



TOWN OF WILLSBORO

5 FARRELL ROAD WILLSBORO, NY 12996

518-963-8668

TOWN OF WILLSBORO TOWN BOARD MEETING WILLSBORO TOWN HALL July 12, 2023

ATTENDEES-Travis Crowningshield, Randi Swires, Robin Belzile, Win Belanger, Polly Belanger, Roger Sayward, Pat McCauliffe, Greg Gordon, Felix Lawrence

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

CALL TO ORDER @ 6:30pm

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Sheehan made the motion to accept the Board meeting minutes of the Special May 22nd, 2023 and June 14th, 2023 regular meeting. Christian seconded the motion. All in favor.

Public comment- Hometown Heroes Banners

Felix Lawrence spoke regarding hanging his grandfather's banner up in Willsboro. In his grandfather's hometown, they do not allow these banners. Gilliland stated that this program was started by Robin Belzile and the local American Legion with the guidelines being the veteran honorees of these banners had to live in Willsboro, grew up in Willsboro or currently live here. Gilliland also stated that the town board agreed to hang, take down and store these banners, along with buying the brackets and getting a permit from NYSEG. Gilliland stated that after Lawrence's email with a copy of Elizabethtown's pole attachment agreement, he contacted NYSEG and was told the Town of Willsboro needed to renew their application yearly. Benway and Sheehan agreed that with all respect to all veterans, that the available spaces should be left for the Willsboro residents set forth by the project and as it was a new project, it came with a learning process for all involved and the NYSEG application yearly application was not known. They both agreed this project should be for Hometown heroes as the project was intended to be. Christian stated he feels that Mr. Lawrence is a taxpayer here and it is his family member and there are plenty of poles. Travis Crowningshield stated that the poles are limited for the ones where you can hang a banner and that is the reason why some have two banners. He also stated that Mr. Blanchard, who resides in Willsboro and worked for NYSEG, issued the permit. Win Belanger from the American legion spoke and told how the project started with Robin Belzile seeing it in another state and bringing it to the legion and because the permitting had to go through a municipality, they came to the town for help. He explained that the criteria to be able to put a banner up is not set by the Town Board, they only agreed to get the application for poles and hang and take down the banners. When it first started out, he explained that although he owned a home and lived in Willsboro that he was not able to put a

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banner up. The legion adjusted the guidelines for the third time to include residents instead of born, died, or graduated from school. These guidelines were done because of the number of polls permitted. He made a recommendation to Mr. Lawrence, to go back to his grandfather's hometown and Belanger said he has helped many towns to get set up and is willing to help this town also. The Town board all agreed that it is the decision of the American Legion as to the banners that go up and the criteria of this process. The Town Board's responsibility is the permit process from NYSEG, hanging and taking down and storage of the banners.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORT-

Town and Correspondence-

-Omitted & Prorated taxes- these are taxes that are missed and they will be reflected as revenue in the next budget. Willsboro's, compared to other towns, is low, which means the paperwork done by the appraiser and clerk have been kept up to date with closings to make sure the unpaid taxes are paid.

-Hometown Heroes donation request- a request from the Hometown Heroes banner committee to the town for a donation.

-4th of July- an appreciation from the board to all involved in the 4th of July celebration. Gilliland has received a lot of positive feedback on a job well done. Essex Supervisor stated he is scrambling to meet the bar for next year that was set for this event.

-Summer Camp- The Camp has started and things seem to be going very well. The State Department of Health was there today and passed with only a few minor start up issues.

-Black Ash- The Black Ash Pond Annual Review was completed.

-Local waterfront redevelopment committee- A meeting was held of the Local waterfront redevelopment committee which is starting back up. The draft of the plan is still not back from the state and the committee is working on a harbor management plan draft.

-Zoning code update- The committee that was appointed for this had some scheduling issues and Gilliland has reached out to the county for recommendations for a consultant to do the penmanship of this project.

-ARCH- Gilliland, ARCH, Darcey Hale and Town Historians met at the Adsit cabin and a condition survey was done several years ago. The \$70,000.00 of dormitory money that was planned to be used to refurbish this cabin is not going to be released from the state. The Adsit cabin sits and is deteriorating as it is now. The furniture and amenities that are in there will be stored at the Heritage Society building for now. Crowningshield met with the County engineer to look at the structure to see if there is anything that can be done to ensure the structural integrity. When the town thought, they were going to get some money from the state several years ago and did a reconditioning survey, the cost now could be around \$500,000.00. Gilliland has tried to get both the County and State to take possession of it, and even Fort Ticonderoga and no one wants to take it over, due to the wrong historical period.

