

July 10, 2023

The regular meeting of the Town Board of Vernon was held at the Town Office Building on the above date with the following persons present: Randy Watson, Supervisor; Gene Bennati, Steve Adamkowski, John Peters and Myron Thurston, Council members. Also present: County Legislator, Keith Schiebel; Assemblyman, Brian Miller and 9 others.

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 June 12, 2023 meeting. There being none, a motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Thurston, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

PUBLIC CONCERNS:

Todd Metcalfe from General Code spoke to the Board members about his proposal for codification services of the Town of Vernon code book. A comprehensive codification would include Supplementation of Local Law No. 1-2021 to Local Law No. 2-2023, create an updated code, an editorial and legal analysis, update online code housed on eCode 360 platform and 5 custom printed code books. Supplementation price is \$600 and Codification project price is \$8,995.00. There is concern on where the fees are listed in the current book and consolidating these fees to one location in the book. Board members will need to see if money is in the budget before voting.

Mike Janowski stated to the board that after the recent ongoings at the highway garage and the 30 years of service he dedicated to the Town of Vernon, that he probably wasn't that bad of an employee to be fired from the Town. Watson stated that he was not fired and that he retired, then was hired back as a seasonal employee and was no longer needed after the season. Peters asked if he wanted to work for the highway again and Janowski said he does not want to work for the current highway superintendent. Watson asked if he received a letter of termination and Janowski said yes, he received a letter that said he was no longer needed and would receive a call if he was wanted back.

Local ATV Club members were present and asked for an update on the approval for ATVs to use a portion of Wood Road to get from one section of trail to the other section. Town Attorney Rossi needs a map with marked locations, distance and a written statement of why it is necessary.

REPORTS:

The following reports were presented: Town Clerk, Codes Enforcement, Education and Libraries: Bennati had expected the Board members from the Vernon Library to be present as he had a few questions for them that he did not ask last month. One of those questions was to inquire if employees were paid when the library was closed due to Covid. Assemblyman Brian Miller wanted to thank everyone for their help and support for the Vernon Downs situation and getting the tax relief legislation through and onto the governor; Supervisors, County Legislator; Schiebel submitted a written report and highlighted the new state election law changing elections to even years for counties and towns, celebrating June Dairy Month, pay raises for county workers and the escalating cost of the county office building parking garage. Schiebel also advised board members to take pictures of the county roads when they see concerning areas that they feel need to be addressed. He also followed up on the "Share the Road Signs" through Cooperative Extension that Peters requested at the last meeting. Board members need to get a count of signs, locations needed and the Highway Department will need to put them up.

There were no reports from Assessors, Zoning/Planning Board, Operations, SWOCO, Highway, Intergovernmental Relations and Economic Development.

A motion to accept above reports was made by Bennati, seconded by Thurston. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to pay bills was made by Adamkowski, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

BUSINESS:

A motion to schedule a Public Hearing on August 14th at 6:45 Pm to discuss allowing ATVs to use Wood Road for access to trails was made by Peters, seconded by Thurston. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

Oneida County 2nd installment of snow contract check was received in the amount of \$83,457.00.

SWOCO invited Town Board Members to picnic at Hatalla Road site on July 13th at 6:30pm.

Supervisor Watson wanted to have a discussion on Elected Official Oath of Office requirements. Adamkowski asked Rossi if any other Towns or Villages he works with has something in place. Rossi advised that the Village of Herkimer is putting together a committee to establish if there should be minimum requirements and what the minimum requirements of Elected Officials should be. Thurston thought it fell under a state statute. Rossi stated that there is a state statute, however, he believes Watson is looking for an understanding amongst ourselves as to what the expectations are. Wendy Coston spoke up that she has done some research on this and that ethics boards are established for this reason and the ethics board would hold Officials accountable for not following their Oath of Office. The Ethics Board would consist of (1) one Board member and (2) two Community Volunteers. Rossi stated that the Town of Vienna has an ethics board and he will get the requirements they have established to share with the board members.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Nate Richter asked for an update on the Vernon Center Water District. Watson advised that the Village of Vernon is going to vote on a price at their July 11, 2023 meeting. Richter asked how the Village of Vernon gets their water. Thurston advised that they get it from the City of Oneida through a water line that the Village installed years ago on Sholtz Rd. Due to the waterline being outside of the Village of Vernon, they are able to charge a different rate to those who are supplied water through their lines.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn at 8:13 p.m. was made by Peters, seconded by Thurston. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Jennifer Champney
Town Clerk

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

COMMUNICATIONS:

None