



## TOWN OF WILLSBORO

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## TOWN OF WILLSBORO

**PUBLIC HEARING  
TOWN BOARD MEETING  
WILLSBORO TOWN HALL  
February 8th 2023**

**ATTENDEES-** Patrick McCauliffe, Travis Crowningshield, Kyli Miller, Darren Darrah, Mark Bonfey, Victor Putnam, Peter Sowizdrzal, Jennifer Sowizdrzal, Shea Walker, Roger Sayward, Nicholas Chabert

**BOARD MEMBERS-** Steve Benway, Lorilee Sheehan, Lane Sayward, Scott Christian, Shaun Gilliland

**CALL TO ORDER at 6:30pm.**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**OPEN PUBLIC HEARING at 6:30pm.**

**ON LOCAL LAW FOR VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND EMS WORKERS  
PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION**

Gilliland spoke on the Tax exemption and gave a summary of the proposed property tax exemption for Fire Fighters and EMS personnel.

**PUBLIC COMMENT-**It was asked if this would be for the county and school tax and Gilliland stated each entity would have to pass this local law. It was also asked if the ambulance district was included in the town. Gilliland explained that if Willsboro passes it and Essex does not, it would only be given to the Willsboro property owners. Then Gilliland explained that all the taxing districts would be included in this. Sewer is a benefit district that is not taxed and if the town decided to make it for the water district, someone who was eligible would get this also. Example if they have a \$100,000.00 home, they would be taxed on \$90,000.00.

**CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING AT 6:37pm**

**OPEN REGULAR MEETING AT 6:38pm**

**REVIEW OF MINUTES-**JANUARY 4TH ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING AND JANUARY 11TH TOWN BOARD MEETING.

**SHEEHAN MADE THE MOTION TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES. SAYWARD  
SECONDED THE MOTION. All IN FAVOR.**

**SUPERVISOR REPORT-**  
**Correspondence-**  
**Town-**

-The Bouquet Foundation (Paine family) donated \$20,000 to the town of Willsboro as a private grant for the development of the Town of Willsboro Harbor Management Plan. This plan is an annex to the local waterfront redevelopment plan, which is currently in draft form at the State and has not been finalized yet.

-Salt/Sand shed has been a problem with the development to put it out to bid. The general municipal law requires that when you put it out to bid under the general municipal law you must have a separate design bid and construction bid. However, with pre-engineered buildings, you must determine what is design and what is construction, as these come pre-engineered with plans and then you also have concrete and ground work that must be designed by the pre-engineer. DPW County Engineers have helped the town with this and they are now getting ready to submit to the APA for a permit for the building with the design specs from Todd Hodgkins, the county civil engineer. This will allow the town to put a building that is over 40 feet tall. We originally released a bid and pulled it back because of this design/build issue.

-Awaiting the draft report from the engineers from SLR on the plan for the subsidence of the bank at Noblewood. Hopefully they will give us a plan that is not too expensive and can be done to protect the bank from falling. This was also financed through a state grant.

-The town was contacted by Krissy Gay from the Youth Commission that parents wanted to start a program that would essentially start youth golf with 3rd and 4th graders. They wanted to start with this group that was a small group and have a instructor/coach that would teach the fundamentals of golf at the golf course. The details of this are being put together by the Youth Commission and they will present it to the board. In the early stages they would start out on the Point soccer fields before going to the course.

### **County-**

-The governor's budget came out and it has a couple of items in it that Gilliland found to be disturbing. The first was FMAP- Federal Medicaid Aid Plan. This is the Federal government giving Medicaid money to counties. The States of New York and North Carolina are the only states in the country that make the county's pay for portions of Medicaid. All other states, the state picks up the bill. The counties have traditionally been paid for Medicaid expenses through these FMAP funds. The Governor has decided to hijack these funds and keep them for the state and pass those bills on to the counties. In Essex County the cost will be \$880,000.00 per year. Essex County cannot raise the tax rate above 2%, however this will give the county a 4% increase. The Association of Counties is going to fight this. The second issue of disturbance is one that the Association of County Treasurers, NYSAC and The Association of Towns is fighting is a proposal of a new law that when the county has a tax sale, when funds coming for a property from an auction that exceed the taxes owed, the state would require the county to return the money over the taxes owed to the delinquent owners.