-Golf course pillars- During a golf tournament recently, someone accidentally bumped one of the club house pillars and broke some stucco off and when Gilliland and Crowningshield went to look at it, discovered all the wood under the stucco was rotted and they all needed to be replaced.

County-

-State of emergency was declared from the recent storms. Although the northern part of the county dodged most of the storm damage, there was significant damage around Crown Point and the fish hatchery. Culverts and roads need a lot of repairs. Ticonderoga, Moriah, Schroon Lake and Newcomb all have some damage, this combined meet the FEMA guideline for Essex County of \$165,000.00. The State has also met the \$35,000,000.00 guideline and Essex County will be included in the Federal disaster declaration.

-Supreme Court made a decision regarding the tax foreclosure Auctions. In Tax foreclosure auctions all the proceeds that are not taken by loans will go back to the owner. Anything above and beyond money owed will not go to the County any longer. Normally the money above what is owed goes into the county general fund. This will drain the county and this will trickle down to the taxpayers.

Motion was made by Sheehan to accept the Warrant. Benway seconded the motion.

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

Ayes-5

Nyes-0

Town Clerk Report-The clerk's office in the month of June took in \$27,892.90, paying \$3.00 to NYS Ag and Markets and \$22.50 to NYS Department of health. Decals took in \$1321.00 of which \$1,271.76 went to the state and the town's commission was \$49.24. Things have been very busy this last month. Along with the everyday operations of the clerk's office, I also helped in the planning and preparation for the 4th of July events. We had an awesome committee that worked well together to bring the old 4th of July back to the soccer fields. Everyone seemed to have a great time. Summer program started on July 5th and my notary book certainly filled up the last few weeks before camp. The New Message Board and bench for the outside of the Town Hall arrived yesterday. Finally!!! The shrubs were removed on the right-hand side of the front of the building on June 15th and although they seemed to have had green on them, Wayne Stoker who has been taking care of all the scrubs for the Town for many years, said the scrubs are all dead underneath and they had to go. We are hoping to have the new sign up soon and make the corner not look so bare. The other side will be pulled this fall when things slow down for the highway department. Water bills will be going out tomorrow. I just want to remind everyone there is a leash law and that is for the whole town...Parks included; we have had a lot of complaints of dogs not on leashes in our parks.

Christian made the motion to accept the clerk's report. Sayward seconded the motion. All in Favor.

DPW REPORT-

Adsit Cabin- Todd Hodgkins, county engineer came out and looked at the structure. He recommended putting 4 braces in the second story from the knee wall to the truss to secure.

The Northwest wall is pulling away from the chimney and he recommends going down with an excavator to push the 5–6-inch gap and put in timber locks and lag them into the corner. Golf course pillar - Peter Paine and Eric Arnold met with Crowningshield and Gilliland and looked at the pillars. This would be a capital improvement and Gilliland will talk with Peter Paine to see what he is going to do. It was recommended to do one pillar at a time, to not have to close the club house completely and not shut down bathrooms.

Indian Bay Road was blacktopped and the County did a great job. We had 27 trucks from local towns helping on this project and the town of Willsboro DPW will help these towns when they have projects going to repay the favor.

The State has been working on the sidewalks on route 22. They have been installing handicap accesses to the sidewalks. The crosswalk was also added to the Club House Daycare. The Town ended up with 38 of these because of the large number of sidewalks we have. Once this is done, the town will be able to begin work on the sidewalk projects they have projected to do this year.

The county has asked the Highway dept to go to Crown Point / Ticonderoga to run the shoulder machine as well as with our trucks because a lot of shoulders washed out. The individual towns cannot be paid by FEMA; however, they can pay other towns to do the work for them.

Willsboro has 3 people trained and they will be paid through the county.

The DPW work truck has been down for repairs and will be finished next week and then the potholes can be fixed around town. Sayward asked why the sides of the roads have not been mowed because people have asked her. Crowningshield stated they have been mowing and are almost finished.

WATER/SEWER REPORT-

One new water tap this month. 3-4 leaks, all of these were on galvanized mains. There might be a few of these that need to be replaced with galvanized as they have been fixed several times. Water meters are being delivered for 3-15 a day depending on what is happening at the plants. The Spedes permit was completed, this was a 62-page application that took a long time to complete. Wastewater side of things has also been very busy with the recent storms and power outages. The flows were not a problem at all, however, the brown- outs and dirty power. Sunset and Middle roads lost power on several occasions and this is the busiest lift station. They had to keep the generator running at the lift station to keep up. During this, NYSEG suggested that the plant be run on a generator until they could figure out what was causing the dirty power. It was discovered that in 1994, when the plant was built, they never put a service disconnect between the meter cam and the automatic transfer station. The plant cannot shut down if there is power coming into the plant. They tried to manually override this and it was not possible. They have a call into NYSEG shut power to put in the disconnect to allow the power to be shut off and the generator would take over. Kinsley Power Systems and NYSEG were great and came right down to help figure out this problem. There were two drivers that got fried during the brown out. The 5th grade from WCS came for a field trip and they did a couple experiments to see how the plant works. McAuliffe is putting together a list of damage done from these brown-outs for the insurance company and a claim will be made. NYSEG made the recommendation to place a claim because of the significant damage.

