

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF FORT EDWARD TOWN BOARD MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, APRIL 8, 2019 AT TOWN HALL COMMENCING AT 7:00PM

Supervisor Middleton called the meeting to order at 7:00pm

PRESENT: Supervisor Middleton
Councilman Orsini
Councilwoman Mullen
Councilman Fisher

ABSENT: Councilman Mercier

OTHERS PRESENT: Gwendolyn Craig (The Post Star), Brian Brockway, Chuck Bump, Katie DeGroot, Chris Krahling (Ag.Stewardship Assoc.), Elizabeth O’Leary, Todd Humiston, Nick Depew and Town Attorney Donald Boyajian, Jr.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MOTION by Councilman Fisher, Seconded by Councilman Orsini to approve the minutes of the meeting of March 11, 2019 **ALL AYES**

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

APPROVAL OF BILLS: MOTION by Councilman Orsini, Seconded by Councilman Fisher to approve Abstract #4 in the amount of \$38,740.62 **ALL AYES**

ABSTRACT #4

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| GENERAL A: 8174-8176,8184-8216 | \$17,049.27 |
| GENERAL B: 8217-8224 | \$ 2,744.30 |
| HIGHWAY: 8225-8240 | \$13,221.86 |
| MUNICIPAL: 8177,8241-8247 | \$ 2,019.98 |
| SPECIAL LIGHTING: 8178-8179,8248-8250 | \$ 2,834.17 |
| SPECIAL WATER: 8180-8181,8251-8255 | \$ 482.49 |
| SPECIAL WATER 2: 8182-8183,8256-8257 | \$ 388.55 |

TOTAL: \$38,740.62

BUSINESS:

Chris Krahling
Agricultural Stewardship Association

Chris Krahling: I am with the Agricultural Stewardship Association; we are a land trust with

offices in the Village of Greenwich. Our focus is farmland protection and conservation both in Washington and Rensselaer County. The main tool that we use for farmland conservation is a conservation easement that is placed on active farmland that restricts or prohibits incompatible subdivision with the primary focus of making sure that farmland is available to be farmed in the future. One of the programs we use is through the State Department of Agriculture & Markets referred to as the PDR Program or Purchase of Development Rights Program. It has been moved to a bi-annual program, every 2 years they open up a round of applications and 1 of the applications that we submitted this past year was actually awarded to the Simply Grazin' parcel. One of the requirements of the grant application is a letter of support from the town where the farm is located. I am here to request a letter of support from the town for the Depew property which is a 57 acre parcel which is part of a larger application we will be submitting in conjunction with 200 acres in Argyle. This particular grant program is a 1 time pot of funds that the State has opened up and is administered the same way as the standard PDR Program but it's called the Dairy Transitions Grant Program. It is specifically for dairy operations that are going through some sort of operational transition. It's the State's way of recognizing the dairy crisis right now that farmers are experiencing. The State has allocated \$30,000,000.00 statewide for the grant program so each region has \$5,700,000.00. As long as applications meet criteria they will start awarding the grants until the money runs out.

Supervisor Middleton: What would be our region? How big is it?

Chris Krahling: It's the largest geographic region, Region 5. It includes Counties of Rensselaer, Washington, Essex, St. Lawrence, Herkimer, Otsego, Montgomery, Sullivan, Greene and Albany. The positive to that is you are encompassing a lot of the Catskills and Adirondacks. We only work in a 2 county area and all totaled we now have 131 easements on just shy of 22,000 acres and probably half of which has been awarded on State funds. There is no other involvement on behalf of the Town aside from endorsing the letter of support to submit the application.

Supervisor Middleton: Unlike some of the other lands that we have had in the Town, this will still remain on the tax roll correct?

Chris Krahling: Correct, conservation easements still are private property, they do not come off the tax rolls and it is the Town Assessor's sole discretion to assess according to the current use value. New York State does however have a property tax credit for any easements where there is a donated portion of value if the easement is donated outright or if it is a bargain sale easement, meaning if there is some value of the easement that is left on the table where the landowners are not being paid it is deemed a charitable contribution so NYS has a property tax credit that will credit the landowners 25% of the Town, County and School Taxes that are paid on that property. That money comes directly from the State Environmental Protection Fund it does not come from the School District, the municipality or the county.

MOTION by Councilman Orsini, Seconded by Councilman Fisher to authorize the Supervisor to sign a letter of support for the Depew Property to apply for a grant with the Agricultural Stewardship Association for a conservation easement **ALL AYES**

Supervisor Middleton: We have a letter from the Historic Hudson-Hoosick Rivers Partnership requesting the Town become a member for a fee of \$200.00.

Councilman Orsini: It is a beneficial partnership; they are having their May meeting at the Visitors Center. They are getting grant money now so there is a possibility for not-for-profits such as the Visitors Center to be eligible for grant money. I think it's a worthwhile organization; it stretches from southern Saratoga to whoever wants to be involved. They are an active group.

MOTION by Councilman Orsini, Seconded by Councilman Fisher to join the Historic Hudson-Hoosick Rivers Partnership for a fee of \$200.00 **ALL AYES**

Supervisor Middleton: We also have a letter from Katie DeGroot regarding street sweeping on DeGroot Rd.