**Sheehan made the motion to accept the Warrant and Supervisor's Report.**

**Benway seconded the motion.**

**Roll Call- Sheehan, Sayward, Christian, Benway, Gilliland**

**Ayes-5**

**Nyes-0**

### **Town Clerks Report-**

The clerk's office in the month of January took in \$5,248.20 Paying \$4.00 to NYS Ag and Markets. Decals took in \$50.00. We also took in \$1,985,433.76 from Property taxes and I have paid the Fire District \$279,900.00 and paid the town \$900,000.00. I have appointed a deputy clerk for 2023, Lilly Nolette. Lilly is a native to Willsboro and has been attending Russell Sage College. She is a bright, young woman who brings a lot of enthusiasm and ideas for the future to the town hall. We both look forward to tax season winding down to be able to accomplish some of the projects we have planned.

**Benway made the motion to accept the Clerk's report. Sayward seconded the motion. All in favor.**

### **DPW-**

Travis Crowningshield has been working with Todd Hodgkins, Engineer from the County on the Salt and Sand building. Things seem to be going well and will put it out to bid as soon as the permit is issued. He also told us that the GIS system that we have been using for locating all the water shut offs, water/sewer lines and mains and culverts is a county license and it can only have a certain number of people on it. He has asked us to obtain our own license, this would cost approximately \$20. A month. Todd would still be able to assist us and this would allow Justin Drinkwine and Joseph Walsh to be able to locate and pin and add to the system, as Pat McCauliffe is the only one that can use it through the county permit. Crowningshield will bring the paperwork to Gilliland to get this license. The last month has been very busy for the Highway crew as we have had a lot of little snow storms. The sand pile is showing it.

March 8th is when the Highway Superintendent is going to Albany to lobby for CHIPS. Patrick McCauliffe stated it has been a very busy month. A new alternator switch was installed and both pumps are running in the sequence they are to run. This gave insight on another problem that was created, they believe that all the power surges that were coming from NYSEG has wreaked havoc on some of the electronics. The pressure transducer in the wet well failed and locked the entire plant down and they were unable to make water. It gave a low alarm level and there is a fail-safe built in that if the level is too low it will not let the pumps come on, to protect them. They were able to figure out what wires controlled that sensor and they unhooked it to make water until they could get a new transducer. The new transducer was installed and another problem arose. The control module that controls the flow meter on the main 6-inch line coming from the pumps also controls the calibration method for the pressure transducer that got knocked out by the power surge as well. The same guy, Mike from Emeric was able to get a new control modular and brought it up and installed it. Walsh is very savvy when it comes to programming and he was able to calibrate it. The pump house monitor has not worked since McCauliffe first started and randomly threw out numbers. It now tells exactly what the wet well levels are and it is transmitting the correct level to the control panel. Then the next week the mainline pressure transmitter engaging switch started to fail. They had trouble with it a few years ago. They were able to fix it and at the time they ordered a new higher tech and more capable transmitter and they were able to install that one. The new one gives them much more capability with a digital display. Disinfection by products is due next week. McCauliffe had a meeting with MJ Associates, Westec- the filter engineering company for the new water plant and Castor the suppliers of the filters with regards to the pilot study that needs to be done for DOH. We have not gotten

approval from DOH yet. We talked about the logistics of getting the trailer into the pump house with power to it. Mike Blanchard is going to come down and look at the power source. A 480 service is needed with 50 amps to plug the trailer into. Blanchard believes that the 480 is already in the building that can be jumped off from to set up a temporary service outside. We must provide water and a place to discharge the filter backwash from the pilot study as well as the finished water. We do already have SPEES from the water plant. We can legally discharge back to the lake if it goes through the filter bags. They are looking to start, pending DOH approval, the first week of March. McCauliffe will coordinate to have bleach delivered right before the study trailer arrives. They had 2 lines freeze and were able to get them fixed quickly. The sewer plant has been running very well. They did violate in January as suspected last meeting of the average daily flow. The average was about 90,000 a day and the permit is for 75,000. Every wastewater district also had this problem. The DMR report is due the 28th of February and Gilliland will have to sign due to the overage. There will not be any fines for this violation.

**AMBULANCE DISTRICT REPORT-** Shea Walker was here to report. New ambulance is arriving on Saturday to replace the 22-year-old ambulance. A new EMT is working in Willsboro to cover during the day. He will be in town Tuesday-Friday.

