January 16, 2024

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 January 16, 2024 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, Katherine O'Connell and Meg Parascandola
Town Clerk: Stephanie Smith
Highway Superintendent Randy LaVarnway
Guests: Steve Page (buildings and codes enforcer), Karen McComb (Library President), Nancy Seifts (budget officer), John Seifts

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Resolution #16 To Approve the Minutes of January 2, 2024
Offered by: Braunius
2ND by: McGovern
Discussion – None
Be it resolved, that the minutes of January 2, 2024 be approved as presented
Adopted by the following vote:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, O'Connell and Parascandola)
Nays: None

Presentation to Mike and Laura Peck – Held off for later in meeting in hopes that they will arrive.

Highway Report:

- LaVarnway reported that the loader is at town hall and backhoe is ordered on schedule for April 15th.
- The garbage truck salesman said he would get back to LaVarnway last week but has not as of today.
- Trails are open and lakes are not safe.
- The river trail and trail behind Oak Mt., are closed due to thawed ground and streams. All other trails are to be traveled with common sense.
- A generous contractor, Anthony Alfieri, in the area is using the "Beast from the East", an ATV with tracks and recovery gear, to pull out snowmobilers that get stuck on the trails.

Discussion about trail conditions went around the room. Riders need to be aware of conditions around them and take caution.

- The bus garage storage area furnace had some parts that went bad and are on order.
- Another resignation came today from an employee moving on for more pay and another avenue of work. The Hwy department will be looking for a new laborer. LaVarnway informed the board that the laborer was leaving because he was unable to find housing in the area. Braunius made the point that when working for the town, guaranteed employment is a benefit.

Old Business:

1. **Unused HRA Funds from 2022 –**
   Smith reached out to Marshall and Sterling in regard to the dollar amount that she was given by the insurance representative for an employee's unused HRA fund for the year 2022. This amount did not match the amounts that should have been allotted to this employee. Marshall and Sterling apologized, explaining that the amount was not for the individual but for the whole group at the end of 2022. The employee still had enough to cover the bill that should have been paid if it had been issued on time. Smith also explained to the board about where the funds go that are unused in the HRA account. Treasurers' office's Jody Small had explained to Smith that the town's HRA account is a flex spending account that works to fund the HRA without closing at the end of the year to allow for late bills to get paid. The unused funds roll back over into the HRA spending line after a time and are available for use in the coming year. Funds that are unused always remain in the account.

2. **Museum Grant Update –**
   Bain let the board know that she contacted Erin at Adirondack Agricultural Heritage and asked if they had overlooked the application for the grant. Erin explained to Bain that they are entering information into the system, then the National Parks Service has to review each project. Once all this is done, they can start their contract process.

New Business:

1. **Building/ Codes Yearly Report –**

   Steve Page gave the board his yearly report for 2023 on Buildings and Codes/ Zoning
   Here are the highlights:
   Total Fees Collected was $6,690.00
   79 permits issued in 2023
   102 permits issued the year 2022
   4 cert. of completion
   47 occupancies
   16 new building permits issued
   8 additions
   11 alterations
   8 decks, porches, steps and railings

8 well permits
9 septic permits
4 septic repairs
4 solid fuels
11 Other (Demolition/Solar/Tents)
7 short term rental registrations

Page let the board know that the STR postcards have been beneficial in getting the new law out with calls and applications coming into Page's office for STR's.

O'Connell asked why the new building tally and septic permits don't line up the same. Page explained that some projects are done in different segments for the same lots.

One stop order on a permit was done last year yet most people are cooperating with rules and regulations.

O'Connell asked if there is a fine system in place and Page replied that there are fines and stop order policies. Page can charge 5X the permit fee to enforce rules if needed.

2. **Planning Board Committee Update –**
   Bain informed the board that Planning Board Chairman, Vicki Buyce, Secretary, Caitlyn Stuart, Steve Page and past secretary, Nancy Seifts all met to work on reconstructing the Committees procedures. In the past the Secretary was paid to do the job. Building/Code Inspector will copy tax maps with subject highlighted. The secretary will take the addresses to adjoining property owners and do up letters for them and committee members, write the legal for the paper, address and stuff envelopes and get them to town hall to be mailed. The secretary will type up the minutes and send a letter to applicant with the committee's final decision. Mailings will be done certified mail. Legal will go into the paper ten days before the meeting date and Meetings are on the first Tuesday of every month. Planning board assessments last week. The Secretary will be paid $50 for each meeting, and she will fill out a voucher to get paid.

