

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF FORT EDWARD TOWN BOARD MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2022 AT TOWN HALL COMMENCING AT 7:00 P.M.**

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

Pledge of Allegiance

**PRESENT:** Supervisor Fisher  
Councilman Middleton  
Councilwoman Collier  
Councilman Suprenant  
Councilwoman Mullen

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Harrison Downs, Steve Davie, Roseanne Lemery, Katie DeGroot, Therese Gillis, Peter Ives, Melanie Dickinson, Mike Dickinson, Brian Brockway, Nasrene Haj and Town Clerk Aimee Mahoney

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MOTION** by Councilwoman Mullen, Seconded by Councilwoman Collier to approve the minutes of the public hearing & regular meeting of June 13, 2022 **ALL AYES**

**APPROVAL OF REPORTS: MOTION** by Councilman Middleton, Seconded by Councilman Suprenant to approve the reports of the Town Clerk monthly, Town Justice, Building Inspector, Highway, Supervisor, Dog Control Officer & Assessor as submitted **ALL AYES**

**APPROVAL OF BILLS: MOTION** by Councilman Middleton, Seconded by Councilwoman Collier to approve Abstract #7 in the amount of \$41,409.96 **ALL AYES**

**ABSTRACT #7**

<b>GENERAL A: 10855-10860,10870-10893</b>	<b>\$19,396.98</b>
<b>GENERAL B: 10894-10903</b>	<b>\$ 1,027.00</b>
<b>HIGHWAY: 10904-10914</b>	<b>\$14,823.71</b>
<b>MUNICIPAL: 10861,10915-10918</b>	<b>\$ 1,754.14</b>
<b>SPECIAL LIGHTING: 10862-10865,10919</b>	<b>\$ 3,114.76</b>
<b>SPECIAL WATER: 10866-10868,10921-10926</b>	<b>\$ 136.26</b>
<b>SPECIAL WATER 2: 10869,10927 (VOID 10920)</b>	<b>\$ 1,157.11</b>

**TOTAL: \$41,409.96**

**BUSINESS:**

**Supervisor Fisher:** We have a letter from Paul Mercier notifying the Board of his retirement on October 14, 2022. We would like to thank Paul for his many years of service with the Highway Department.

**MOTION** by Councilman Middleton, Seconded by Councilwoman Mullen to accept Paul Mercier's retirement from the Town of Fort Edward Highway Department effective October 14, 2022 **ALL AYES**

**Supervisor Fisher:** Carrie Woerner did notify us that she was able to get a \$40,000.00 Town Planning Grant. We haven't received all the official information yet but we did send a copy to Mike Dickinson. We figured the Promote Fort Edward group could utilize that for planning.

**Katie DeGroot:** Isn't that for the Town and the Village?

**Supervisor Fisher:** Yes

**Katie DeGroot:** Is there going to be a discussion on the Town Board about how to use it?

**Supervisor Fisher:** Like I said, we do not have all the official paperwork yet we are just letting everyone know that she was able to secure the funds.

**Katie DeGroot:** Can it go to a private group?

**Supervisor Fisher:** The Town will control the grant, we have done many studies but this is something that came up when Carrie came here.

**Katie DeGroot:** Is the charrette different from Town planning that you've done before? Where you invite all the different people in to talk about what they would like to see in Fort Edward.

**Councilman Middleton:** That's been done in the past.

**Katie DeGroot:** When was the last time it was done?

**Councilman Suprenant:** 2008 or 2009

**Katie DeGroot:** Since it was 12 years ago you might want to consider doing something like that again. I know that Carrie Culhane said that she could facilitate it for a reasonable amount of money. It might be helpful to have everyone that is interested talking to each other. I would hate to have it just centered in the Village; we need to involve the grasslands, the school and maybe a farmer.

**Therese Gillis:** I think Promote Fort Edward represents both the Town and the Village.

**Supervisor Fisher:** Therese, I talked to the Mayor about Sally's Trail and he spoke with Joseph Maloney from the Canal Corp. and they indicated that they are not doing any new trails because they don't have enough employees. They are having a hard time keeping up with the trails they have now.

