

**TOWN OF WHITEHALL
PUBLIC HEARING FOR LOCAL LAW #1 2023
PARTIAL EXEMPTION FOR VOLUNTEER FIRE AN AMBULANCE SERVICE WORKERS
AND REGULAR MEETING
57 SKENESBOROUGH DRIVE
WHITEHALL, NY 1887
7:00PM**

APRIL 19, 2023

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: John Rozell, Supervisor
David Hollister, Councilperson
Christopher Dudley, Councilperson
Stephanie Safka, Councilperson
Timothy Kingsley, Councilperson

OTHERS PRESENT: Patti Gordon, Town Clerk; Erika Seller-Ryan, Attorney; Louis D. Pratt II, Superintendent of Highways; Barbara Spoor, Angela Benson, Brock Fox, E.J. Conzola, Whitehall Times; Stanley Potwin.

Supervisor Rozell called the April 19, 2023 Town Board meeting to order at 7:00pm with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Immediately following the Pledge of Allegiance Supervisor Rozell called for a moment of Silence for Carol Greenough.

Supervisor Rozell called the Public Hearing on Local Law #1 of 2023 Partial Exemption of for Volunteer Fire and Ambulance Service Workers to order at 7:02.

Supervisor Rozell asked if anyone had any comments on Local Law #1 Of 2023.

Supervisor Rozell asked for a second time if anyone had any comments.

Supervisor Rozell asked a third and final time if anyone had any comments. No comments were made.

Supervisor Rozell closed the Public Hearing on Local Law #1 of 2023 at 7:03pm.

Supervisor Rozell opened the regular Town Board meeting at 7:03pm.

MOTION to act on Local Law #1 of 2023 to implement New York State Real Property Tax Law Section 466-a Partial Tax Exemption for Volunteer Fire and Ambulance Service Workers made by Councilperson Hollister and Seconded by Councilperson Safka.

ADOPTED 5 **AYES** **Rozell, Hollister, Dudley, Safka, Kingsley**
 0 **NAYS**

Bid Opening for Sciota Cemetery:

The Town received one bid for the mowing of Sciota Cemetery. The bid was from Champlain Valley Lawn Care for \$4,000. An ad was placed in the Whitehall Times 4/13/2023, the Town website and the Town Clerk's sign board.

MOTION to accept the bid from Champlain Valley Lawn Care for \$4,000.00 for the maintenance of Sciota Cemetery for the 2023 season made by Councilperson Hollister and Seconded by Councilperson Safka.

ADOPTED 5 **AYES** **Rozell, Hollister, Dudley**
 0 **NAYS**

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Barb Spoor gave the Town Board a petition to Digitize Whitehall. Supervisor Rozell stated that he has been looking into this and explained that there is a security issue with firewalls and streaming not to mention the cost would be significant to start up and it would be passed on to the taxpayers.

Angela Benson reapproached the Town Board and asked if they could continue using the Senior Center for their weekly meetings. They would like to use it on Mondays 3:45 to 5:30, Wednesdays 5:00 to 6:00 indefinitely and Saturday 10:00am to noon (6 weeks). Town Clerk Gordon is going to check with the Senior’s schedule to see if the request can be accommodated. Supervisor Rozell also suggested the possibility of using the Town meeting room.

Brock Fox addressed the Board and wanted to discuss the temporary cement plant on Ryder Road and if there was a possibility of it becoming permanent to bring jobs to the area. He also asked the Town Board why it does not have an actual Code Enforcement Officer for the Town. Supervisor Rozell explained it was only a temporary building and will be deconstructed at the end of the project. Supervisor Rozell and the Board members discussed the “code enforcement” issues the Town is having with the Code Enforcement Department at Washington County. The Board explained that just not anyone can be a code enforcement officer, there is a lot of education required for that the position and that the Town does not have anyone qualified to fill the position. Mr. Fox stated he would be looking into the requirements.