Katie DeGroot: I believe it was an unfortunate interaction on a day when I feel the sweeping could have been put off for a day when it was rainy. It was like a huge sand storm coming down the road and I have a video. Unfortunately the interaction was not very nice on either end and I will make apologies for my end and I would hope to hear an apology from the other end. They knew exactly why I was coming to the truck because it was so obvious what was going on. Last year they waited until it rained and the road was swept and it wasn't an issue at all. I know there are a lot of miles of road to be done it just seems like maybe there was a road with a tenth of the dirt that could have been done that day. I apologize if I was obnoxious but the whole thing was kind of obnoxious.

Supervisor Middleton: Elise Stefanik is putting on a presentation for the Northern Border Regional Commission regarding grants at the Park Theater in Glens Falls and Aimee and I will be attending because one of the categories deals with economic development.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Brian Brockway: We have a dumping issue going on with a couple different items. Cary Rd. had several garbage bags full of hay; they also had them on Woodard Rd. I got a call this morning for a hot tub on Anthony Rd. There have been several tires throughout the town as well that we are picking up and disposing of at our cost.

Supervisor Middleton: Unfortunately I think it's because it's harder to get rid of stuff.

Katie DeGroot: Is it just hay in the bags?

Brian Brockway: Yes, it's just hay; we had 8 bags last week. What it looks like to me is that someone has rabbits or something and they don't have a place to dispose it.

Councilman Orsini: The New Yorker magazine had an article about everyone getting rid of recycling and the only municipality that they brought up that was getting rid of recycling was Fort Edward; a small municipality in Upstate NY. It was a decent article and it did point out that we are all in the same boat due to China not taking it right now.

Supervisor Middleton: I forwarded correspondence from the Mayor, the Village feels we have Town residents putting recycling in the Village bins. He is asking the Town to pay \$700.00/month to offset some of the costs. My only concern is if we start doing that it will open the flood gates for everyone in the Town to start bringing it there and it will be twice as full?

Councilman Orsini: I talked to Mike Glass who serves on the Fort Edward LDC that owns the Train Station. He is a manager at Waste management and I talked to him because I wanted to find out if they are actually recycling it or just throwing it away. He said no they do not take it to the burn plant. He suggested getting a separate bin for corrugated cardboard because you get a little money back from it because it's sellable. He also suggested having someone police the bins 2 days a week.

Supervisor Middleton: The only downside I see is people not wanting to separate it. I was out front today with Elizabeth and a resident said she wouldn't separate her stuff.

Elizabeth O'Leary: When Town residents ask me if they can use the place out back to recycle I tell them no and give them the hours and days at the Transfer Stations.

Chuck Bump: Hiram Hollow is opening again this week or next.

Donald Boyajian, Jr.: Get a draft agreement from the Village to review at the next meeting.

RESOLUTIONS:

RESOLUTION NUMBER 12 OF 2019

MOTION BY COUNCILMAN FISHER

SECONDED BY COUNCILWOMAN MULLEN

WHEREAS, the Fort Edward Town Board does hereby approve the Highway Superintendent, Brian Brockway, to attend the Association of Town's Highway School held in Ithaca, New York.

DATED: April 8, 2019

VOTE: Councilman Orsini - AYE
Councilman Mercier - ABSENT
Councilwoman Mullen - AYE
Councilman Fisher - AYE
Supervisor Middleton - AYE

RESOLUTION NUMBER 13 OF 2019

MOTION BY COUNCILMAN ORSINI

SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN FISHER

WHEREAS, the Historic Hudson-Hoosick Rivers Partnership is an entity formed of local municipalities, county, state, and federal agencies and not-for-profit community organizations which was created by New York State Legislation in 2006 and 2009 which evolved into a nonprofit organization;

WHEREAS, the mission of the Historic Hudson-Hoosick Rivers Partnership is to preserve, enhance, and develop the historic, agricultural, scenic, natural and recreational resources and the significant waterways within the Partnership region;

WHEREAS, the Partnership advances collaborative projects with non-profit and governmental entities with an emphasis on both agricultural and open space protection, economic and tourism development, and the protection and interpretation of our natural and cultural heritage;

WHEREAS, the Town of Fort Edward shares the Partnership's goals and supports fostering collaborative approaches to preserve a landscape supporting the historic, cultural and environmental assets of the upper Hudson Valley watershed, to protect its traditional land uses and environmental quality and to develop the economic potential of heritage and outdoor recreational tourism; and

WHEREAS, the Historic Hudson-Hoosick Rivers Partnership has invited the Town of Fort Edward to become a member.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Town of Fort Edward Town Board voted in favor, at a regularly scheduled meeting held on Monday, April 8, 2019, to join the Historic Hudson-Hoosick Rivers Partnership and direct Supervisor Terry Middleton or Deputy Supervisor Neal Orsini to membership and Board meetings of the partnership.

DATED: April 8, 2019

VOTE: Councilman Orsini - AYE
Councilman Mercier - ABSENT
Councilwoman Mullen - AYE
Councilman Fisher - AYE
Supervisor Middleton – AYE

Aimee Mahoney, Town Clerk
Town of Fort Edward

MOTION by Councilman Fisher, Seconded by Councilwoman Mullen to enter into executive session at 7:26pm to discuss pending litigation **ALL AYES**

MOTION by Councilman Fisher, Seconded by Councilman Orsini to come out of executive session at 7:53pm **ALL AYES**

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION by Councilman Fisher, Seconded by Councilman Orsini to adjourn the meeting at 7:54pm **ALL AYES**

DATED: April 10, 2019

Aimee Mahoney, Town Clerk