**YOUTH COMMISSION REPORT-** The youth commission report is in the council's packet.

**PARKS COMMISSION REPORT-** A good meeting last month. They are moving on with plan B, waiting on bids for the RFP for the playground. They have decided to move on to developing Hathaway Park on the Essex Road with a pavilion, bathrooms, ball fields, things that can be accomplished quickly. They have a meeting this month. One of the concerns that the Parks Commission has had is all the talk with the skating rink. Darrah stated realizes the weather has not cooperated and he does not know where the town stands with this and he has not been there personally nor does he know the mechanics of the rink. He asked the town where we go from here. He said that Westport seems to have a good program and wondered what they are doing that we are not. Crowningshield stated that the other towns have volunteers and it is a 2-inch water line to the rink and it must be responsible, trained volunteers to operate it. The town has flooded the rink 8 times in the last month and Monday-Friday the weather was not cold enough to make ice.

**Old Business-**

**Sheehan made the motion to approve the local Law #1 of 2023 Property Tax Exemption for volunteer firefighters and EMS workers. Christian seconded motion.**

**Roll Call- Sheehan, Sayward, Christian, Benway, Gilliland**

**Resolution Appointing Review Committee Members**

**Sayward made the motion to appoint these members of the Town Zoning Law Review Committee and to set focus on the following- Mark Bonfey (Vice-Chair), Win Belanger (Vice-Chair), Hannah Neilly (Secretary), John Sucharzewski, Andre**

**Klein, Pete Sowizdrzal, Anne Lincoln, Robert Sturgess (ex-official). Lane Sayward and Steve Benway and to set focus of the committee as follows:**

**1-improvements of processes for the functioning of the code, corrections of errors, classifications of boundaries, definitions, etc. for precision.**

**2- expansion or inclusion of laws/regulations laid down by the state since 2015, and**

**3- inclusion/expansion of technology areas that were not in extant in 2015. Ie: solar panels, charging stations.**

**4-review the draft local waterfront development plan and the current zoning law to ensure congruence.**

**Benway seconded the motion. All in Favor.**

**A motion was made to accept a \$20,000 grant from the Bouquet Foundation to be used against the Harbor Management Plan by Sayward. Seconded by Sheehan. Roll Call- Sheehan, Sayward, Christian, Benway, Gilliland**

**Ayes-5**

**Nyes-0**

**A motion was made to adopt the Town of Willsboro Parks Commission By-Laws approved by the parks commission in 2022 as officially the Town of Willsboro Parks commission By-Laws by Benway. Christian seconded the motion. Christian stated that it should be added that if a meeting is called, it will be within the town limits. All in Favor.**

**Christian Made the motion to authorize the Supervisor to sign the contract with the Heritage Society for the museum lease agreement for a term of 20 years at the cost of \$1.00 each year. Sheehan Seconded the motion. Benway asked if the Heritage Society was responsible for insurance on the contents. Darren Darrah, President of the Heritage Society stated the Heritage Society had their own insurance on the contents.**

**Roll call- Sheehan, Sayward, Christian, Benway, Gilliland**

**Ayes-5**

**Nyes-0**

#### **New Business-**

**Reber Cemetery Association asked the town to take over maintenance of the cemetery. Gilliland asked them to come to the board meeting to present their needs and no one showed.**

**Sheehan made the motion to hire Kori McCauliffe as Summer Camp Director for the summer program. Christian seconded the motion.**

**Roll Call- Sheehan, Sayward, Christian, Benway, Gilliland**

**Ayes-5**

**Nyes-0**

#### **Public Comments-**

**Victor Putnam stated he was the new President of the Boquet River Association. They are working on the Bouquet River watershed management plan that was drafted in**

2016. It will need some edits/updates. There are 2 phases to it. He submitted a grant to get it printed and hopes to be able to present it to the board this summer and get their recommendations from that report. He also said that the Nature Conservancy with the Colebrook project, that the dam has been removed and the fire department put in 3 dry hydrants. They still must do a culvert. The Boquet River Association has agreed to partner with them and do some volunteer planting and seeding. He asked Crowningshield to let him know if there is any river clean up needing to be done. Jennifer Sowizdrzal asked who would be responsible for the cost of installing the water meters. Gilliland stated that the homeowner is responsible for the cost of installing the meter and the town will inspect for lead and inspect and calibrate the meters once they are installed.

**Adjourn at 7:31pm**