MOTION to approve the minutes from the March 19, 2023 Public Hearing and regular Town Board meeting made by Councilperson Safka and Seconded by Councilperson Dudley

ADOPTED **AYES** 5 **Rozell, Hollister, Dudley, Safka, Kingsley**
 NAYS 0

MONTHLY REPORTS

Town Recreation Report by Timothy Martindale – Written

-Councilperson Safka reported that the Rec Booster Club has been meeting monthly and the next schedule meeting will be May 10th @ 6:00pm at the Rec Center.

Town Dog Control Report by Kathy Hall – No Report

Town Compliance Report by Martin Rocque – Verbal

-Working on on-going litigation. Nothing else to report at this time but would like to remind everyone its spring time and to clean up their properties.

Town Clerk Report by Patti Gordon – Written

-Tax collection has been completed and reconciled with the County Treasurer.

Town Assessor Report by Roberta Stone – Written

Town Supervisor Report by John Rozell – Verbal

-The Town received a mobile home application. The application was incomplete and the Town cannot take any action on it at this time.

-The Town received two separate emails from two solar companies expressing an interest in solar projects in the Town of Whitehall. One is on County Route 12 and the other is on State Route 4 South of the Village. The Town opted into tax exemptions for solar and wind structures in the Town of Whitehall in 2014. Supervisor Rozell discussed with the Town Board possibly doing a moratorium or changing the current local law. Town Attorney Seller-Ryan suggested to just change the local law.

MOTION to schedule a Public Hearing to repeal Local Law #3 of 2014 concerning tax exemptions for qualified solar and wind energy structures in the Town of Whitehall made by Supervisor Rozell and Seconded by Councilperson Safka for May 17th, 2021 at 7:00pm.

ADOPTED **AYES** **5** **Rozell, Hollister, Dudley, Safka, Kingsley**
 NAYS **0**

Town Attorney Seller-Ryan suggested to do it in two steps:

-Repeal the current local law

-Do a new law updating the local law from 1991 with the new standards.

Currently the Planning Board has oversight and that may need to be amended as well.

Town Budget Officer and Transfers by Joel Carpenter – Written

Town Planning Board Report by Gregg Chappell – Written

Town Highway Report by Louis D. Pratt II – Written/Verbal

-CHIPS funds for the black top will hopefully stay flat this year.

-Black top has gone down approximately 415.00 per ton

-Culverts are down 23% from last year.

-Looking into using Bryne instead of sand.

-Docks will be going in in the next couple weeks.

-Looking into purchasing a MIG welder and would like the Board approval. It will cost approximately \$1246.00 from Hauns and it will come out of the A5132.4 budget line.

-The State changed the key on the wall for the power. They state has been contacted but they have not gotten back to us yet.

-Will be contacting the Village to have the water turned on on the wall. The water was shot off early last year due to a leaking valve.

There are three interns that will be working at the Highway garage.

MOTION to allow Superintendent of Highways Louis Pratt to purchase a MIG welder from Hauns for \$1246.00 made by Councilperson Hollister and Seconded by Councilperson Dudley

ADOPTED **AYES** **5** **Rozell, Hollister, Dudley, Safka, Kingsley**
 NAYS **0**

MOTION to approve the monthly reports made by Councilperson Hollister and Seconded by Councilperson Dudley.

ADOPTED **AYES** **5** **Rozell, Hollister, Dudley, Safka, Kingsley**
 NAYS **0**

BUSINESS TO DISCUSS:

Yearly insurance renewal contract w/ Northern

-Buildings went up 6% from last year

-Equipment went down because we lowered the value on truck #7 from \$200,000.00 to \$150,000.00.

MOTION to allow Supervisor Rozell to sign the statement of values/ renewal contract with Northern Insuring Agency made by Councilperson Safka and Seconded by Councilperson Hollister.

