

**MINUTES OF THE TOWN BOARD OF THE TOWN OF FORT EDWARD PUBLIC HEARING & REGULAR MEETING HELD ON MONDAY, AUGUST 12, 2024 AT TOWN HALL COMMENCING AT 6:55 P.M.**

Supervisor Fisher opened the public hearing at 6:55pm

Pledge of Allegiance

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

**ABSENT:** Councilman Middleton

**OTHERS PRESENT:** David Earsing, Katie DeGroot, Kyle Cozzens, Frank Burkhardt, Theresa Rose, Brian Brockway, Joellen Bloodnick, Town Attorney Bill Nikas and Town Clerk Aimee Ives

The following notice was published in The Post Star:

**TOWN OF FORT EDWARD  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a public hearing will be held by the Town Board of the Town of Fort Edward on Monday, August 12, 2024 at 6:55 p.m. at Town Hall, 118 Broadway, Fort Edward, NY regarding the consideration of a proposed Local Law of the Town of Fort Edward for the year 2024 which would amend the Town Code by adding a local law entitled: “A Local Law Adding to Chapter 82 of the Town Code a New Article III Entitled “Importation, Disposal and/or Processing of Solid Waste Prohibited in the Town of Fort Edward”.

Any resident of the Town of Fort Edward is entitled to be heard upon said proposed Local Law at such public hearing. Copies of said proposed Local Law are available for review at the Town of Fort Edward Clerk’s office.

**Councilwoman Mullen:** I have a question regarding the comment about the sewer district from the County Planning Department. Do they not realize that the bio solids that leave the district go to the Town of Kingsbury?

**Supervisor Fisher:** I talked with the Planning Department and that is cleared up.

**Theresa Rose:** I get my water from Hudson Falls so if I want a sewer line would I ask Hudson Falls or Fort Edward?

**Supervisor Fisher:** That would be controlled by the sewer district and they are having a meeting tomorrow at 3:30pm at the Rogers Island Visitor's Center.

**MOTION** by Councilman Suprenant, Seconded by Councilwoman Mullen to close the public hearing at 7:00pm **ALL AYES**

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

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES: MOTION** by Councilman Suprenant, Seconded by Councilwoman Collier to approve the minutes of the meeting of July 8, 2024 **ALL AYES**

**APPROVAL OF REPORTS: MOTION** by Councilwoman Collier, Seconded by Councilwoman Mullen to approve the monthly reports of the Town Clerk, Town Justice, Building Inspector, Dog Control, Highway & Supervisor as submitted **ALL AYES**

**APPROVAL OF BILLS: MOTION** by Councilman Suprenant, Seconded by Councilwoman Mullen to approve Abstract #8 in the amount of \$106,879.42 **ALL AYES**

**ABSTRACT #8**

<b>GENERAL A – 12638-12649,12657-15693</b>	<b>\$22,203.90</b>
<b>GENERAL - 12694</b>	<b>\$ 44.00</b>
<b>HIGHWAY – 12695-12711</b>	<b>\$79,021.78</b>
<b>MUNICIPAL – 12650-12651,12712-12713</b>	<b>\$ 1,616.11</b>
<b>SPECIAL LIGHTING – 12652</b>	<b>\$ 2,759.59</b>
<b>SPECIAL WATER – 12653-12655,12714-12719</b>	<b>\$ 1,132.59</b>
<b>SPECIAL WATER 2 – 12656,12720-12721</b>	<b>\$ 101.45</b>

**TOTAL: \$106,879.42**

**BUSINESS:**

**Town Clerk's Office  
Security Window & Enclosure Quote**

**Supervisor Fisher:** We received 2 quotes to increase the security in the Town Clerk's Office; the project will enclose the front counter and install a window for transactions.

- Matt French - \$1,580.00
- New England Security Film - \$7,351.09 (Darkening all windows in the building)

**MOTION** by Councilman Suprenant, Seconded by Councilwoman Mullen to have Matt French install the security wall and window at a price of \$1,580.00 **ALL AYES**

**Highway Laptop  
Quote**

**Brian Brockway:** The current laptop that we have is running Windows 7 and it cannot be updated to accommodate the water program which utilizes Quickbooks. Storedtech provided a quote of \$957.61.

