

Otsego Town Board
Minutes, February 10, 2021

REGULAR MEETING

The monthly meeting of the Town of Otsego Board was held on this date at the Town Office Building in Fly Creek, New York. Present were Supervisor Meg Kiernan, and Town Councilmen Tom Hohensee (deputy), Carina Franck, Suzanne Olson, and Matthew Zwissler. Also present were Highway Superintendent Bill Hribar and acting clerk Bill Deane. Kiernan called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilman Hohensee moved to approve the Board's minutes of January 13, 2021. Councilman Franck seconded the motion and it was approved, 5-0.

Supervisor Kiernan reviewed correspondence received since the last meeting, some of which was included in the members' meeting packets. It included a flier on the 2021 New York Towns Annual Meeting & Training School, to be held as a virtual event, February 14-17.

Supervisor Kiernan noted that the Town still has a Community Bank account with over \$2,000 rightfully belonging to John Stucin. He had put up the money as a bond for his mineral mine many years ago. Kiernan wants to get the money back to Stucin, though he has not showed interest in that in the past.

Supervisor Kiernan noted that Councilman Hohensee had done an annual audit of the Town Clerk, and Councilman Franck did one of the Town Tax Collector. She accepted their reports.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Supervisor Kiernan opened the floor for public comments.

- Carl Wenner of Oaksville brought in articles for the Board (delivered to the Town Clerk), and shared his conspiracy theories about COVID-19.
- Andrew Marietta, County Representative for District 8, answered questions, and gave updates on various subjects:
 - Tammy McDonald of the Office for the Aging has reallocated unspent grant money toward transportation for seniors needing COVID vaccinations.
 - The Governor's office approved increasing the Otsego County bed tax from 4% to 6%, effective in September. Revenues from this source were about \$500,000 in 2020, down about two-thirds from previous years.
 - The Healthcare Consortium is on hiatus due to funding issues.
 - New York State will again withhold \$236,275 in tax money for the Distressed Provider Assistance Account. This is detailed in a January 22 e-mail from Elliott Auerbach, New York State Deputy Comptroller, in the members' meeting packets.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The Supervisor's financial report was included in the members' meeting packets. Councilman Hohensee moved to accept the financial report. Councilman Olson seconded the motion and it was approved, 5-0.

BILLS & TRANSFERS

Councilman Franck discussed the bills & transfers, noting that Highway #468 was changed from \$429.42 to \$399.17 due to removal of tax. She moved to pay the bills & transfers. Councilman Zwissler seconded the motion and it was approved, 5-0.

OTHER REPORTS

Dog Control Officer – Tom Steele was not present, and there was no report.

Zoning/Planning – Zoning Enforcement Officer Jess Lanza was not present, but had submitted a report, copies of which were distributed to the Board members. It listed six applications processed in January. Chip Jennings was present as Planning Board liaison. He gave a synopsis of their February 2 meeting activities.

Highway Superintendent – Bill Hribar discussed various subjects:

- The New York State Department of Transportation's County Highway Improvement Program (CHIP) is expected to give the Town c. \$175,000 after the budget passes in April. There is a November 3, 2020 letter regarding CHIP in the members' meeting packets.

- The Planning Board approved the expansion of the Kukenberger Gravel Mine, which is good news for the Highway Department, as the nearest alternative site is in Milford.
- Hribar is gathering financial information on replacing the culverts on Stone House and Tripp Hill Roads, and estimates it will cost between \$35,000-50,000. The Board expressed support of these efforts.

Highway Committee – Supervisor Kiernan and Councilman Franck said there was no report.

Building & Grounds Committee – Councilman Hohensee reported that new LED lights had been installed on and around the Highway Barn. Highway Superintendent Hribar said it was a great improvement. Councilman Franck submitted a flash drive with pictures of the Highway Department inventory.

Watershed Supervisory Committee – Supervisor Kiernan said there was no report.

Safety Committee – Councilman Franck and Hohensee said that the committee would be meeting February 12 at 9 AM.

Finance Committee – Bennett Sandler was not present. Supervisor Kiernan noted that there was a missing item under “DA expenses” in the highway fund budget, and \$38,104 should be zero. She will work with Sandler on this.

OTHER BUSINESS

Supervisor Kiernan discussed complaints and observations about the traffic on Jones Road. The posted speed limit is 45 mph, and people drive fast and recklessly on that road. She will ask Town Clerk Pam Deane for assistance in petitioning the State to reduce the speed limit.

With no further business, Supervisor Kiernan adjourned the meeting at 8:17. The next regular meeting is scheduled for March 10, 2021 at 7 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Deane, Acting Clerk