

December 18, 2023

A special meeting of the Town Board of Vernon was held at 6:45 p.m. on the above date at the Town Office Building for the purpose of a public hearing to consider amending Local Law Administration and Enforcement of the NYS Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code and the State Energy Conservation Construction code per NYS Guidelines.

Council members present: Randy Watson, Supervisor; Gene Bennati, Myron Thurston, Steve Adamkowski and John Peters. Also present: 5 community members. The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Watson at 6:45 p.m.

Watson advised that they are updating this code per NYS Guidelines. There was no further discussion on this.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

The regular meeting of the Town Board of Vernon was held at 7:00 p.m. on the above date at the Town Office Building. Council members present: Randy Watson, Supervisor; Gene Bennati, Myron Thurston, Steve Adamkowski and John Peters. Also present: 5 residents.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, there was a moment of silence. The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Watson at 7:00 p.m.

Supervisor Watson asked the council members if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes from the December 4, 2023 meeting. There being none, a motion to approve the minutes as written was made by Peters, seconded by Bennati. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

PUBLIC CONCERNS:

Resident Nate Richter stated that he was here as a concerned Town of Vernon resident not from the City of Sherrill, and that he was not representing anyone, just fact finding. A little over a year ago there was a meeting between the Town of Vernon and Sherrill regarding the extension of the agreement between the 2 entities regarding green waste and funding etc. It appears through emails that at the end of said meeting there was an agreement made between the 4 individuals that attended that meeting. In September 2022 the Town of Vernon had a board meeting and after Executive Session there was a vote on extending Intermunicipal Agreement that did not pass with 4 Nays and 0 Ayes. Richter was wondering what had happened between these two instances that changed the minds of board members. Watson asked whose email he had gotten the information from. Richter stated that Brandon Lovett, City of Sherrill manager had given him a synopsis of what the meeting was. Watson stated that they had never agreed to extend the agreement. The agreement made over five years ago was agreed upon as the Town of Vernon was able to receive grants by doing so. Mr. Lovett expected that the Town of Vernon was going to extend the agreement. Richter wanted to clarify that the Town of Vernon (4) board members that were at that meeting did not remember agreeing to anything at the meeting. Peters stated that it was a 5-year agreement. And it was not advantageous to extend that agreement any longer. Richter had looked at emails between the 2 entities and Mr. Lovett had given the option for the Town to either be "All in or all out. No ala carte." on what support the Town was choosing to give to Sherrill. He believed Mr. Lovett then back pedaled. His interpretation was that Mr. Lovett had changed his mind on his initial stance and wanted to be open to negotiations. Richter stated that the City of Sherrill has a pool, CAC and a number of parks. He would like them to be open to everyone in the Town of Vernon and negotiations between the two entities to open back up for an agreement. Watson advised that one part of their decision was based on the fact that only 1% of the Town residents outside of the City of Sherrill were using the facilities. Richter said that it was 14% of the Town population at the pool according to their numbers. Adamkowski advised that they have never directly supported the pool financially. It had always been in the agreement for the CAC, library, and other things. Watson stated that the Town residents can still use the CAC. Richter said it is an added cost for families especially if they have multiple children. Adamkowski stated that they had budgeted in 2023 to give to the CAC however with Mr. Lovett's all or nothing option, the town chose nothing. The town has budgeted money for 2024 and looks forward to negotiations and contributing. Richter asked when those negotiations would begin. Adamkowski stated that with the change over of three City Commissioner seats they

would be waiting until after the 1st of the year when those terms take place. Thurston advised that up to this date there has been no negotiating with Sherrill as from their side it has been take it or leave it. Richter advised that the CAC can be utilized by people of all ages in the town and that it would be nice for everyone to be able to use the facility at the same rates. When the agreement didn't go the way Sherrill wanted it to go the City of Sherrill has since then found it to be cheaper to take care of their own green waste. The Town Board members do not believe that to be a fact but are happy for them if it is true. Bennati asked Richter what his objective was, and Richter advised that he would like to see negotiations open back up between the two entities.

Roger Eaton asked for an update on the Vernon Center Water District. Peters advised that they are finishing up on the water easements that were needed. There are 30 trees in the proposal that need to come down. He has spoken with 26 of those who have agreed to take the trees down. They are finalizing the plans for the water tower and piping system and pumping station. Three phase power will be needed to connect to the pumping station. Watson advised that out of the 4 remaining easements 3 of them we are working with and the fourth does not want to sign off on it. Justin Eaton asked if the water would be going down route 26 to Vaill's farm. It is not currently. It is proposed to go to the first 9 homes on that stretch. However, it may not happen if the property owner on the corner of Route 5 and Route 26 is not willing to sign off on the easement. Eaton asked what the other side of the story was on the sign that said property owner wants to put up. Watson advised that they feel they are being held hostage on the easement until they issue the permit for the sign. The property owner must go through the codes office and the local laws need to be followed. The town board has nothing to do with issuing the permit.

Emily Sweatman spoke to the board members as she had sent them each a letter requesting help to amend the way the laws are written for abused individuals that have to pay their abusers child support. Bennati stated that he received the letter and after talking to others he recommended she go to Oneida County Family Court for assistance. Sweatman advised that she had done so and had gotten nowhere. Board members understood what she was asking but did not feel they had any pull to get her the help with this change.

REPORTS:

The following reports were presented: Education and Libraries; Bennati said he attended the open house at the Vernon Library. He was very impressed with how they had cleaned everything up and stated that they are doing an incredible job and they have great plans for the library.

There were no reports from Town Clerk, Planning Board/Zoning Board of Appeals, Codes Enforcement, SWOCO, Supervisor's, Highway Superintendent, Assessors, Intergovernmental Relations, Operations, Economic Development and County Legislator.

Adamkowski had to leave at 7:35 as he was late for a school board meeting.

A motion to accept the above reports was made by Peters, seconded by Thurston. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to pay the bills was made by Thurston, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

BUSINESS:

A motion to approve Local Law Ammendment for the Administration and Enforcement of the NYS Uniform Fire Prevention/Building Code and the State Energy Conservation Construction code per NYS Guidelines was made by Peters, seconded Thurston. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None

A motion to adjourn at 7:48 p.m. was made by Bennati, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

Additions to minutes on file
in Town Clerk's Office.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Champney
Town Clerk

This meeting was digitally recorded and is on file in the Town Clerk's office.

COMMUNICATIONS:

None