February 6, 2023

State of New York
2679 Route 8
County of Hamilton
Town of Lake Pleasant

A Meeting of the Lake Pleasant Town Board was held on February 6, 2023 at the Lake Pleasant Library 2864 State Route 8, Speculator, NY 12164. The meeting was called to order at 7:00 P.M., to make approvals, give reports, establish organizational tasks and conduct any business that may come before the Board.

The following were present:
Supervisor: Betsy Bain
Councilman: Neil McGovern , Don Braunius, RaChelle Martz and Katherine O'Connell
Town Clerk: Stephanie Smith
Highway Superintendent Randy LaVarnway
Guests: Eileen LaVarnway, Vicky Buyce (Planning Board Chairman), Karen McComb (Library President), Marty Zegstroo (Chamber Co. President), Tracy Joy (Chamber Co-President), Donna Benkovich, Sherry Matthews (Librarian), Kate Eldredge (Director)

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag Followed by A Moment of Silent Prayer for Bill Tracy

Bain asked Neil to say a piece about Bill Tracy. McGovern voiced praise for good friend Bill Tracy and all who came out for his funeral service today. Bill was a previous Mayor of the Village of Speculator and a dedicated member of the Lions club and more. He will be greatly missed by many.

Resolution #24 To approve the minutes of January 17, 2023
Offered by: McGovern
2ND by: O'Connell
Discussion: Braunius asked about Resolution #17 and how it is worded. Electric Service needs to be changed to Electric Poles in order to be more specific and not get confused with Services.
The Board moved to amended Resolution #17 of January 17, 2023
Be it resolved, that the minutes of January 17, 2023 be approved as presented
Adopted by the following vote:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, Martz and O'Connell)
Nays: None

Resolution #25 Amendment to Resolution #17 Town of Lake Pleasant to Pay National Grid Bill for Electric Poles on Fish Mountain Road in the Amount of $26,251.06.
Whereas, Tax exempt form will be submitted to wave the taxes billed at $2,100.09
2nd by: McGovern
Adopted by the following votes:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, Martz and O'Connell)
Nays: None

Highway Report:

- Electric heat backup in town hall front office was not working correctly. It was found that the thermostat was bad so HWY crew disconnected the electric heat to the front office, which solved the heating issue that was occurring.
- Library door closure was readjusted, slight oil leak in the mechanism and will need to be replaced in the future.
- Flag pole in back of the Library has an electrical short. There is corrosion in the electric box. New water proof box is on order.
- Heat in the closet at the library is due to the heat ducts when heat is on. Gets cooler when heater is not on.
- National Grid power check is out. FEMA sent a letter and we have in writing that things are covered.
- Chimney brick block is off at town hall garage and needs to be replaced in the summer when it is warmer and new sleeve can be installed.
- The 220 truck needed work done on it in the rear and front springs.
- Groomers are out as much as possible. Minor repairs needed to groomers so far. Limited grooming due to weather conditions. Reports are that trails are OK. McGovern said he heard that the tree farm trail was good. River trail is not good.
- Highway Committee meeting on hold until quotes are all in for new truck. Truck part of quote is in, now waiting for quote on the body.
- Bain asked LaVarnway about the garbage truck getting built. LaVarnway responded with Garbage truck to be built starting tomorrow.

Old Business:

1. **BAN –**

Resolution #26 to Approve the BAN for $600,000.00. drawn up by Mr. Goodfriend Authorizing the Issuance of $600,000 Bonds of The Town of Lake Pleasant, Hamilton County, NY, to Pay the Cost of the Replacement of the Culvert on Fish Mountain Road over the Sagandaga Lake Inlet, in and for said Town.
Offered by: Bain
2nd by: McGovern
Adopted by the following votes:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, Martz and O'Connell)
Nays: None

2. **Campground Update** – Bain reported that the state has remained evasive. Hamilton County Chairman is pushing for a meeting but not getting a response. Bain encourages the community to keep sending letters to help this effort.
   Braunius said the region five director isn't sure if fall camping will open or remain closed.

Braunius requested from region five a percent of occupancy by month for the county campgrounds. After not hearing from them he called and was told that anyone asking about this is to go through the region five director with questions. McGovern says if we can't get unofficial numbers at the local level we need to stay persistent. Anyone who knows someone in the press we need to reach out to them to get word out on how this affects local commerce.