Benway made the motion to allow the supervisor to authorize the purchase of the items needed from Ace to get this problem fixed to be able to shut the power off and run on generator when needed. Sayward seconded the motion.

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

Ayes-5

Nyes-0

AMBULANCE REPORT-

Written financial report was given to the board.

YOUTH COMMISSION REPORT-

No Report

GOLF COURSE REPORT-

Written report was given to the board.

PARKS COMMISSION REPORT- Will be discussed later in the meeting.

Old Business-

The bids for the foundation and concrete work for the Salt/Sand shed were opened at 2:00 pm on Tuesday, July 11th. There were 4 bids that came in. After opening the bids, one bidder withdrew their bid, leaving 3 bidders. Two were for the alternate only, one was for both pre-form concrete blocks and poured concrete. The two for the alternate were \$565,000.00 and \$465,500.00 and the one with both \$208,000.00 for precast and \$435,910.00.

Sheehan made the motion to accept Eagle Association bid of \$208,000.00 which includes \$25,000.00 of change of order contingency, subject to approval from the county engineer.

Benway seconded the motion.

Roll Call-

Sheehan, Sayward, Christian, Benway, Gilliland

Ayes-5

Nyes-0

The sewer district costs have been rising a lot for some time now and the town has tried to not raise the cost for sewer. This year to date the cost for the sewer district is \$91,000.00 with \$30,820.00 in revenue. At the end of the year historically, the town has a 30% nonpayment from our sewer district. That is the percentage given to us from the county after submission of the relevy list. Gilliland has talked about this for some time now and recommends that the increase is done over time to get to \$150.00 per quarter as we are currently at \$90.00 base rate. He suggested that it be raised to \$120.00 per quarter now, which will be a \$30.00 increase. Gilliland is seeking a grant for the new tanks to increase capacity.

Sheehan made the motion to increase the sewer rate from \$90.00 to \$120.00 per quarter.

Benway seconded the motion.

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

Ayes-4

Nyes-1

A resolution was passed to place a question on the ballot in the November election for bonding for a recreation center/playground at Florence Hathaway Park. A request from the Parks Commission was made to rescind the resolution at this time to allow the commission to fully develop all the plans, moving forward with the pavilion/bathrooms at this time.

Sheehan made a motion to rescind the following question from the ballot for the November 2023 election. Benway seconded the motion.

"Should the Town take out a taxpayer financed bond of between \$750,000 and \$900,000 (depending on design and costs) to build a playground complex and recreation building facility to host recreational and sports activity 12 months a year at Florence Hathaway Park."

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

Ayes-3

Nyes-2

New Business-

We have reached out to Alltech for a price quote for fire alarms and security systems for all our buildings. The current security/fire system has had lots of issues and the tech has had health issues and is unable to reach. The problems have not been resolved for over 6 months. The quote for all these buildings was over \$20,000.00. Gilliland is suggesting that the town get a bid written up and put out for security/fire systems for all the buildings to determine the best pricing.

Christian made a motion to put a bid out for a security/fire alarm system for all the town buildings. Sayward seconded the motion. All in favor.

A copy of the rules on having travel trailers was given to the board members from the Code Enforcement officer. The Chairman of the planning board is present and Gilliland stated there has been an explosion of travel trailers/recreation trailers being parked on lots in high density residential areas. Some of these have porches built on them. The way the zoning law reads now, states that a travel trailer can be inhabited no more than one per lot for up to 21 days and after that requires a permit. Gilliland states nothing can be done this year however can be put in as an upgrade when the zoning laws are done. Gilliland stated the biggest concern is the waste water issue and the 21 days are impossible to govern and should be taken out and a permit for high density areas should be issued. He also said that this issue needs to be investigated in depth and maybe inspections and possibly reviewed by the planning board. Health, waste water and electrical issues are all things to look at. Gregg Gordon, Chairman of the Planning Board, stated that there are a couple lots on the point where there are 5 trailers on one lot and they have put wooden decks on the front of them. He stated that although these decks are not attached to the campers, there are still 5 campers on one lot, the sewage problem and they are all using water and they are only paying one water bill. He said there are numerous lots on the point with trailers on them, some of the lots with campers are occupied by people building homes and that needs to be looked at also. He stated that his concern is not the people who are building, it is the camps that have 4 trailers coming in for weeks at a time. He stated that people pay a lot of money in taxes and zoning on the point states you cannot put in a manufactured home and that these trailers are just undersized of a manufactured home and people are paying minimal taxes for these lots and using it to the utmost. Gordon stated that under the last code enforcement officer that a person who was building a home was

