

Town of Fowler Emergency Meeting held on March 31, 2020 at 4:00PM

The Town of Fowler held an Emergency Meeting on the above date. In attendance were: Supervisor Ricky W. Newvine, Councilperson Jeff Andrews, Councilperson Karen Simmons, Highway Superintendent Randy Durham, Town Clerk Tami Gale, and attending by phone Councilperson Lynn Bishop. The meeting was advertised on both entrances to the Town Hall, the Town of Fowler website, and an email was sent to the Gouverneur Tribune Press. The advertisement of the meeting was to let taxpayers know that the Town was holding a meeting as the Town Hall is closed to the public due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Attendance was limited to 10 individuals, and the social distancing recommendation was observed.

Supervisor Newvine stated that the emergency meeting was called to determine when the highway department would be asked to return to work. Supervisor Newvine reported that other Towns are laying off their entire highway department for 1 month taking into consideration the federal stimulus package.

Councilperson Bishop asked if any member of the board had discussed it with the union. Supervisor Newvine stated that he would call and speak to the union representative.

Highway Superintendent Durham stated that the laborers were slated to return to work on April 1, 2020 by previous instructions and asked the boards' decision on the matter.

After some discussion, it was determined by the board, that the highway department laborers would remain off for 1 more week, and the board would meet weekly as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to determine a date for the highway department laborers to return to work. A meeting was set for April 7, 2020 to re-address a return to work date for the highway department.

PAVILION

Supervisor Newvine reported that he had received the Agreement prepared by Town Attorney Henry Leader between the Town of Fowler and Boland Creek Masonry for the construction of a 30' by 50' concrete pad that will house a future pavilion. Supervisor Newvine stated that the board had been updated following a February 25, 2020 Pavilion Committee meeting attended by 2 of the 4 board members on the matter. The agreement was approved following the March 11, 2020 Pavilion Committee meeting by consensus of the board. Two members of the board attended the meeting and further discussed the proposal for the pad with the remaining board members. Supervisor Newvine reported that some work had begun without a contract signed at the time due to favorable weather conditions and time restrictions, while awaiting the agreement paperwork that was being drawn up by the Town attorney. Supervisor Newvine wanted to let everyone know that if the contract is approved to be signed at this meeting the effective date of the contract would be todays date even though some of the work had begun,

and that a Certificate of Liability Insurance had been received by the Town Clerks office from Boland Creek Masonry on March 12, 2020.

RESOLUTION

Resolution #10 of 2020

A motion was made by Councilperson Andrews seconded by Councilperson Simmons to adopt Resolution #10 of 2020, authorizing Supervisor Newvine to sign the agreement by and between the Town of Fowler and Boland Creek Masonry, on behalf of the Town. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

AYES: 3 *NEWWINE, SIMMONS, ANDREWS,*

AYES BY PHONE: 1 *BISHOP*

NAYS: 0

Supervisor Newvine reported:

- He had received information and guidance from the Town attorney in regards to declaring a state of emergency, and it was discovered that the Town is covered under Governor Cuomo's Executive order and it is not necessary for the Town of Fowler to declare a state of emergency.
- He had received correspondence from the Town attorney with some information on how to conduct meetings under Executive Order 202.1 that suspends Article 7 of the Public Officer's Law (Open Meetings Law) so as to allow the board to meet either remotely by conference call or to be physically present at the meeting. The meetings now need to be recorded, live-streamed or taped with the Town Hall being closed to the public to make the content of the meetings available to the public.
- He had received information and guidance from the Town attorney on COVID-19 paid sick leave and his analysis of the New York State and Federal Paid Sick Leave Act as well as the Family Medical Leave Act.

It was discussed that the Town needed to adopt a policy stating that if you are sick stay at home.

- He had emailed Shari Barnhart, administrator of the Town of Fowler website, to ask her if she could help make all seasonal Sylvia Lake residents aware that when they come back, they will need to self-quarantine for 14 days. He learned that this message was already posted on the Sylvia Lake website.
- He will provide to her a similar message to put on the Town of Fowler website.

Supervisor Newvine gave update from Tom Manley of Pinnacle Technologies:

- That the wiring is fixed between the buildings, wi-fi is now set up in the Town Barn, and that he was calling to confirm an appointment for Thursday to finish the new phone system set up.
- He had received a request by the Highway Superintendent to obtain a lap top computer for use by the men in the bay area, to use to look up parts and use to look up "how to" u-tube videos on equipment repairs. He quoted a price of \$600.00 on a Dell refurbished

laptop and asked about the board's thoughts on the matter. After further discussion, it was the consensus of the board to take no action at this time on the computer.