ADOPTED **AYES** **5** **Rozell, Hollister, Dudley, Safka, Kingsley**
 NAYS **0**

Skenesborough EMS came to the Town this fall for financial assistance. Supervisor Rozell had asked the Board if they would be in agreement if the Town gives \$2,500 toward the EMS this year as a one-time payment and next year, they could possibly put a line item in the budget for them. Supervisor Rozell also asked the Village of Whitehall and the two municipalities that utilize the Skenesborough EMS if they

would be willing to contribute \$2,500.00 as well. The Village recently agreed to contribute to the \$2,500 to the Skenesborough EMS which that enables the Town to use money from the B Fund which was marked to be used for the salary for the Heritage Director. The position of Heritage Director was eliminated in January of 2023 at the organizational meeting but the line item was left open with the funds incase it needed to be used if a new position were created.

MOTION to transfer \$2,500.00 from the B Fund to the Skenesborough Emergency Squad for providing a benefit for emergency services to the Town made by Councilperson Hollister Seconded by Councilperson Kingsley.

ADOPTED 5 **AYES** **Rozell, Hollister, Dudley, Safka, Kingsley**
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MOTION to approve park request for Horace Scott to use Skenesborough Park 7/14 and 7/15 for a 1960's class reunion made by Councilperson Hollister and Seconded by Councilperson Dudley.

ADOPTED 5 **AYES** **Rozell, Hollister, Dudley, Safka, Kingsley**
 0

MOTION to approve the Farmers Market in Skenesborough Park beginning 6/10/ to 10/10 1:00 to 4:00 made by Councilperson Hollister and Seconded by Councilperson Dudley.

ADOPTED 5 **AYES** **Rozell, Hollister, Dudley, Safka, Kingsley**
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The Town received a letter from Brian Brooks Sr. applying for the position of Urban Cultural Park Director and other related positions. Supervisor Rozell explained The Town did not actually employ anyone for this position, it was through the Village but the Town had a contract with the Village to contributed to the salary. This position was originally created because it was a condition of a grant which the term of said grant has expired. Supervisor Rozell will give the correspondence to the Historical Society; the Historical Society Board over sees the Museum at this time.

ABSTRACT #4 OF 2023

General Fund V/#1-24 \$ 6,142.76
Highway Fund V/#1-17 \$28,057.35

MOTION to approve the monthly vouchers made Councilperson Hollister and Seconded by Councilperson Safka.

ADOPTED 5 **AYES** **Rozell, Hollister, Dudley, Safka, Kingsley**
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Councilperson Kingsley addressed the Town Board concerning the Rec Committee Booster Club ideas. They would like to move the basketball courts to the tennis court area and would like some financial help from the Town to do it and they also were inquiring about the small dock area located on the bank of the Canal over near the Rec Center, they would like to possibly expand it so the kids could fish off from it. Supervisor Rozell stated that the dock does not belong to the Town and it is the property of the Canal Corporation and is on Canal Corporation property. Councilperson Safka stated as far as moving the basketball court, its going to cost approximately 10K to 15K to complete. The Board members and Highway Superintendent Pratt discussed possibly options for the project.

MOTION to go into Executive Session at 8:50pm for contract negotiations and hiring and firing of personnel made by Councilperson Hollister and Seconded by Councilperson Dudley.

ADOPTED 5 **AYES** **Rozell, Hollister, Dudley, Safka, Kingsley**
 0

MOTION to come out of Executive Session at 10:03 with no action taken made by Councilperson Hollister and Seconded by Councilperson Dudley.

ADOPTED **AYES** **5** **Rozell, Hollister, Dudley, Safka, Kingsley**
 NAYS **0**

MOTION to adjourn the monthly Town Board meeting at 10:04pm made by Supervisor Rozell and Seconded by Councilperson Dudley.

ADOPTED **AYES** **5** **Rozell, Hollister, Dudley, Safka, Kingsley**
 NAYS **0**

Adjourned
Respectfully Submitted

Patti Gordon
Town Clerk