Resolution #17 Town of Lake Pleasant Town Board to Create a Budget Line for Planning Board Secretary. Line # B.8010.405 will be funded with a Transfer of Funds from Line # B.8010.102 which is Zoning/Planning Secretary Line.
Offered by: McGovern
2nd by: O'Connell
Adopted by the following vote:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, O'Connell and Parascandola)
Nays: None

Discussion: O'Connell asked who was doing this in the middle. Bain explained that Kathy Aird was doing this task as Secretary after Nancy Seifts retired. Then after Aird retired Debbie O'Rourke took over the duties. Seifts explained that the meetings are only when the planning

board has a request to meet. This is usually only a few times a year not very often. Parascandola asked about what paper the legal goes in and it was explained that the official newspaper for the town is the Hamilton County Express. Smith explained that she submits the legal to the paper. Smith let the board know that problems arose this past year when residents did not get mailings due to error somewhere between drop off at post office and resident getting mailing and residents not having correct address associated with tax map codes. Mailings go to addresses that are listed under tax map codes.
Bain explained that the mail will be certified so that the mailings get confirmed of receipt.

3. **Library Committee –**

   Karen McComb the library president explained that the library board can have up to nine people on the board. Susan Hartman had expressed interest in filling a spot on the board. Since she was assistant DA she was unable but now she will not be the assistant DA and she would like to be on the library board.

Resolution #18 Town of Lake Pleasant Town Board to Approve the Addition of Another Member to the Library Board of Directors. The Library Board has Appointed Susan Hartman to Fill a Five Year Term on the Board.
Offered by: Parascandola
2nd by: Braunius
Adopted by the following vote:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius and Parascandola)
Nays: None
Abstained: O'Connell

4. **Adirondack Park Local Government Review Board Agreement –**

Bain went over the agreement with the board explaining that everything is the same as the previous year's agreement. Bain asked for a motion to sign the agreement.
Offered by: McGovern
2nd by: O'Connell
Adopted by the following vote:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, O'Connell and Parascandola)
Nays: None
McGovern said that this is a good group that is looking out for small towns in the Adirondack Park.

5. **Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages Dues –**

Resolution #19 Town of Lake Pleasant Town Board to Pay the $500 Dues Fee for the 2024 Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages Dues.
Bain asked for a motion for discussion.
Offered by: Braunius

2nd by: McGovern
Bain discussed how the Association has been helpful with steps to take in appointing a new board member to replace RaChelle Martz. McGovern added that it has been a while since the town has sent anyone from the board to the annual conference that is hosted by the Adirondack Association of Towns and Villages and this conference is a wonderful educational experience and encouraged that our town have a presence with the association.
Adopted by the following vote:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, O'Connell and Parascandola)
Nays: None

6. **2024 Standing Committees –**

   Bain went over the appointments to Standing Committees as follows:

   Finance/Budget – McGovern, Bain, LaVarnway
   Recreation Trails – Braunius, LaVarnway
   Safety – Smith, LaVarnway, Bain, Matt Seifts (safety coordinator)
   Youth Recreation – O'Connell, Parascandola
   Cemetery – LaVarnway, Smith, Braunius
   Highway – LaVarnway, Braunius, McGovern
   Building Committee – LaVarnway, McGovern, O'Connell
   Fire Dept. Committee – McGovern, LaVarnway
   Website Committee – Parascandola, Smith
   Health Insurance – LaVarnway, Smith, Bain

   ****See attached for full 2024 standing committee list and terms****

Committee Reports:

- **Web Site Committee –** Parascandola announced that she and Martz will meet tomorrow to go over the website turnover. Smith let the board know that she and Parascandola will meet after Parascandola meets with Martz to go over website changes and moving forward.
- **Youth Recreation –** O'Connell and Parascandola will meet soon to go over youth recreation. O'Connell announced that ski lessons are moving along with three lessons complete out of the eight.
- **Health Committee –** Smith gave the latest updates with where things stand with the health care negotiations between Humana and providers provided by Marshal and Sterling. Two Humana recipients have been advised to contact Humana to express complaints. Oncology and Ortho offices are still in negotiations and have pushed back their termination dates. Braunius announced that he had called the number on the back of his insurance card and talked to a helpful gentleman who looked into other providers for Braunius. Unfortunately, the providers that will be the closest are a ways away. Smith

expressed how hard this situation is on any Humana recipients at this time as negotiations are in the air. She provided the board with a spread sheet comparison of other plans rates that Marshall and Sterling compiled for the town board to review. None of the rates and benefits come close to those of the current Humana plan. The next best plan is over double the cost per individual. McGovern pointed out that our best bet is to work things out through the towns broker. Bain feels that it is best to keep putting pressure on the broker to get the best coverage for our retirees. Braunius said that when he called Humana the person, he spoke to put in an official complaint for him.

Resolution #20 Motion to pay Bills: Abstract #4 dated 1/12/2024, #3214-3245 in the amount of $106,508.86. Abstract #5 dated 1/16/2024, #3246-3253 in the amount of $18,463.99.
Offered by: Braunius
2nd by: Parascandola
Discussion: None
Adopted by the following votes:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, O'Connell and Parascandola)
Nays: None

Public Comment:
-McComb asked about the health insurance and if the employees could go with another carrier that would be accepted by medical practices in the area. McComb wanted to know who decided what Insurance the employees were under. It was explained that the town board decides what insurance carrier the employees and retirees have. McComb wanted to know if the town board could go back and renegotiate different insurance contracts with a comparable cost to the town. It was explained that the next closest comparison is double the cost.
Bain explained how it worked with Excellus in the county last year and how the negotiations worked out. Discussion continued about the health insurance negotiations.

Roundtable:

- Braunius and his wife Florence attended a program put on by the National Guard at the Indian Lake Senior Center about "bugging out". This program was informative on what to do and what to pack if you need to evacuate quickly due to earthquakes, forest fires etc. Bain asked if there were many seniors from our area in attendance and Braunius said no. Bain would like to have them come to our area to present.
- Smith announced that the local postal service had informed her that stamps will be going up two cents on January 22nd.
- LaVarnway mentioned that the dog kennel heater is not working at this time. Another employee explained that the propane needs to be bled out for it to work correctly. LaVarnway suggests that the board have a new heater put in so that the dog warden will be able to easily use a heat source. The board agreed to have LaVarnway look into pricing for a new heater. Parascandola asked about Frankie housing dogs coming in on

her site but this is not a possibility due to unknown shot history of any dog that comes into the towns kennel. Discussion about heating sources was had around the room.

- Bain let the board know that she received a check from Lake Pleasant school for $800 for Youth Recreation.
- An unemployment request for an individual from Department of Labor has come into the town and Bain will be sending a notice of protest tomorrow. This tries to come through every year and when the notice of protest goes out from the town, the town doesn't get charged.
- Towns and Village post closures vouchers went out and $834.00 is the towns cost. Total cost of post closure bills is $2,197.00. Checks have been coming in from towns and the Village.
- Happy New Year postcard from The Chamber of Commerce was received by the town.
- AGA markets, Janet Coller, will be doing training with Frankie Page our new dog warden on Thursday January 18th at Town Hall in the Supervisors office.
- Senator Stec wrote back, thanking Bain and the board for supporting the initiative on inadequate cell service in our area.
- Bain mentioned that starting January 22nd, Katrina Cohea will be starting up stretch classes at the library from 5:30-6:30 on Mondays.
- JR Rust Benefit Dinner will be in Wells on Saturday January 27th at 3:00 P.M.-? JR works for the Village water department, and he fell off his roof and shattered bones in his foot and has been unable to work. Food, games and raffles.
- Bain went over the certificate to the Pecks for being Animal Control officers for the past twenty years.

Next meeting: Our next meeting will be on Monday February 5, 2024 at 7PM at the Lake Pleasant Library

***ON A MOTION BY**: Don Braunius **2ND by:** Parascandola
To Adjourn @ 8:07 P.M.
All in Favor
Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Smith, Town Clerk