The Town of Otsego Town Board held a Public Hearing, and a Regular Monthly Meeting on the 8th day of May 2024 starting at 7:00 pm at the Town Building in Fly Creek, NY.

Town Board Members Present:

Benjamin Bauer Supervisor

Chris Kjolhede Councilperson

Patricia Kennedy Councilperson

Deb Dalton Councilperson

Tom Hohensee Councilperson

Also Present:

William Hribar Highway Superintendent

Pamela Deane Town Clerk

Supervisor Bauer called the meeting to order and asked everyone in attendance to please rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Supervisor Bauer stated that the purpose of the Public Hearing was to hear public comments on allowing the Town Board to increase the 2025 Town Budget by more than the 2% limit set by the State of New York.

MOTION by Councilperson Hohensee, seconded by Councilperson Kennedy, to open the floor for public comment.

MOTION CARRIED: All were in favor.

There were no comments.

MOTION by Councilperson Dalton, seconded by Councilperson Kjolhede, to close the floor for public comment.

MOTION CARRIED: All were in favor.

MOTION by Councilperson Hohensee, seconded by Councilperson Kennedy, to accept the April 10th minutes as presented.

MOTION CARRIED: All were in favor.

MOTION by Councilperson Kjolhede, seconded by Councilperson Hohensee, to accept the April 18th minutes as presented.

MOTION CARRIED: All were in favor.

Supervisor Bauer reviewed correspondence received since last month’s meeting.

Supervisor Bauer opened the floor to public comments.

Edward Hobbie wanted to know how the Town Board has progressed with the solar evaluation and have they formed a committee to investigate it.

Supervisor Bauer replied that there is no plan to discuss the Solar Law tonight, but the Town Board has scheduled Solar Workshops for the third Thursday of the month at 3:00 PM. To answer Hobbie’s question, no committee has been formed.

With no further questions or comments Supervisor Bauer closed the floor.

Supervisor Bauer introduced Amanda Whalen who explained the NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities Program Grants and how accumulating points from accomplishing certain things equals Grant Money to be used to upgrade some of the Town’s infrastructure.

Supervisor Bauer thanked Whalen for coming and it was the consensus of the Town Board to take advantage of the NYSERDA Clean Energy Communities Grants.

MOTION by Councilperson Kennedy, seconded by Councilperson Kjolhede, to pay the bills and make the necessary transfers.

###### General: #55-# 70 $ 44,498.53

Hwy: #92-#109 $ 12,845.25

MOTION CARRIED: All were in favor.

The Town Board discussed the balances provided by Supervisor Bauer:

General Checking: $ 375,359.88 Hwy Checking: $714,682.29

Hwy Equipment Fund: $ 253,431.40

MOTION by Councilperson Dalton, seconded by Councilperson Kjolhede, to accept the Financial Report as given.

MOTION CARRIED: All were in favor.

Planning Board Member Sharon Kroker gave a report on applications currently being reviewed by the Planning Board.

A Highway report was given by Highway Superintendent Bill Hribar.

* Hribar stated that the Mill Street Bridge has been “Yellow Flagged” and will need to be addressed. Salt is eroding different sections of the bridge and affecting its integrity.
* Hribar stated that residents on Bibik Rd are complaining that the road has a drainage problem. Previously the Town Board had agreed to an engineering study that subsequently was never done. Supervisor Bauer will follow up on that.
* Hribar reported that Highway Employee Michael Thayer has volunteered to go to a three-day Highway Internship Program originally offered in Ithaca but, given only three people applied for the class, may be offered here in Fly Creek.
* Hribar informed the Town Board that he has approximately 16 culverts to replace/install. Some are for new driveways going in.
* Hribar asked the Town Board’s permission to hire Mike Ainslie to mow the Cemetery across from the Historical Building located on Cemetery Rd. The Town Board agreed.

Hwy Committee member Councilperson Kennedy reported that she and Councilperson Dalton suggest the Town Board move to accept the Expenditure of Highway Agreement.