**MOTION** by Councilman Suprenant, Seconded by Councilwoman Collier to approve the purchase of a new laptop for the Highway Department at a price of \$957.61 **ALL AYES**

**420 Lower Main St.**

**Supervisor Fisher:** The Sheriff contacted Matt French regarding squatters in 420 Lower Main St. Matt suggests that the house be boarded up and tagged with signs. He is looking at how the Board would go about that.

**Councilman Suprenant:** Contact the owner and have him board it up and if he doesn't then the Town will do it and add the cost to his taxes.

**Bill Nikas:** How are you planning to get these squatters out?

**Councilman Suprenant:** If we can get in contact with the owner then he would have to serve them with eviction notices and if they don't leave then arrest them for trespassing.

**Attorney Nikas:** If they were originally a tenant by consent and stopped paying rent they would have to go through an eviction. If they initially went in there trespassing, that is a criminal situation and the Sheriff would get them out.

**Theresa Rose:** I bring my cardboard down to the recycling bins out back and there is garbage in there and it stinks. You have cameras; can you look and see who is throwing garbage in there?

**Councilman Suprenant:** Next time you see garbage in there, report it and they can review the cameras with the Sheriff's Dept. and find out who is doing it.

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 12 OF 2024**

**MOTION BY COUNCILWOMAN COLLIER**

**SECONDED BY COUNCILWOMAN MULLEN**

**TITLE: RESOLUTION IN OPPOSITION TO THE CLOSURE OF THE GREAT MEADOW CORRECTIONAL FACILITY IN THE TOWN OF FORT ANN.**

**WHEREAS**, the Governor of New York has announced the closure of the Great Meadow Correctional Facility in the Town of Fort Ann, and

**WHEREAS**, the closure of the facility is currently slated for November 6, 2024, and

**WHEREAS**, the Great Meadow Correctional Facility is currently the top employer in Washington County with an estimate of 560 in its employ who are responsible for the operation of a correctional facility with a capacity of 1,595 inmates, and

**WHEREAS**, the economic impact of such a closure is not merely to the Town of Fort Ann and Washington County, but to the other local municipalities, surrounding region, local school districts and local businesses that currently support the facility and staff, and

**WHEREAS**, the facility when abandoned will cause an additional blight on the local region due to the State's lack of planning on any future use of the facility, which will sit abandoned, unmaintained, and deteriorating as have other facilities previously operated by the State, and

**WHEREAS**, Great Meadow has one of the only full mental health facilities as well as an intermediate level care facility and the effect of eliminating the availability of these mental health resources will be harmful to and dangerous for not only those individuals who must now be distributed to facilities without this level of support but as well as those entering the system who would be transferred to Great Meadow to assist with their personal needs, and

**WHEREAS**, Great Meadow's Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) is a state of the art, self-contained unit with all housing, treatment classrooms, and recreational facilities and including 40 BHU beds, 102 Intermediate Care Program beds, 6 Residential Care Treatment Program beds capable of 1:1 suicide watches, and 8 over-flow dorm style beds, and

**WHEREAS**, there is currently a statewide shortage of both BHU and ICP beds for incarcerated individuals in need, closure of Great Meadow will leave no facilities for care for individuals in crisis, and

**WHEREAS**, abandoning this BHU capability demonstrates a callous disregard for the mental health needs of incarcerated individuals and greatly diminishes their chances of returning to a safe, productive life after incarceration, and

**WHEREAS**, in the past (5) years nearly \$200 million in capital improvements to Great Meadow have been undertaken including a new facility powerhouse with a new boiler totaling \$14 million, the rehabilitation of infrastructure plumbing and individual cell plumbing in 1,168 cells in A, B, C, and D Blocks, a new elevator in the Behavioral Health Unit, upgrades to the education building (Building 9) including new windows and HVAC totaling \$15 million, a

perimeter wall upgrade and repair for \$11 million, a facility wide fire alarm upgrade totaling \$13 million, facility-wide CCTV system installation including 2300 cameras and related infrastructure, and an upgrade to the waste water treatment plant totaling over \$3.1 million, and

