March 18, 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 March 18, 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: Eileen LaVarnway, Katrea Cohea (Library Director), Karen McComb (Library President), Tracy Joy (Co-President of The Adirondack Speculator Region Chamber of Commerce) and Shorty Hoffman

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Resolution #59 To Approve the Minutes of March 4, 2024 and Emergency Meeting Minutes on March 11, 2024.
Offered by: Braunius
2ND by: McGovern
Discussion – O'Connell pointed out that in Old Business Resolution #33 the Chamber contract was not accepted, it was agreed to accept the recommendations for the contract.
Be it resolved, that the minutes of March 4, 2024 and March 11, 2024 be approved as presented with change to Resolution #33 as amended.
Adopted by the following vote:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, O'Connell and Parascandola)
Nays: None

Highway Report:

- LaVarnway reported that the storm in the past week left the area with trees down but little to no damage to roads.
- One of the town garage trucks has suffered some wear and tear with an ill-fitting seal causing oil to leak out. Parts were ordered and will be seen in the bills.
- The storm also left damage to South Shore Cemetery due to fallen trees landing on three sections of fence. LaVarnway called Brady fence company in Poland, and they will pull damaged fence sections out next Monday. Trees were cut out today and the hard wood in the back needs to be cut down. LaVarnway would like to have a committee meeting to decide on what to do with a large hardwood tree in the

cemetery when the ground is solid. The tree that did the damage was a healthy tree. LaVarnway would like to ask the landowner around the cemetery if trees can be cut down surrounding the cemetery. Smith is to find the letter about land use around the cemetery from surrounding landowner. Discussion about trees and land was had at the table.

- Braunius asked if the brush pit could be opened and LaVarnway said that they tried to drive into it and the ground is too soft down in the pit to open the road at this time.
- Tennis/pickle ball courts have stumps that will be disposed of when the ground is solid again. A quote for black top and painting blacktop came in for $150,000.00 and doesn't include the fencing. Waiting for two other quotes to meet the state recommendation to request for three quotes.
- Parascandola and O'Connell have been looking into grants to help offset the costs of the tennis/pickleball courts and surrounding area. Parascandola asked if there would be a place for a gazebo on the property and LaVarnway said that there is plenty of room for a gazebo. O'Connell mentioned that there are some grants for the library and others in community development but nonspecific for tennis/pickleball athletics at this time. Bain feels that a gazebo would be nice even for the garden club and school students etc. Parascandola asked why the ratio of two tennis courts and four pickleball courts. Board members explained that this ratio is necessary for community needs with these sports. Discussion went on about grants and preparation and scheduling etc. Braunius asked about the foundation for the gazebo and if the ground will be prepared for it. Discussion of underlayment was had at the table and with LaVarnway. No decision was made to have a gazebo placed on the property.
- Gates in Perkins clearing have been locked by the town and DEC has locked gates to their roads as well such as Fawn Lake and Indian Lake.
- Snowmobile trails are closed.
- Grooming hours for the grant are down this season. Last time this happened money had to be sent back.
- The backhoe auction ended yesterday, and the amount doesn't meet the price the town wanted for a trade in. To end the auction LaVarnway must put in a counteroffer. LaVarnway said that he asked for the trade in price and there is a 24 hour wait to see if it will sell for the listed price. The asking trade in price is $36,000 and LaVarnway is asking the board if he can sell the backhoe for this price.

Resolution #60 Town of Lake Pleasant Town Board to Sell the Town's Backhoe Listed on Auctions International for $36,000.00
Offered by: Braunius
2nd by: McGovern
Adopted by the following vote:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, O'Connell and Parascandola)
Nays: None

- The new garbage truck will be here on Wednesday! Paperwork to have it registered is getting completed. This has been two years in the making.
- The current garbage truck did its last run today 3/18/2024.

Old Business:

1. **Chamber Contract –** Tracy Joy addressed the board and proposed negotiations with some of the proposed changes to the contract.
   Last year the Chamber worked 30 hours a week and this year the Board would like them to work 35 hours a week. Last year it cost the Chamber $30,000 to run the visitors center so adding five more hours to payroll would send the Chamber over their budget. Later in the meeting it was determined that the hours were 35/week during peak season.
   Sunday hours, since Joy has been at the Chamber, she has not seen the Chamber open on Sunday and Joy does not see how they can get the volunteers for Sundays. Bain said that when she worked for the Chamber, some years back, she worked half days on Sundays. The Chamber is always looking for volunteers.
   Parascandola reported that she checked out hours open and visitor centers that are manned in a few surrounding towns. She looked at Lake George and Lake Placid as well as Indian Lake and found that Indian Lake is open five days a week Tue-Sat. and the others are open seven days a week. Parascandola asked if the salaries and expenses are specific for the visitor centers and salaries or are they also for the business association of the Chamber. Joy responded that the funding given to the Chamber from the town goes to running the visitors center. The Chamber of Commerce works for the businesses, and it raises money for the businesses in the towns. This is why the contracts were separated last year. Joy reported that the Chamber just had its ball which raised enough money for ten snowflakes to decorate the Village next winter. Wells raised enough for snowflakes in their town.
   Parascandola mentioned that STR's are turned over often on Sundays. She explained that having the Chamber open at that time to serve visitors on Sundays is what the Town is looking for. She suggested tracking the number of visitors so that informed decisions can be made to make the Chamber visitors center more visible. McGovern and Bain discussed that being open on Sundays would be an asset to the businesses.
   Joy mentioned that the events are for businesses and the town shouldn't put a number on how many events they do. They are doing the Farmers Market, Bear and Wine and the Winter Ball. Chamber members are talking about a music festival. McGovern mentioned that on the food crawl there were less businesses participating than last year. The board would like the visitors center to be manned on Sundays and Joy said that she cannot guarantee that Sundays will get covered. Parascandola asks that events get listed in the contract yearly, not just mentioned. The Town of Lake Pleasant would like to know that certain events are solidified from year to year.

2. **Museum Grant –** Meg Parascandola reported that the grant work is moving forward.
   The town has been awarded $75,000.00 through the Adirondack Rural Revitalization Grant. Updated estimates from Adirondack Building Restoration, and Vogel Construction have been requested. One of the companies that was asked to give an estimate has declined. On April 29th, Adirondack Rural Revitalization will come to present a sign for the grant at the museum. Invites to historical society members and members of the museum are going out about this event. The Revitalization group does a 20%, 60%, 20% payment schedule for the grant. The town must come up with 20% initially and they

have acquired these funds with the fund raiser. Once 60% has been achieved the grant will be paid and there will be no reimbursement costs due.
Braunius asked about the museum becoming handicap accessible with the grant. It was explained that the historic classification keeps the town from adding any new structures to the original. Braunius also asked about heat sources and Parascandola explained that if they are to try to change the heat source then the grant administrator would need to be consulted about other ways that heat can be installed. McGovern explained that the old furnace was not a good return. The grant is specific to the proposal and historic preservation. Discussion about heat sources, preserving and storing artifacts and removable handicap ramps was had.

3. **VFIS Update –**McGovern gave an update on the LOSAP program. He and the fire department officials are working on keeping it solvent into the future. A meeting with Insurance Broker, Steve Sawn is getting set up to go over insurance. Bain asked the board if they agree to pay the LOSAP bill for now and get caught up with the $12,000.00 later. **All in Favor -Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons – McGovern, Braunius, O'Connell and Parascandola**. The town and fire department have done what they committed to do but after an audit the bill was another $12,000 for so many years.

New Business:

1. **Library Report –** Katrina Cohea gave the library report for 2023 at the Town of Lake Pleasant Library. The numbers and impacts are that in 2023 there were 8,807 visitors with 7,184 library items borrowed, 110 library sponsored programs and 2,856 in attendance at library programs. Wifi was accessed 4,091 times,1,456 e-books were downloaded and there were 1,360 cardholders.
*****See attached brochure*****
McGovern asked what the cost of copies was for anyone who needs to copy paperwork. Cohea replied with .25 for each black and white copy and .50 for each color copy with no charge for fax use.
2023 Initiatives were successful with a summer reading BINGO Challenge in July and August to children 0-12 with over twenty children involved. Cohea explained that the library is continuing to be a community hub for residents and visitors for events and information in town.
The library was awarded two grants in 2023, one for a wheelchair accessible ramp for those with special needs and the second for bringing in local speaker's, authors etc.
Teen book box subscriptions with two books and snacks are available to teens with two teens giving feedback on this so far. Feed back has been good. This is to bring in the teen population to the library. Cohea went over the calendar of events that happen at the library. Story time is on Tuesdays, and they are growing. Home schoolers are using story time. Reading classics bingo challenge is to get people interested in the classic books. Blind Date with a book got raving reviews and Cohea is working on doing this event again in the summer.

