

Town of Fowler October 4, 2023, Minutes of Regular Scheduled Board Meeting at 6PM.

The Town of Fowler Regular scheduled Town Board meeting was held on the above date with four board members present. Also present were Town Clerk Tami Gale, Highway Superintendent Randy Durham, Planning Board Member Leo Knight, Board of Ethics Committee Member Vivian Goodman, Bill Smith of Barkley's Safe and Lock, Jane Dodds, and John and Debra Walsh. Councilperson Lynn Bishop was not in attendance.

Supervisor Newvine called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM then proceeded with the pledge of allegiance and led a moment of silence to honor our military men and women, all healthcare workers, and past Town of Fowler Councilman, and Town Supervisor, William Henry Lutz.

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the September 11th, 2023, regular scheduled board meeting. A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland, seconded by Councilperson Simmons to approve the minutes. All board members present voted in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Emergency meeting, held on September 26th, 2023. A motion was made by Councilperson Andrews, seconded by Councilperson Simmons, to approve the minutes. All board members present voted in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Supervisor Newvine reported Town Councilperson Lynn Bishop, Code Enforcement Officer Glen Besaw, and Assessor Chair Kathleen Besaw would not be in attendance this evening.

PROPOSAL

William Smith of Barkley's Safe & Lock presented the Town of Fowler Town Board with a Fire Alarm System Proposal for the Town Barn and the Town Hall. It was discussed the need for such monitoring was brought to the board's attention as a recommendation of safeguarding employees, members of the public, and municipal assets, after a recent insurance survey completed by NYMIR.

The following estimates were provided.

Town Barn Estimate \$ 9,272.82.

Town Barn and Town Hall Estimate \$18,686.04.

It was discussed that the estimates would be honored for 60 days. Supervisor Newvine thanked Will Smith for his presentation and reported there will be a 2nd budget workshop scheduled for October giving the board time to crunch some numbers.

JANE DODDS DISCUSSION ON GRANT OPPORTUNITY FOR SYLVIA LAKE

Supervisor Newvine introduced Jane Dodds to the meeting attendees for a discussion on a grant opportunity that would benefit Sylvia Lake. Ms. Dodds discussed Supervisor Newvine had forwarded her an email a few weeks prior, about Grants/Funding Opportunities that involved invasive species management which was provided to the Town by the St. Lawrence County Planning Office. Ms. Dodds reported she is a part of the Sylvia Lake Association and has spent the last several years trying to get rid of and stop the spread of Milfoil in Sylvia Lake as a member of the Sylvia Lake Milfoil Task Force.

Ms. Dodds reported she is at the board meeting tonight to ask to partner with the Town of Fowler to submit the grant application, which is submitted through the Grants Gateway for New York State. It was discussed the Town of Fowler has never used the Grants Gateway before, and she felt it would be a great opportunity

for the Town of Fowler to get set up with the Grants Gateway, which will list all the State and Federal Grant Opportunities that the Town would be eligible for once you are set up in the Grants Gateway System.

Ms. Dodds reported she has experience in grant writing, and she would love to volunteer to help. It was discussed that either Town Clerk Gale or Supervisor Newvine would be the representative on behalf of the Town if the Town decided to go through with the partnership.

Supervisor Newvine reported Town Clerk Gale now has the Town of Fowler set up in the Grants Gateway System.

Ms. Dodds reported the grant they are interested in applying for has a 25% match. She stated the Sylvia Lake Association has between \$8,000 and possibly \$12,000 to put in, which would make them eligible to apply for a possible \$48,000.

Ms. Dodds stated she is willing to spend as much time as is necessary on working on the grant application, and if the Town of Fowler is willing to partner with them, they will put in the money to get matched, and they will put in the work.

Supervisor Newvine thanked Ms. Dodds for her presentation stating he thinks Sylvia Lake is a great natural resource and we should take care of it. Supervisor Newvine reported he would let her know how the Town of Fowler wished to proceed on the matter.