**Therese Gillis:** I just heard from Jackie Schillinger today. There was a meeting with the Canal Corp. Monday morning that I'm pretty sure Joseph Maloney was at and Jackie Schillinger today

did get in touch with me and said that she owes me a call, she has no updates yet but was hoping to have more information for me and that she is still working on it. I explained to her that Monday night we had a Promote Fort Edward meeting and tonight was the Town Board meeting. I feel that indicates that the answer is not no. What they are trying to do is put me in contact with the right people at the Canal Corp to make this happen. Until I get a definite answer back from her; what I did since our last meeting was send a letter off to her requesting designation of this trail along with the signed petitions and at that time I did feel that I had the support of the Town Board to have this happen. I had spoken with Dave O'Brien regarding it and that maybe this could be a duo fold purpose in that we could maintain this recreational area alongside a water/septic line that's going to go there. The water and sewer doesn't affect sally's trail.

**Supervisor Fisher:** The big hang up right now according to the Village and like we said before the Town was going to do nothing until the Village asked us seeing as it's in the Village and it's Canal Corp. property. The Mayor's official response to me was Canal Corp. doesn't have the employees and they are not going to designate any new trails because they can't maintain the ones they have.

**Therese Gillis:** I think that we can move that further along.

**Councilman Middleton:** I question that because Lock 7 always used to be open and people walked and drove in there and fished and now they lock it every night.

**Therese Gillis:** You don't feel that you can support this as a Town Board?

**Supervisor Fisher:** Like I said we were waiting for the Village, it's in the Village for the third time, and the Mayor officially got back to me with what I just told you and that's how it stands right now. It's a moot point if they are saying we are not doing any more trails because we don't have enough employees.

**Therese Gillis:** It was my understanding that you were going to put together a letter as a result of the last meeting so I misunderstood that. I thought that you thought that 100 signatures on a petition made the constituents in the Village's voices heard but I can certainly see if I can get more. I think where this is coming from is we lost access and it was not a designated trail but we lost access to a walking path that went down to Lock 8 so in February when I started discussions with Canal Corp. because there was no other input assisting me from anywhere else they understood that it was access and that residents in the Town and Village enjoyed that walkway. So I told them that I won't continue to argue the fact that I think you should put a bridge over the wharf that was left in there that was supposed to come out but can we go the other direction. They understood that so I sat down personally in 2 meetings with Canal Corp. and then when I talked to people in the Village everyone misses that walkway that we used to have accessible to us. Since this has been recognized in Washington DC I think it's worth fighting for with or without the Town support.

**Councilman Suprenant:** Back in 2009 we submitted our ideas to National Resource Damage Assessment and part of that was for them to open that trail back up but GE has done nothing.

**Therese Gillis:** Because that happened, when these discussions have taken place they understood what was sacrificed by the Town & Village residents.

**Councilman Middleton:** The one thing that happened Therese is that since Canal Corp. has been re-taken over Mitch has had meetings with them and 3 years ago we went down there and they said the Town never even met with them. You are dealing with people that really don't care about up here. I sat in a meeting down there with Mitch, Tim and Carrie Woerner and they said we don't know anything about this.

**Supervisor Fisher:** The first step would be to get Canal Corp. to say yes, we will designate this as a trail but they told the Mayor that they are not going to do that.

**Councilman Suprenant:** I don't see what the big deal is in taking down the gate that's all covered in grass.

**Therese Gillis:** They won't go that way because of the wharf.

**Councilman Suprenant:** Boaters go there all the time from Lock 8 Way, they can walk all the way to that gate and then they have to turn around and go back but the people from the Village can't access it from this end.

**Katie DeGroot:** Then it sounds like we should go to the Village.

**Therese Gillis:** No, I have not gotten a response from the Village.

**Suprenant Fisher:** The Mayor did reach out to Canal Corp. and that's what they told him.

**Katie DeGroot:** Would it be a liability to have volunteers?

**Councilman Middleton:** The difference now compared to when everyone walked on it is that the Canal system used to have operators at least 2 shifts until 11:00pm and when the Canal was really going it has 3 shifts. Now every lock has a gate and it's closed at 4:30pm.