- That the key-fob system will be fixed by Barkley's that would consist of uploading a new software system which should remedy the issues with the Town Clerk door not working. If this does not solve the problem, Tom stated that he would run a new line.
- That Tom will be running a new line to be used as a fax line for the machine in the Code Enforcement office, requested by Assessor Chair Sherry Geer. The two offices would then have access to a fax machine when the Town Clerk office is not available.

PAVING

Highway Superintendent Durham:

- Reported that he felt the Town of Fowler still needed to BID out the paving for 2020. He suggested cutting back on the roads to be paved and just paving the River Road and Kilkarney Court, siting that revenue is likely going to be much lower than anticipated this year.

After some discussion on the matter, it was the consensus of the board to have Highway Superintendent Durham prepare the Roadwork 2020 BID to bring to the April 14th, 2020 Regular scheduled board meeting for further discussion.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 4:10PM, a motion was made by Councilperson Andrews seconded by Councilperson Simmons to enter into executive session. Highway Superintendent Randy Durham was invited by the board to attend the executive session. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

At 4:16PM, a motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Andrews to end the executive session. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Supervisor Newvine reported that the purpose of the executive session was to discuss an employee who is currently off and his health situation. He reported the board has made the decision to wait until the employee has concluded his next Dr. appointment to make a determination on which way to go.

COVID-19 FOOD & WELLNESS PROGRAM UPDATE

Councilperson Simmons reported:

- That she and Town Clerk Tami Gale had shopped Friday March 27, 2020 for items to deliver to the senior citizens that were found to have needs discovered during wellness calls and checks that were made to the senior citizens of Fowler due to the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- The amount spent on food and toiletries totaled \$483.54, which was for a total of 40 senior citizens.

- On Saturday March 28, 2020, she as well as Linda Hill, Debra Tupper, and Tami Gale met at the Town Hall to make up small containers of hand sanitizer and hand soap, and to sort and bag groceries for the 40 senior citizens.
- Each recipient received 3 bags of items. Included in the bags were: Bread, hand soap / or hand sanitizer, toilet paper, soup, crackers, instant oatmeal, canned meals, canned vegetables, canned potatoes, canned tomatoes, pudding, pasta, peanut butter, multi-use cloths donated by Newvine's Napa, and COVID-19 informational flyers from St. Lawrence County Public Health, New York State Department of Health and Town of Fowler Emergency phone numbers.
- Linda Hill and Councilperson Simmons delivered to 15 senior citizens and Debra Tupper delivered to 1 senior citizen on Saturday March 28, 2020.
- Jeff and Linda Hill, and Councilperson Simmons, delivered the remainder of the packages on Monday March 29, 2020, and Highway Superintendent Randy Durham assisted with 3 deliveries.
- Over the weekend Councilperson Simmons had received 2 more names of senior citizens with needs.
- She shopped for the 2 individuals at a cost of \$34.03 prior to todays' meeting and will deliver the packages at the conclusion of this meeting.
- She reported that we are done shopping for this round of deliveries and directed the volunteers that in 2 weeks we will make the wellness calls again.
- She reported that volunteer Linda Hill had received donations from Kinney Drugs that will be included in the next round of packages.

Highway Superintendent Randy Durham reported:

- He had applied for a \$500.00 grant through the Gouverneur Elks Lodge to assist the Town in this effort.

Councilperson Jeff Andrews:

- Recommended that the Town place an ad in the Gouverneur Tribune next week to let Town of Fowler residents know that if they need any assistance to contact the Town.

Supervisor Newvine:

- Asked how the response has been from people who have received the packages. Councilperson Simmons reported that everyone has been so appreciative.
- Thanked the volunteers for their work and their effort and asked the board if anyone had any issues with spending some money to continue to provide this assistance during the pandemic. After some discussion, it was the consensus of the board that it is money well spent to assist Town of Fowler residents during the pandemic. The Town anticipates providing the assistance approximately every 2 weeks as needed.

Councilperson Lynn Bishop:

- Asked what the status of the sales tax is. Supervisor Newvine stated that the Town had received the last quarter, but the next quarter will hurt as nothing is coming in right now, and there is some concern if the CHIP money will still be available.

Supervisor Newvine asked everyone to take care of themselves, and to be safe.

The next emergency meeting is scheduled to be held on April 7, 2020 at 4:00PM at the Town Hall.

At 4:22PM a motion was made by Councilperson Andrews seconded by Councilperson Simmons to adjourn the emergency meeting. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Tami Gale, Town Clerk