MOTION by Councilperson Kennedy, seconded by Councilperson Dalton, to accept the Expenditure of Highway Agreement as presented.

MOTION CARRIED: All were in favor.

MOTION by Councilperson Kennedy, seconded by Councilperson Dalton, to hire an intern from the Cornell Camp Program to work 10 weeks, 40 hours/ week, at $17.50/hour.

MOTION CARRIED: All were in favor.

Supervisor Bauer reported on the Land Use Law Committee progress. He submitted a revised Land Use Application accepted by the Land Use Law Committee. The Town Clerk felt because of lack of storage, the old 1-page application should go back in use. The newly proposed application is 5 pages and most of the time half of the pages connected to the application are empty. The filing cabinets are filling up fast.

Councilperson Dalton suggested scanning everything into a computer, but the Town Clerk replied that that was not an option. Councilperson Hohensee suggested options for archiving or shredding be explored to alleviate storage issue. Councilperson Kennedy suggested the Building and Grounds Committee assess the situation.

Supervisor Bauer also submitted a revision of Section 1.05 and a definition for “Building Height”. The purpose of the revisions was to attempt to create more clarity.

Watershed Committee report was given by Councilperson Kennedy. Currently there are 376 septic systems around Otsego Lake. Problem is what authority is supposed to enforce them.

Supervisor Bauer stated that Town Attorney Will Green offered to re-write the Violation Notice that in the past came from the Watershed Committee only now it would be coming from the Town.

Councilperson Kennedy did not feel the Town Board should go forward with a Violation letter unless they are ready to follow through with the consequences set forth in the letter.

It was the consensus of the Town Board not to send out the letter until Town Attorney Green had reviewed it.

Councilperson Kennedy reported that she will be meeting with Kate Black to get the last details on the $500,000.00 grant for the 9-E plan. The grant money is to be used to plan a way to maintain Otsego Lake.

Supervisor Bauer told the Town Board that the new website is ready to launch. Kip will type up some instructions on how departments can update the website on their own and Supervisor Bauer will take some more recent pictures for the webpage.

Supervisor Bauer requested that the Town Board pass a Local Law allowing the 2025 Town Budget to exceed the 2% Cap set forth by the State of New York.

MOTION by Councilperson Hohensee, seconded by Councilperson Kennedy, to adopt Local Law #2 allowing the 2025 Town Budget to exceed the 2% cap set by the State of New York.

MOTION CARRIED: All were in favor.

Supervisor Bauer submitted a Memorandum of Understanding between Otsego County and the Town of Otsego. Otsego County was awarded a $27,159 grant for the purpose of establishing a Climate Smart Community group between Otsego County and the Town of Otsego for the completion of a Community-Wide Greenhouse Gas Inventory and a Government Operations Greenhouse Gas Inventory.

Councilperson Dalton agreed to conduct the Greenhouse Gas Inventory if the Town Board adopts the Memorandum of Understanding.

MOTON by Councilperson Dalton, seconded by Councilperson Kennedy, authorizing Supervisor Bauer to sign the Memorandum of Understanding between Otsego County and the Town of Otsego.

MOTION CARRIED: All were in favor.

The Town Board briefly discussed the proposed changes to Section 1.05, and the “Building Height” definition suggested by the Land Use Law Committee.

MOTION by Councilperson Kjolhede, and Councilperson Dalton, to schedule a Public Hearing for what would be called Local Law #3, amendments to the Land Use Law Section #1.05 and the definition for “Building Height.”

MOTION CARRIED: All were in favor.

Supervisor Bauer told the Town Board that ZBA Chairman Greg Crowell has requested the Town Board appoint another ZBA Alternate.

Supervisor Bauer introduced the idea of the Town Board hiring a bookkeeper. Discussion was tabled until the June meeting.

MOTION by Supervisor Bauer to adjourn.

MOTION CARRIED: All were in favor.

Meeting ended at 9.02 pm.

Next scheduled meeting will be June 12th, 2024, at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Pamela Deane/Town Clerk