**Therese Gillis:** But the direction that we are going has no gate and it has been mowed and maintained for 25 years and they are still mowing it.

**Supervisor Fisher:** Talk to Joe Maloney again.

**Councilman Middleton:** Right now no one is saying you can't walk on it right?

**Therese Gillis:** No, it's public access and it's mowed, it's open to be able to walk on it and use. It was proposed to me by a Canal Corp. employee to get it as a designated trail because part of the problem with opening it back up to Lock 8 is that wasn't really a designated trail so to try to get that access back it was not designated so that is the key term, fight, proposal. It would be helpful if I had an endorsement from the Town and the Village that they would like to see that as

public access for the Town & Village residents but if you feel you can't do that then you can't. I will move forward from there.

**Katie DeGroot:** Carrie Woerner is coming on the 25<sup>th</sup> to meet with Promote Fort Edward at Slickfin at 6:30pm; I am hoping you will come. I am not quite sure about the parameters of that grant and would like to know more about it. I reached out to Sarah Idleman from Greenwich because she already went through that and I went to that charrette out of curiosity. I think it's important for the Town & Village to get together on what they would like to see. We do have a list of things that we are going to approach her about. My husband kayaked from our house all the way up around Rogers Island and back down and it was my understanding that the Town owned part of Rogers Island but it's just the Village?

**Councilman Suprenant:** It is owned by the Town and Village from the trestle down.

**Katie DeGroot:** Does the Idle Hour rent a building there?

**Supervisor Fisher:** No, the Idle Hour owns 9 acres.

**Supervisor Suprenant:** The Visitors Center is owned by the Town.

**Therese Gillis:** Is there a public launch at the Visitors Center? Ed Carpenter said at the Village Board meeting that there was a dock for the Visitors Center.

**Supervisor Suprenant:** There is no launch but there is a dock right behind the wall with steps that go down to it. Last I knew it was there; Canal Corp. usually puts it in.

**Therese Gillis:** It's not there, I was there last weekend and there is just a dilapidated piece of lumber that could have been a dock and if there is a dock there then they should advertise it.

**Councilman Middleton:** It's usually a plastic/poly dock, maybe they haven't put it in yet.

**Katie DeGroot:** Since the island is owned by the Town & Village do you have the same rules about what can happen on the island like camping for example.

**Councilman Suprenant:** No camping.

**Katie DeGroot:** What about glamping? What if a private person wanted to give you guys money to have a camping service there and pay the Town & Village to run something like they have done in Schuylerville?

**Supervisor Fisher:** The Rogers Island Heritage Development Alliance (RIHDA) controls and manages what goes on there; they have re-enactments and events like that.

**Katie DeGroot:** Do they stay over for the re-enactments?

**Councilman Suprenant:** Yes

**Katie DeGroot:** So they camp?

**Councilman Suprenant:** Yes in the Visitors Center parking lot.

**Katie DeGroot:** Schuylerville has very fancy container cabins to stay in for \$299.99/night. They are very nice and totally moveable.

**Nasrene Haj:** So to confirm, the reason that camping can't happen on the island is because the Village is part of the ownership but if it's outside of the Village lines, camping is allowed or you can't in the Town either?

**Councilman Suprenant:** If you have someone that is willing to invest some money we will sell them the end of the island for \$100,000.00 and they can do whatever they want with it.

**Katie DeGroot:** If someone wanted to pull over and camp on the side of the road in the Town of Fort Edward is it legal? I know they said it is not legal in the Village.

**Supervisor Fisher:** We are not a campground, I am not saying people don't do it but that doesn't mean it's legal.

**Nasrene Haj:** There is nowhere to stay in Fort Edward if you are passing through on a bike. If we think about how we bring people to spend a night in Fort Edward and do things in the business district and take advantage of our businesses what are the options? There are a lot of people that do ride their bikes for long distances and camp overnight in different places. That is why we are asking if there is a place like that that wouldn't be on private land and wouldn't interfere and is in the Town. Would they get in trouble for doing that?