DISCUSSION ON THE 2% TAX-CAP

Supervisor Newvine discussed the option to over-ride the 2% tax-cap or stay within the 2% tax-cap. Bookkeeper Finnie reported to override the 2% tax-cap the Town would need to hold a Public Hearing, adopt the 2% tax-cap over-ride by Local Law, and if the Town stays within the tax-cap, the Town will then need to rescind the Local Law that was adopted. Bookkeeper Finnie reported that she felt the Town was safe to stay within the 2% tax-cap. After some discussion, a motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland seconded by Councilperson Andrews to not exceed the 2% tax-cap. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

AYES: 4 Newvine, Simmons, Andrews, Cleveland

NAYES: 0

ABSENT: 1 Bishop

Set 2nd Budget Workshop in preparation of the Preliminary Budget

Supervisor Newvine reported a 2nd budget workshop is necessary in preparation of the 2024 preliminary budget. After some discussion, it was the consensus of the board members present to set the budget workshop to be held on Wednesday, October 18th at 4:00PM.

NOVEMBER BOARD MEETING DATE SET

Supervisor Newvine reported a date needed to be set for the November board meeting. After some discussion, a motion was made by Councilperson Andrews seconded by Councilperson Cleveland to set the November Town board meeting for Thursday, November 9th. All board members present voted in Favor. Motion Carried.

DATE SET FOR PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PRELIMINARY BUDGET

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to make Thursday, November 9th the date to hold a public hearing on the 2024 preliminary budget. A motion was made by Councilperson Andrews seconded by Councilperson Simmons. All board members present voted in Favor. Motion Carried.

DISCUSSION ON ADVERTISING FUEL BID

Supervisor Newvine discussed the need to advertise the 2-year fuel BID. A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Andrews to advertise the 2-year fuel BID to come in for the November 9th board meeting. All board members present voted in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Town Department Reports

Justice Department

Town Justice Tim Knowlton was not in attendance.

Bookkeeper

Bookkeeper Barbara Finnie reported:

- She had provided Town of Fowler Cash Balance Reports for Month Ending September 30, 2023, to board members for their review, and hadn't had time to complete the Budget Balances for September 30, 2023, which will be presented to the board later.
- The pavilion/playground fund has a balance of \$15,616.05.
- The SOS/HAP fund has a balance of \$7,270.23.

Supervisor Newvine asked Bookkeeper Finnie the amount of ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Funds that were left. Bookkeeper Finnie reported there is \$80,756.97 left in the ARPA Fund. It was discussed some uses for the money could be investing in a new raft for the beach, using it for the fire alarm monitoring proposal discussed earlier in the meeting, and for making the necessary upgrades to the dog kennel as mandated by the State. Supervisor Newvine asked Councilperson Simmons to provide a list of all the necessary changes that need to be made to the dog kennel for the board's review.

Assessors

Assessor Chair Kathy Besaw was not in attendance.

Supervisor Newvine reported:

- The town has received official notification that our equalization rate is 8.8%.

Historian

Historian Karen Simmons reported:

- She has been working on genealogies for three families.

Animal Control

Councilperson Karen Simmons reported for Dan Moyer who was not in attendance:

- 1 dog had been picked up by DCO Moyer, running at large on the Farm to Market Rd. The dog was returned to its owner who was actively looking for the animal.
- 2 complaints were received of dogs running at large on the California Road.
- She received a follow-up phone call from an individual on Jones Road concerning an incident involving an animal previously reported to animal control.

Beaver Control

Councilperson Karen Simmons reported for Moyer's Wildlife Control:

- There has been no activity from the beaver on the lower Stone Road since he has removed 3 beaver from the site. He continues to keep one trap at the location.
- He has not located any beavers on the Sylvia Lake Road, where beaver dams are present, and continues to monitor the site.
- He has three beaver traps set on Chub Lake and North Woods Roads and will remove the dams when the beavers are caught. He continues to monitor the areas.

Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement Officer Glen Besaw was not in attendance.

Supervisor Newvine Reported:

- CEO Besaw had made progress with a property in Hailesboro being cleaned up.
- CEO Besaw has been dealing with legal issues stemming from a certificate of occupancy never being issued by a former CEO. The document was located by Town Clerk Gale amongst stored records in the vault. Supervisor Newvine thanked Town Clerk Gale for her efforts in locating the missing document.

Town Clerk

Town Clerk Tami Gale reported:

- DEC Gross sales for the month were \$4,842.00 with the Town of Fowler's Commission being \$243.37. She had licensed 35 dogs, issued 4 death certificates, 1 marriage license, 3 certified marriage transcripts, handled 3 building permit applications and had collected \$3.75 for photocopies.
- Pepsi machine money collected was \$324.00 (since July).
- A scrap metal check was received in the amount of \$223.20 for 2.12 tons of metal.
- She, and Deputy Town Clerk Kimberly Reed will be attending the local government conference to receive training on Tuesday, October 10th, and Deputy Town Clerk Debra Tupper will be working at the Town Hall.
- The Town Clerk's Office will be closed on Monday, October 9th, in honor of Columbus Day, and will be closed on Tuesday, November 7th for the General Election, as the Town Hall is the polling place for the Town of Fowler.

Highway Department

Highway Superintendent Randy Durham reported:

- Brian Koerick starts CDL school on October 26th, and they have found enough grants to cover the entire cost of the school, which Hwy. Superintendent Durham thought would make the employee training agreement executed by Resolution #14 of 2023 on July 10th, 2023 between the Town of Fowler and Brian Koerick null and void.
- Hwy. Superintendent Durham stated the only cost will be the mileage, and the school is from 4:30 to 8:30, with an hour drive each way, so he will be paid for those hours, and Brian will drive a Town truck back and forth to the class.

Town Clerk Gale stated the agreement should be rescinded by resolution. Bookkeeper Barbara Finnie suggested leaving the contract in place until the class is completed.

- Reported his camera that he installed to try to catch the sign thieves has been chopped up by an ax, and asked the board if they would replace it.

Councilperson Simmons asked what the cost would be to replace the camera. Hwy. Superintendnet Durham replied that it would cost less than \$100.00. Councilperson Simmons asked if it was going to be replaced with another camera and if it was going to belong to the Town of Fowler or to Hwy. Superintendent Durham. Hwy. Superintendent Durham replied it is going to belong to him since it is replacing one that was his, and he had made the board aware of the use of his own camera to monitor for road sign thieves. Councilperson Simmons asked why the Town isn't buying their own camera to use. After some discussion, it was the consensus of the board members that were present to replace the Hwy. Superintendents camera and to have the Town purchase their own camera for future use. It was discussed that Hwy. Superintendent Durham would set an account up for the Town's camera to receive the photos from the camera which will include a monthly fee.

- There is an issue with the crack sealer's wand not heating up. Hwy. Superintendent Durham reported the salesperson who sold it to the Town is going to meet the highway department half way and transport the crack sealer to Rochester to be fixed. It was discussed that the crack sealer is no longer under warranty and the Town will only be paying for the shop fees to repair it.

- He has contacted BOCES several times regarding the 98 International plow truck and has not had a return call. It was discussed they will re-address the topic at the next board meeting and decide how to proceed if BOCES does not contact him about the plow truck.

Councilmembers

Councilperson Cleveland:

- Reported he thought that partnering with the Sylvia Lake Association for the grant opportunity was a good thing and a good idea to help them out.
- Asked about Senator Mark Walczyk's bonfire session that is going to be held at the Town Hall on October 12th, and if we needed to set up something for a campfire.