3. **Chamber Presidents – Marty Zegstroo and Tracy Joy** spoke to the board as current co-presidents of the Chamber of Commerce. Zegstroo and Joy gave the board an update on changes at the Chamber and how they see the Chamber moving forward. Their first priority has been the researching of bylaws, budgets, past events, what works/what doesn't work and why the Chamber originally started. The Chamber is a nonprofit organization that is owned by Chamber members with the local government support. Tourism is the connection between the businesses and the towns. Currently three towns are in contract with the Chamber. The goal is to evaluate these contracts and clean up any redundancy to make things more efficient for the Chamber and its members.
   Events that are being planned will require less man power.
   New Events this summer include, Bear and Wine Festival with over 200 vendors invited. This weekend is Fire tower festival. Business driven events as opposed to town driven events moving forward is the plan.
   The Chamber is boosting fundraising in order to make the chamber money and the businesses money as a result. Events from here forward have to have a litmus in order to make the Chamber money to benefit businesses. This will start slow with a revisit of the budget. Zegstroo and Joy wish to have employment at the chamber with benefits for employees with the goal of a safe environment between the entities.
   McGovern spoke to the new presidents and the board as a member involved for over 40 yrs.
   Zegstroo let the board know that the Chamber will be working on having business after hours hosted by businesses to build comradery, relations and business communication. This town being a small town needs to work together.
   With money coming from the towns, a product needed or wanted is difficult to attain with municipal funds. Town membership is not allowed in the bylaws of the Chamber at this time. Towns have differing amounts of contributions. In the future the equity should be looked at with towns and their rewards of this.
   McGovern explained that with government involvement there is always roadblocks. Government money has expectations and the Chamber can't stand alone.
   The Chamber wants to make clear that they are taking back the Chamber and will run it. Boundaries of service will change. Chamber business will be for their members and moving forward as a visitors' center.
   The town doesn't have to take the contract. Chamber needs funds this year from the town but their future goals are to move away from town funding.

Bain asked if Wells had been contacted and they haven't at this time. Braunius asked about how the Chamber has reached out in regards to the camp ground closure. Eldredge said that she has been reaching out on this issue.
Bain opened the floor for the public to ask questions

Kate Eldredge said she would be active in the Chamber until she leaves.

4. **Property Tax Exemption for SVAC -**
10% tax exemption letter. Permissive referendum notice is advertised in the Hamilton County News and posted at town hall. Townspeople have 45 days to file a petition at town hall. If no petitions are filed the public Hearing will be after March 3rd.
McGovern asked if income was applicable to this and it is not.

New Business:

1. **Planning Board Recommendation – Vicki Buyce, Chairman of the Planning Board** presented to the board with a written complaint about the White House wedding venues noise. After researching zoning in area it was found that the White House plot is not zoned for what it is being used for. Revised zoning done in 2007 matched APA Zoning yet this could be changed with a new revision to zoning laws. The code says we should review to make changes every so many years as things change. The Planning board recommends the town board allow more uses of properties so that new businesses can take up residency in town. In the town zoning regulations, for proposed uses, with a special use permit, the Planning Board can review each individual application and approve, disapprove or approve with conditions. The later is for concerns to be addressed and businesses new to area given an opportunity to serve the community.
Braunius expressed that people buy here for the quiet. Change to the area, weddings and music Max. of 82 decibels is allowable.
McGovern made a point that if we keep every event that generates noise away, then we won't have these events in the area and revenue to businesses as a result will not generate.
Discussion around the table pursued. Section 41 says that review of zoning laws should be every 3 years.
Tracy Joy explained that at the White house, the music is over at 10:00 PM. Brides decide where they want the dance floor. The board suggests that the speakers be facing in another direction.
With an X in the approve with conditions box, the board can issue a conditional permit.

Resolution #27 Town of Lake Pleasant to Accept the Recommendation from the Lake Pleasant Planning Board to Revise Zoning and Codes of 2007.
Offered by: McGovern
2nd by: Martz
Discussion: O'Connell asked if the board accepts the recommendation, the businesses in town not zoned commercial, will have to apply for a special use permit for every event or by season. If at any point the stipulations are not met, the permit can be revoked. No mater how many reservations they have. All answers are yes.

Braunius asked who would be notified. All lakefront properties in this area will be notified.
Adopted by the following votes:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius and Martz)
Nays: None
Abstain: O'Connell

Bain proposed setting up a committee to review and revise the Planning codes. She asked McGovern to be Chairman of this Committee. McGovern accepts.

2. **Lake Pleasant Fire Department Contract –** The only changes for 2023 are the date and $170,000 prebudgeted increase.

Resolution #28 Town of Lake Pleasant Town Board to Accept the 2023 Lake Pleasant Fire Department Contract.
Offered By: Martz
2nd by: O'Connell
Discussion: None
Adopted by the following votes:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Martz and O'Connell)
Nays: None
Abstain: Braunius

Resolution #29 Town of Lake Pleasant Town Board to Accept the 2023 Town of Lake Pleasant Financial Services Intermunicipal Agreement with Hamilton County.
Offered by: McGovern
Whereas, The Town of Lake Pleasant will pay Hamilton County $14,850.00 for one year to manage the town's finances. This is a $1,350.00 increase from the previous year.
2nd by: Braunius
Adopted by the following votes:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, Martz and O'Connell)
Nays: None

Resolution #30 Town of Lake Pleasant Town Board to Accept the 2023 Meal Site Agreement for Seniors
Offered by: Braunius
Whereas, the Town of Lake Pleasant will pay $5,500.00 to the senior center for the 2023 budgeted meal site agreement.
2nd by: O'Connell
Adopted by the following votes:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, Martz and O'Connell)
Nays: None

Resolution #31 Town of Lake Pleasant Town Board to Accept the Annual Audit of Town Justices.
Offered by: Martz

2nd by: McGovern
Discussion: None
Adopted by the following votes:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, Martz and O'Connell)
Nays: None

Lake Pleasant Library President, Karen McComb asked the town board if the library could open a credit card through the town in order to make purchases through Amazon. This would save the town money on shipping costs and any annual fee would come out of the library budget. McComb turned it over to library director Sherry Matthews.
Matthews explained that in January Amazon smile cut ties with Sangragine Bank and now they have brought in American Express. Shipping is high if there is no free shipping. American Express will give the library free shipping for $179 a year. Sherry would like to get a card through the town and the library board will pay the annual fee.