**Katie DeGroot:** I walk my dog at the Hudson Crossing Park and right next to the locks there are long distance bikers with their tents on Canal Corp. property.

**Councilman Suprenant:** I would talk to Ed Carpenter about the camping possibilities.

**Therese Gillis:** We are still working on an updated F.O.I.L. from IDA because Hughes Energy and Twin Bridges have put an application in at Eco Park Planned Development District (PDD) in Halfmoon and is going to the planning board in 2 weeks. My interjection at this point is for anyone who that Hughes Energy didn't mean garbage it's actually moving in together at Twin Bridges. This has made our group HOTH to inform the residents of where this might be going; we are not anti-development of Canalside Energy Park by any means. We understand that has got to develop but we are concerned that if Hughes Energy might be a proposed entity there they just moved forward with an application for Halfmoon. We have not been able to obtain an updated F.O.I.L. since February; we did get a recent F.O.I.L. that was really just a copy of the old F.O.I.L.

**Councilman Middleton:** Have you been to a County meeting? There are several Supervisors' that sit on the IDA at the County and you could definitely ask the question there. I have been

reading minutes and I haven't seen anything where Hughes Energy has even been mentioned since this winter.

**Therese Gillis:** Maybe it won't matter to the Town & Village Boards if garbage ends up coming to Canalside Energy Park and if it doesn't then it just becomes my problem because it's in my front yard but that's what HOTH is all about.

**Supervisor Fisher:** I have been to every meeting at the County and nothing has been talked about regarding Hughes Energy.

**Therese Gillis:** On the IDA's application for their water and sewer grant is Hughes Energy. I have that documented information out of the F.O.I.L. so I find that concerning that they are trying to get 400,000 gallons of water into our water and septic because that is a lot more than what WL Plastics proposed and in the last IDA meeting they did talk about previous companies coming in there and reasons why they didn't need that much. Is Canalside Energy Park just the dewatering facility property and is there property still around it that's owned by other corporations?

**Councilman Middleton:** Yes, from the bridge up north all the way down there are several different owners.

**Katie DeGroot:** So DA Collins doesn't own anything around it?

**Councilman Middleton:** They most certainly do.

**Supervisor Fisher:** The solar project at the old landfill will begin at the end of the month.

**Katie DeGroot:** What about the business that came in that wanted to buy the lease?

**Supervisor Fisher:** We looked into it and it had never been done with a municipality before and we weren't going to be the first.

**Katie DeGroot:** The lines that are going through, has that started?

**Supervisor Fisher:** Yes they started up north.

**Therese Gillis:** Is there a map of that?

**Councilman Middleton:** It is going to follow the rail, if you go the Champlain Hudson Power Express website they have a map.

**Therese Gillis:** What does it do when it gets to the river?

**Councilman Suprenant:** It goes underneath.

**Therese Gillis:** I have one Town constituent who would like to see a copy of the East St. bridge inspection.

**Brian Brockway:** Contact DOT, that is who I sent the pictures to. (Contact information given)

**Brian Brockway:** We have 2 roads still closed; North River Road is closed because of all the wires that are down, the trees are all off the road to make a way for National Grid to get through. It took them 3 hours to extricate that woman with the tree on her house, she has no broken bones and is going to be okay. From Glen Rd. south got hit bad. Fort Miller Rd. is still closed as well for the same reasons. 2 telephone poles are down in Fort Miller Park on the basketball court. The door is blown in on the Fort Miller Barn. We need to get the barn closed up somehow so that we don't have anyone inside.

**Councilman Middleton:** Put a call in to the insurance company and report the damage and also the telephone poles because I believe we insure those now as well.

**Peter Ives:** Sounds like an insurance claim to me.

**Councilman Middleton:** Can a letter be sent to GE asking if that is the final product up there because they are not doing a good job of keeping the property up.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION** by Councilman Middleton, Seconded by Councilwoman Mullen to adjourn the meeting at 8:13pm **ALL AYES**

Dated: July 15, 2022

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Aimee Mahoney, Town Clerk