Supervisor Newvine reported he had talked to a member of Senator Walczyk's team earlier today, and he is bringing the fire pit, and light refreshments. It will be held from 6PM to 8PM. It was discussed the bonfire session ad would be sent to the town webmaster to add to the website.

- Asked Town Clerk Gale if she had been contacted for a pavilion rental on the 14th of October. It was discussed she had not been contacted by anyone to rent the pavilion, and she would mark the date as reserved.

Councilperson Jeff Andrews:

- Asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham when the summer hours are going to end for the highway workers. Hwy. Superintendent Durham replied they will end in a couple of weeks; he usually ends it the first Wednesday after hunting season starts.

Councilperson Karen Simmons:

- The month of September had 27 visits to the HAP Program, along with a \$200.00 donation, and a canned vegetable donation.
- On September 22, she and Supervisor Newvine delivered SOS care packages to senior citizens in the Town of Fowler. Prior to that she and Town Clerk Gale had delivered SOS care packages to Kilkarney Courts and the Fowler school apartments.
- The next SOS care package delivery will be made in December.
- Reported she had received a complaint from a taxpayer at Countryside Court Drive, concerning a street light being moved. It was discussed the street light was moved closer to Kermit Rice's residence. Councilperson Andrews reported the street light had been placed near the Rice residence first and it was moved back to where it originally was.
- The taxpayer would like to know if they are paying for Hailesboro Lighting as a part of their taxes, why they can't have a light there. Supervisor Newvine reported he can ask about having one installed there.
- The same taxpayer wants to know why there is no sign installed coming from State Highway 58 and entering Countryside Court Drive depicting the name of the road. It was discussed that Countryside Court Drive is a private road, and if the Town of Fowler were to put up a sign on a private road it would make the Town beholden. Hwy. Superintendent Durham reported the Town is no longer putting any signs on any private roads period. He suggested the taxpayer(s) can purchase the signs and install them themselves on private roads and he can give them information on where to purchase them.

Councilperson Lynn Bishop:

- Was not in attendance.

Supervisor Ricky W. Newvine:

- Asked if the proposed dock law was ever approved. Town Clerk Gale reported the proposed dock law is at the St. Lawrence County Planning Board Office for review, the County meeting is on the 12th, and we should have written recommendations or approval shortly after the meeting is held. If there are no recommendations then we can schedule a public hearing for the proposed dock law, if it needs corrections, it will go back to the Town Attorney's office for any changes to be made.
- Reported the exposed generator line has now been buried.
- Asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham to have another sign made depicting Town of Fowler business parking only, to be installed at the beach parking area. He reported with the agreement that was recently made regarding the DEC boat launch he felt this would be a good idea.
- Tipped his hat to the highway department workers for their recent prompt work cleaning up a downed tree on the Sullivan Road. He reported Nelson Bice and Fran Cole had done a tremendous job in a timely manner.

Public Comment

- Councilperson Cleveland questioned if the vote had been taken to approve number 5 of this evening's agenda, approving the minutes of the Emergency Meeting held on September 26, 2023. Town Clerk Gale reported a motion had been made by Councilperson Andrews seconded by Councilperson Simmons. All board members present then voted "aye" and the motion was recorded as All board members present are in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.
- Councilperson Simmons thanked Steve and Tami Gale for decorating the outside of the Town Hall for fall.
- Debra Walsh reported she needed the end of her driveway fixed. Hwy. Superintendent Durham reported he has it scheduled to complete and is waiting on hot mix.

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to audit the bills. A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland seconded by Councilperson Simmons to audit the bills. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

The bills audited for the General and Highway Fund were #378 to #416, with a total of \$93,025.60.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held on November 9th, 2023, at 6:00PM.

Supervisor Newvine reminded all to remember to vote in the General Election on November 7th.

With no further business, on a motion of Councilperson Cleveland, seconded by Councilperson Andrews, the October 4th, 2023, Regular Town Board meeting was adjourned at 6:52PM. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Tami Gale; Town Clerk