2. **Retiree's Health Insurance –** Bain called Marshall &Sterling to see if the town would be able to get out of its contract with Humana to find out that they can if they decide to. She then called Town retirees to find out if their providers are not accepting their insurance. Two of the retirees are having trouble with their providers taking Humana. Researching other insurance coverage benefit packages that the town would qualify for has resulted in Human coverage as the most cost effective for benefits and CDPHP as second. CDPHP is an increase in cost of coverage by 85% more than what the town pays for Humana with other carriers costing more. McGovern mentioned that CDPHP is higher in cost, and they don't travel with coverage out of the area and out of state. Humana accepts individuals and covers nationally. McGovern asks for patients with the retirees because bumps in the road will iron out. Switching to another carrier can create more problems with coverage as well as costs down the road. Bain asked the board for feedback. O'Connell asked about retirees paying the difference after what we already changed recently. Everyone will get the choice to stay with Humana or go on CDPHP if the board decides to go in this direction. Braunius explained that he has been happy with Humana and looking at the no out of state coverage with CDPHP and limited coverage for higher cost, he would rather switch providers and stick with Humana for now. Bain mentioned that the other individual that has had trouble with providers taking the coverage also travels out of state and CDPHP will not cover out of state.
   McGovern was hoping that a coalition of municipalities could come together to get combined coverage, but this is not available at this time. He plans to talk with the Commissioner of Insurance for NY.

   Bain mentioned that the town is too small in numbers to go with other plans. Bain asked the board for feedback. Parascandola thanked the members for their research and agreed that the consensus is to stay with Humana. O'Connell, McGovern, Bain and Braunius agree.

3. **Office of the Aging Contract –**

Bain went over the contract grant and how it pays for the bus trips with Wells paying half and Lake Pleasant paying the other half. Grant money reimburses the towns for these bus trips.

Resolution #61 Town of Lake Pleasant Town Board to Accept the Agreement Between Warren and Hamilton Counties Office For the Aging With The Town of Lake Pleasant.
Motion to discuss:
Offered by: Parascandola
2nd by: O'Connell
Bain went over this contract coming from the Office of the Aging, Dee Parks, she is helpful with any questions the town has. The cost to the town is $1,144.00 a year.
Bain mentioned that it would be nice to get the Town of Arietta on board since Arietta residents go on the bus trips.

Adopted by the following vote:

Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, O'Connell and Parascandola)
Nays: None
*****See attached for complete Contract Agreement*****

Committee Reports:

- **Highway Committee –** Braunius reported that the new garbage truck will be arriving on Wednesday.
- **Cemetery Committee –** Braunius reported that the committee will be making the rounds at the cemeteries once the ground is solid and assessing any winter damage and clean up.
- **Web Site Committee –** Parascandola went over the e-mail survey that she sent out to board members to give feedback on what they like about website formats. Top uses are- to look at rules and regulations, locate other offices and contacts, job postings and forms, locating board minutes. Top needs are- mobile friendly site, better accessibility, ADA compliance, list of forms, ease of use and calendar. Smith and Parascandola are working on website demos. The current site price is the best so far, the next up is double.
- **Youth Recreation –** O'Connell reported that 24 children went to Sky Zone today on Superintendent Conference Day. Bain praised the youth recreation direction that the committee is going in.

Resolution #62 Motion to pay Bills: Abstract #13 dated 3/15/2024, #3333-3360 in the amount of $212,512.53. Abstract #14 dated 3/13/2024, #3361-3361 in the amount of $626,400.00.
Offered by: McGovern
2nd by: O'Connell
Discussion: None
Adopted by the following votes:
Ayes: All (Supervisor Bain, Councilpersons - McGovern, Braunius, O'Connell and Parascandola)
Nays: None

Public Comment:
Kaen McComb praised Katrea Cohea for all that she is doing with the limited budget that the Town Board provides for the library. McComb pointed out that the value of the library to the community and comparable budgets of our size and demographics should be looked at by board members. She also mentioned that she was the one years ago that did not see the need for a heating system at the museum when it is not open in the winter months. She explained that the library is an ideal place to house artifacts that cannot be left in the cold. The library would be willing to accommodate the museum for storage needs. The library and the museum are community partners. McGovern stated that the library is the greatest public space the town has.

Roundtable:
- Bain mentioned the museum fundraiser is up to $36,054.00.

- Congresswoman Elise Stefanik has secured a $1.5M, small cell tower deployment project for Hamilton County. Bain read the thank you note that County Supervisor Brian Wells sent back to Elise Stefanik.
- Parascandola contacted the APA to express concerns about how difficult it was, when the cell tower was out, for residents in the area.

Next meeting: Our next meeting will be on Monday April 1, 2024, at 7PM at the Lake Pleasant Library

***ON A MOTION BY**: Don Braunius **2ND by:** Parascandola
To Adjourn @ 8:46 P.M.
All in Favor
Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie Smith, Town Clerk