Town of Lake Pleasant to approve the library to open an American Express card under the Town in order to allow for free shipping purchases for the library.

Town Clerk spoke about being shut out of personal files at Town Hall. This has posed difficulties for her in doing her job duties as town clerk. Smith is unable to do her work if it requires access to these files unless the Supervisor is available to get requested information for her.

Resolution #28 Town of Lake Pleasant Town Board voted to Discuss Personal File access issues in Executive Session at the end of meeting.
Offered by: McGovern
McGovern asked if research on this was sent out to board members and Smith replied that it was sent to them in October of last year.
2nd by: Braunius
Adopted by the following votes:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, Martz and O'Connell)
Nays: None

Committee Reports:

- **Youth Recreation –** four weeks into ski lessons. Plan for skiing over Feb break for the students is in the works. Braunius asked about skiing at Gore for the students and O'Connell mentioned that ski club, through school, may be working on trips.
- **Short term rentals –** The January meeting went well and another meeting is scheduled in another few weeks with a guest to come with board approval. Committee is short on time with regulations and how to be a good neighbor flier.

Resolution #29 Motion to pay Bills: Abstract #2 dated 1/26/2023, #2564-2566 in the amount of $4,345.10, Abstract #3 dated 1/30/2023, #2567-2569 in the amount of $53,671.58 and Abstract #4 dated 2/2/2023, #2570-2591 in the amount of $21,607.50.
Offered by: Braunius
2nd by: Martz
Adopted by the following votes:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, Martz and O'Connell)
Nays: None

Public Comment:
Eileen LaVarnway asked if there could be a theme of saving our campgrounds at the next 4th of July parade. Historical characters in the ADK's is the theme for next year.

Karen McComb asked what Robert Smullen is doing for this cause and the board responded that he has been active in our cause. Discussion about the campground fall shut down continued.

Roundtable:

O'Connell announced that the LPCS 6th and 7th grade Valentine's dinner will be on February 14th from 5-7 PM.
Martz let everyone know that she and Christy Wilt will be traveling this weekend to the Small Community's Big Opportunities Conference held by ANCA in Saranac Lake. Trying to help existing businesses and new businesses to the area.
Smith let everyone know that Seniors asking about the exemption need to contact the Assessor at town hall by calling 518-548-3625 Ex. 5. Taxes are slowing down now that the January deadline has passed. The town has received their portion to date and collection continues for the county until April 3rd. 2023 vacancies for the town are posted and letter to elections has been sent.
Braunius let the board know that he has called about the route 8 and route 30 road construction and was told that construction is to start this spring.
Bain mentioned that at a county board meeting Assemblyman Robert Smullen, Hamilton County Board of Supervisors, and the President of the NYS Sheriffs Association all gave Officer Sean O'Brian plaques to honor him for his NYS Deputy of the Year Award. The Sheriffs Association wanted Hamilton County to know that Karl Abrams is the most active and involved of all the Sheriffs in NYS.
February 15th is the next senior bus trip to Colony Mall. Those that want to sign up must call Doris Sloan.
Claim for unemployment from an employee who worked with the town under BTI has been made. Supervisor Bain has filed a grievance with NYS Unimployment.
The town received a letter from NYS Parks and Recreation Preservation, letting the town know that they will not be awarded the grant that Cris Mixner applied for. Cris is currently working on another small grant through Lowes. She will also be working on raffles. So far $31,936.00 has been raised to date.

Bain thanked all for coming

Resolution #30 for the Town of Lake Pleasant Town Board to Move into Executive Session

Offered by: McGovern
2nd by: Braunius
Adopted by the following votes:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, Martz and O'Connell)
Nays: None
Resolved, that the board move into an Executive Session at 9:00 PM to discuss matter of Town Records Keeper not having access to town records without key holders' permission.

Town of Lake Pleasant Town Board Returned to Regular Session at 9:30 PM
Offered by: Braunius
Resolved: That Supervisor Bain and Town Clerk Smith will contact the town's attorney.
Adopted by the following votes:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, Martz and O'Connell)
Nays: None

Next meeting: Our next meeting will be on Tuesday February 21, 2023 at 7PM at the Lake Pleasant Library

***ON A MOTION BY**: Don Braunius **2ND by:** McGovern
To Adjourn @ 9:31 P.M.
All in Favor
Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Smith, Town Clerk