, somewhere in the minutes, I am sure you can find that I said that it would not be my choice to the dewatering site to bring garbage.

Therese Gillis: Do you mind if we give you links?

Councilman Middleton: I think information is great, but I will say it again, I would rather see something else than garbage there, but there is not very much that we can do about it.

Katie deGroot: I strongly disagree.

Right now they don't even have another meeting scheduled like the IDA that I know about.

Kerry Culhane: But if we went to the IDA and said, Let's consider that this is a residential development or let's consider some other business to go in there. Let's think of other uses for that property.

Councilman Middleton: Honestly, what I think is great, and I haven't seen it in years. This. Participation. This means more at the IDA meeting, than Tim talking to the President up there saying, our people, we don't want this, or me talking to them, or any one of us. Ten or fifteen of you people.

Supervisor Fisher: You could all go over to the IDA meeting and say the same thing.

Therese Gillis: There is always an open forum at the end of the IDA meeting? Unless someone closes it?

Katie deGroot: You can tell them you are coming.

Supervisor Fisher: They have open meetings. They have to allow you in.

Therese Gillis: You can't go along side of us? Oh, only two at a time!

Supervisor Fisher: Let us review the information and like I say, we haven't taken any action because we haven't had any information.

Nina Lockwood: I have a question for Kerry. If the Champlain Canal is on the National Registry, does that prohibit any of this?

Kerry Culhane: No, it doesn't. It just means that there is another layer of environmental review, so it can be that they say this won't have an adverse impact. Its more about what that type of designation attracts to it. Let's think of this as a valuable asset and treat it like that and not just treat it as a place to unload garbage. It is unlikely that it would stop a project.

Councilman Middleton: That would all come out in the SEQRA process.

Kerry Culhane: It would come out in the section of the ----- process. But it would be, again, let's use it as a valuable resource rather than just this.

Supervisor Fisher: As of right now, what's the status on the Catskill project? Do these links have very much going on?

Katie deGroot: They are still going on. They are still pushing.

Supervisor Fisher: Is the DEC still doing their...

Katie deGroot: They are still doing their review.

Shannon Gilroy: The DEC just commented that they are open for public comment. I think that they got 200 letters, which was less than they had anticipated, so I think they are not very hopeful that the DEC is actually going to be able to use those statements. I know that they have a ton of resources available. I will have that available for everyone after. Its in the working process right now and the woman that has led that has both the research and I know that they didn't get the response that they had hoped for. I would not want to be that community. They have done a lot of work. The idea is getting together as a community and pooling all of our resources so that we can all make an informed decision using research data that they have done there.

Katie deGroot: I also really think the link to the IDA meeting and having people go. They don't like it when you show up and actually have anything to say. The more of us that do that makes them realize that there are people...

Shannon Gilroy: I am contacting people in Warren and Washington County, especially youth through school, social media through different action groups to hopefully see some younger faces and hope to inspire them to make different decisions.

Therese Gillis: You guys don't have any qualms about us rallying some people, do you?

Supervisor Fisher: That is your right. Usually there are two people here at the meetings, so we are happy to have people come.

Councilman Middleton: Don't come here and attack us.

Therese Gillis: Do you agree that we are not?

Councilman Middleton: Very good!

Therese Gillis: If your guys hands are tied, kind of, until its presented to you, then we would like to move forward as a community to educate the community with facts, there are links, that we can promote to get the interest of the community. If we can't do that through a town board meeting yet, I was hoping we could get it on the agenda, March sounds like it will be busy and that's good, to promote Fort Edward. This may take awhile, so maybe April or May, but what we would like to do is try to motivate this body.

Councilman Middleton: The other thing that I would just like to throw out there and lets say that hypothetically, we are going to get little green men from this, they also have the right to solicit the board. Now that we are making it public, they can dispute anything you give to us.

Therese Gillis: But they can.

Councilman Middleton: That's what I am saying.

Supervisor Fisher: That's why we want the facts.

Mike Dickinson: You need to educate yourself on both sides. As I understand it, the Village and the Town need the tax credit. This may not be the best fit for us, we need to keep that in mind and educate ourselves.

Harrison Downs: This may cost us a lot more than it brings in. I understand that they need \$90 million.

Katie deGroot: And where is that money coming from?

Kerry Culhane: The IDA will have to require grants to do that.

Councilwoman Mullen: You mentioned Canned presentations. Please define that.

Therese Gillis: There is a CAAN presentation. I got the link from someone from Fort Edward.

Councilwoman Mullen: Oh yes, that was mentioned in the article. I think I saw that phrase in the article.

Supervisor Fisher: Clean Air Action Network of Glens Falls. So you are saying that they have something you are saying.

Nina Lockwood: They had a meeting with the CEO of Hughes.

Katie deGroot: That's the same one that we all saw. Tracy Frish and CAAN, it's the same meeting that we all went to. CEO of Hughes, Dan O'Brien.

Supervisor Fisher: That's a different one than the one we saw. The one we saw was Hughes just showing us their process.

Katie deGroot: There is another meeting.

Nina Lockwood: Actually that Zoom meeting video is on YouTube now and I transcribed it. There are a number of inconsistencies and contradictions that Hughes tried to back track on and a few people called him out on it. It's very informational, because you realize that it's not exactly what they are presenting and it is not really something that we would want in our community.

Supervisor Fisher: Therese, was that in your information that you gave.

Shannon Gilroy: I can write the website that will be coming online and then all those resources will be available.

There Gillis: I was getting emails at 6:45 tonight before the meeting.

Supervisor Fisher: As I am not here all the time, please give the emails to Elizabeth or Aimee in the Clerk's office.

Harrison Downs: I am sure that this board and all of these town and village boards IDA are used to people coming to town saying I am going to do so much for you, not what are you going to do for me. Many years ago when you people were children, I was on the board in Schuylerville A gentleman came to our board and wanted to convert the Victory Paper Mill to senior citizen housing. The first thing he was going to have to do was put in sewer, then water, oh and then give him a \$3 million grant. So, everybody is coming to town with an idea. This amount of people are very close to this project and it would affect me as much as anybody here. I want to see how this plays out a little bit. I would like to say this. The IDA, I don't know any of them, but I am sure that they wouldn't be on that board if they weren't concerned citizens and normal ordinary working people like the rest of us, and , for the moment, I will give them the benefit of the doubt that they are going to do their best for us.

Katie deGroot: Thank you. We will keep that thought in our hearts.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION by Councilman Middleton, Seconded by Councilwoman Mullen to adjourn the meeting at 8:05 pm **ALL AYES**

Elizabeth O'Leary, Deputy Town Clerk

Dated February 22, 2022