**WHEREAS**, Washington Correctional and H Block (State Police Forensic Lab) is dependent on Great Meadow for their power supply, heating system, and sewer infrastructure, and

**WHEREAS**, the decision to close the facility is due to the inaction of the State to respond to long-known staffing, and operational concerns presented over the past several years, and

**WHEREAS**, the County is already facing significant budget crisis due to the additional costs of State imposed unfunded mandates for Medicaid, increased employer Retirement contributions and social service programs.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Town Board of the Town of Fort Edward hereby states its opposition to the closure of the Great Meadow Correctional Facility, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, the closure of the Great Meadow Correctional Facility be reconsidered and in lieu of reconsideration be stayed until such time as a proper economic impact be prepared and reviewed and those impacted by the closure have proper and suitable time to review and consider any and all options that they may avail themselves to in order to plan for the safety, security and future prosperity of themselves and families, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Governor Hochul, Senators Stec and Ashby, Assemblymen Simpson, Woerner and Bendett along with the members of the NYS Commission of Corrections; Allen Riley; Yolanda Canty; and Elizabeth Gaynes.

**BUDGET IMPACT STATEMENT:** The closure of the Great Meadow Correctional Facility will impact significantly the (2) driving revenue sources for the County, namely Sales Tax and Property Taxes and imposes an undue burden on the remainder of the County residents.

DATED: August 12, 2024

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

**RESOLUTION NUMBER 13 OF 2024**

**MOTION BY COUNCILWOMAN COLLIER**

**SECONDED BY COUNCILMAN SUPRENANT**

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Fort Edward Lifeguard's have been receiving \$15.00/hr. for their work at the Fort Edward Community Pool for the past few years, and

**WHEREAS**, in order to keep employees at the Fort Edward Community Pool the salary needs to be increased.

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the Town Board of the Town of Fort Edward is raising the Lifeguard salary to \$16.50/hr. effective immediately.

Dated: August 12, 2024

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

**OTHER BUSINESS:**

**MOTION** by Councilman Suprenant, Seconded by Councilwoman Collier to approve Local Law #1 of 2024 **ALL AYES**

**Brian Brockway:** Update on the garbage truck: Cab & Chassis is built, Delurey is waiting for it. The body is in Michigan all built and when Delurey gets the cab & chassis then they will deliver the body to them.

**Councilman Suprenant:** You should ask if they can add a lift for the garbage cans.

**Attorney Nikas:** Regarding the funding application for Boralex, you will receive a filing notice from Boralex and that will start the 30 day clock to apply for the available funding. Chris Koenig and I can coordinate an application. Also, a Community Host Package will need to be negotiated as well as a road use agreement. The Grasslands Attorney specializes in this and has been very helpful.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

**Joellen Bloodnick:** I am concerned about stormwater runoff as a result of the Boralex Solar Project. The largest part of the project is going to be on property adjacent to mine and the slope is such so that all the stormwater runoff is going to run through my pastures.

**Attorney Nikas:** They have to file a stormwater plan.

**Joellen Bloodnick:** The stormwater plan that they gave me a copy of has silt fencing.

**Attorney Nikas:** The Town Engineer will be reviewing all stormwater plans for the Town of Fort Edward.

**Supervisor Fisher:** Boralex just submitted their application to ORES and probably will not get approval for a year.

**David Easing:** Gave the Board a parade update as well as informed them that Irving Tissue has agreed to donate \$3,500.00 for the fireworks display.

**Councilman Suprenant:** Contact Stewarts about a donation.

**Theresa Rose:** I am going to be replacing my porch; do I need to get a building permit?

**Supervisor Fisher:** Yes, a permit is needed.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION** by Councilman Suprenant, Seconded by Councilwoman Mullen to adjourn the meeting at 7:34pm **ALL AYES**

Dated: August 14, 2024

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Aimee Ives, Town Clerk