permitted to put in 3 set ups for campers on his property and that would be considered a campground and you cannot have a campground in most areas without permits. He feels this needs to be looked at also. Sayward asked that if only 1 camper is allowed, has the code enforcement officer said anything to these people? Gilliland said if he directed him to do so, he would, but this problem has not been addressed. Gilliland stated there were two ways to address this issue, make this a part of the zoning code or to write a subject town ordinance, which does not require a multi-agency review. Christian stated it is a good idea to change the code on this but feels we should enforce the code that we have in place now, before we place another code. If the code states only one trailer, then that should be enforced. Sheehan stated that another person would be needed to do this and that code enforcement is trying to stay afloat. Gilliland stated he is out on inspections constantly and it is during construction season and he is very busy. Benway stated he did not disagree that it needs to be updated but if it goes to a permit system and if someone is building a house and putting a trailer on the lot, they are going to have to have the same sewer system prior to building the house, that should be put in also and the electrical inspection should not be up to the town, it should be with NYSEG. He stated there is enough detail in the codes as is, if they had a way to enforce it, they could get on it now. Win Belanger stated when the zoning book was written, compared to his notes he has, that the 21 days, although not written as such, was meant to say 21 days per season. He said he has complained several times over the years about the many trailers on lots and nothing has been done. He said enforcement has always been an issue, stating, at one time, that a person was hired to assist the codes officer and do inspections and things. He said he believes the code in place right now is good and feels that a separate ordinance is not needed until the new zoning law is done for campers. He thinks that the people violating should be addressed. Gilliland stated again that an ordinance could be written and later incorporated into the change of the zoning law. Christian stated that he feels it is an enforcement issue, with 2 complaints in front of the board and that code enforcement should take care of it immediately and if he needs to work longer to do this, he should. Gilliland stated that we issue the second highest number of permits in the county and he is too busy. Christian stated if the code enforcement officer is too busy, he should come to the board or possibly hire an assistant. Gilliland stated the clerk has been looking for a deputy and once found, maybe they could do some part time code administration.

Sheehan made the motion to write a draft for a new ordinance for campers/trailers on land parcels. Benway seconded the motion. All in favor.

Parks and Rec. Committee-

They have a building permit for the pavilion and a septic permit pending the engineer design. The pavilion will be located midway of the lot and the septic between the pavilion and the road. They have talked about using Roost funds and this year would be construction of the building and possibly next year building the playground and stretching it out over a few years. Also working with Hannah Neilly to reach out for grant money. Once the town has invested in this project, there is a much better chance of receiving a grant.

Public Comments- Gregg Gordon stated he has had several conversations with Bobby Sturgess, Code enforcement officer and at least now you see building permits on buildings and they are

yellow forms. When a person driving by sees it clearly. He has also come up with another form for violations that he will post on buildings. Gordon's only concern is that it is very similar to the stop work order posting. These he will post that states what the violation is and to contact the Code Enforcement Officer.

Win Belanger asks what the pavilion was and states he did not understand. Sheehan stated that ROOST money was being used to put up the pavilion at Florence Hathaway Park and it would be used for events and the septic system; they were working with Mr. Ferris for the design.

Belanger asked if there were any consideration of a playground going back behind the Town hall for preschool children, who did not have anything anymore. He was thinking this could be a cheaper solution. Sheehan stated that it was the intention from the beginning for that age group, but to consolidate it to one location and she does not know if putting a playground back where it originally was, was ever a plan. He asked the board and Supervisor to talk about the plans for the park in the electronic newsletter to let the people know. Sheehan stated that the reason for rescinding the resolution to take it off the ballot was to get the people more involved. Gilliland stated a newsletter was being put together soon and Sheehan stated that they will put the pavilion plans in it. Robin Belzile asked about the letter she wrote asking for a donation for the Hometown Heroes. Gilliland stated that the town had not been giving donations out because of the profit margin due to the staff abusing the unemployment system and that every year the golf course ends up in the red. Belzile is asking for 2-certificates for 2 rounds of golf for the Hometown hero's silent auction. It was stated that Eric Arnold authorized gift certificates to both golf tournaments that were held at the course. No other certificates were issued for any other causes. Christian offered to personally purchase the gift certificates for this cause.

Adjourn @ 8:00pm.