

August 15, 2017 Regular Meeting 6:00PM

PRESENT: Mayor Smith; Trustees LaChapelle, Austin and Watson; Chief Ernest Bassett; Attorney Erika Sellar Ryan; Karen Beckwith; Carol Greenough; SallyAnn Raino; Bryan Brooks; Steven St. Claire

Steven St. Claire asked if the tax exemption on the property located at 45 Poultney Street has been removed and why is a business allowed there without the property on the tax roll. He also asked if the property has been given water and why was a building permit issued for this property that is not on the tax roll. He stated that if the Village had condemned the building before any improvements were made, NYS Dept. of Environmental Conservation would have torn the building down and cleaned up the remaining property. He asked the Village Board to pass a local law stating that no business shall be conducted on property that is not on the tax roll. Mayor Smith stated that the building is already repaired and that the Village is not providing Water to this property because there is no recourse to collect an unpaid water bill without the property on the tax roll. Mayor Smith will review previous minutes regarding the request for the local law. Attorney Sellar Ryan stated that the Washington County Supervisors took a county wide vote to not put contaminated properties on the tax roll so as not to be part of the chain of title. There are also State and Federal liens on this property totaling over \$100,000.00.

Bryan Brooks asked if a decision has been made regarding the Whitehall Volunteer Fire Company's request to buy the property from the Village that the fire station sits on. He also requested to have a meeting with the Village Board, Town Board, Assessor and Whitehall Volunteer Fire Co. to discuss the Fire Company's goals and ways to save the taxpayers' money. Mayor Smith is willing to sell the property that the fire station sits on but not the parking lot, park or waterfront if it is legal to do so. Attorney Sellar Ryan feels the sale could be accomplish in a way that would make everyone happy. It was decided to hold a meeting with the Village Board, Town Board, Assessor and Whitehall Volunteer Fire Co. on August 29, 2017 at 6:00PM.

SallyAnn Raino had a letter of request from the Historic Preservation Commission to appoint Marie Gandron as a new member and to make changes to the Historic Preservation Law. Mayor Smith appointed Marie Gandron to the Historic Preservation Commission and stated that a public hearing would be needed regarding the changes to the law. Motion made by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee LaChapelle to hold a public hearing on Tuesday, September 19, 2017 at 6:00PM regarding proposed changes to the Historic Preservation Law, all voting in favor,

CARRIED

Motion made by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee Austin to approve the minutes of the July 18th meeting, all voting in favor,

CARRIED

LETTERS: Charter Communications submitted correspondence regarding programming changes. Whitehall Volunteer Fire Company submitted a request to purchase property that the firehouse sits on. Brian Brooks sent a letter regarding a response to his FOIL request. Allen Forestry submitted correspondence regarding timber sale with payment of \$4,281.34. American Legion Post 83 sent notification that they are renewing their liquor license. Mary Monty submitted a request for an adjustment to the sewer amount of her water/sewer bill because she had a hose split causing flooding in her cellar. Correspondence was received from Kenneth Bartholomew requesting the bushes next to the French machine guns in Riverside Park be trimmed to allow proper viewing of the monument. Motion made by Trustee LaChapelle, seconded by Trustee Watson to accept the correspondence and to place it on file, all voting in favor,

CARRIED

Motion made by Mayor Smith, seconded by Trustee Austin to adjust Mary Monty's sewer portion of her water/sewer bill equal to her average use, all voting in favor,

CARRIED

Mayor Smith reported on Deb Charpentier's previous request for an adjustment to her water/sewer bill. The antennae on her meter was defective and had to be replaced. Motion made by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee LaChapelle to adjust Deb Charpentier's bill with a credit of \$20.41 for water and \$64.41 for sewer, all voting in favor,

CARRIED

Trustee Austin will look into trimming the bushes in Riverside Park by the French machine guns.

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Mayor Smith presented a request from the Whitehall/Fort Ann Canal Trail Committee asking for a donation of \$500.00 to use as matching funds for a grant. Attorney Sellar Ryan advised that the Village cannot legally donate public funds.

BILLS: Motion made by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee Austin to approve payment of the abstract covering claims #119-177 totaling \$140,556.11, all voting in favor, CARRIED

Mayor Smith appointed Trustee LaChapelle as commissioner of Health, Buildings and Code/Zoning. Zoning Officer Peter Telisky requested working with Attorney Sellar Ryan to amend some local laws into one law making enforcement more streamlined. Motion made by Trustee LaChapelle, seconded by Mayor Smith to allow Peter Telisky to work with Attorney Sellar Ryan amending local laws with regards to property maintenance. A discussion took place with Trustee Watson asking to put a limit on how much is spent on this. Attorney Sellar Ryan stated that the current laws are antiquated and need to be more comprehensive by having one all encompassing law for property maintenance issues. Trustee Austin stated that we need a law that will get results. It was decided to table the motion for further discussion.

Trustee Watson reported that large trucks trying to get to Green Mountain Produce have taken down the signs on Maple Street and new signs need to be installed. He stated that a notice needs to be published in the paper notifying residents that it is illegal to turn the water shut offs. The shut offs are being turned and broken causing extra work for the Dept. of Public Works crew to repair.

Trustee LaChapelle asked if money was put away for replacement of the filters at the Water Treatment Plant. A Capital Reserve Fund needs to be established for this purpose. It will be looked into as the best way to establish an account for capital improvements.

Trustee Austin reported that she and her husband will pick up the brush at Boardman Street Cemetery. She asked if signs could be placed at the entrance to the cemetery stating that it is closed from dusk to dawn as a deterrent for vandalism. Attorney Sellar Ryan stated if the signs were in place, the Village has to be willing to enforce the closing of the cemetery from dusk to dawn.

Mayor Smith reported that he talked with the Nature Conservancy regarding the carbon credit at Pine Lake. Nature Conservancy will work with Allen Forestry to get an estimate of how much the Village could get for the carbon credits. Mayor Smith received a letter from George Armstrong regarding large tree limbs hanging over his house and driveway on Park Avenue. DPW Foreman Steven Brock will look into trimming the limbs or removing the tree. Mayor Smith talked with an Amish gentleman regarding the horse manure on the streets. The Amish are not receptive with using bags behind the horses as the bags tend to break. The Amish gentleman also stated that since the buggies do not have brakes, they cannot just stop the buggies to clean up the manure and have control of their horses. He will spread the word throughout the Amish community to avoid the side streets.

REPORTS: George Rockenstire submitted reports for the Water Treatment Plant and Wastewater Treatment Plant. July reports were received from Village Justice and Acting Village Justice. The Historic Preservation Commission submitted minutes of their June 30th meeting. A Compliance and Zoning report was received. Motion made by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee LaChapelle to accept and file the reports, all voting in favor, CARRIED

APPLICATIONS: Marawan Bakir submitted an application for the Police Department. Motion made by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee LaChapelle to accept the application and to place it on file, all voting in favor, CARRIED

Motion made by Trustee Watson, seconded by Trustee Austin to approve payment of \$16,435.00 to Arold Construction Co. Inc. for Contract #1 Part A, \$168,163.35 to Arold Construction Co. Inc. for Contract #1 Part B and \$32,092.50 to Environmental Design Partnership for engineering services for Sanitary Sewer System Rehabilitation and to authorize Mayor Smith to sign the payment applications, all voting in favor, CARRIED

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Chazen Companies submitted a copy of the application for grant funds to complete a comprehensive plan.

Motion made by Trustee LaChapelle, seconded by Trustee Watson to adjourn the meeting at 7:40PM, all voting in favor, CARRIED

Stephanie A. LaChapelle
Clerk-Treasurer