

May 9, 2016

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 were Randy Watson, Supervisor; Gene Bennati, Mick McDonough and Steve Adamkowski. Also present: Art Freemire, Highway Superintendent; Mike Kaiser of PAC 99, Keith Schiebel, County Legislator; Frank Laguzza, Assessor Chairman; Attorney Evan Rossi and 29 citizens.

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 April 11, 2016 meeting. There being none, a motion to approve the minutes as written was made by Bennati, seconded by Adamkowski. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

#### PUBLIC CONCERNS:

Jayne Wentworth specified that SunEdison's representative at the last Board meeting was wrong about the solar farm not affecting property values because they would be decreased, and it would be unsafe because of the radio frequency radiation that would be given off. The Town Boards of Lenox and Sullivan enacted a moratorium on solar farms so they could study it further because of the health risks. There is nothing positive to this at all.

Jason Calcara reiterated the danger of this power plant to his family, and that Oneida Castle Fire Department said they are not equipped to handle this, and SunEdison is in bankruptcy. Also, is this decision going to be unbiased because the Board members may be close friends with Howard Regner who owns the property that the proposed solar farm would be built on.

McDonough responded that he did not like the implication that the Board would make a biased decision on this because they are listening to all the facts and have not made any decision yet. Also, there is no law in place right now to allow it.

Bennati mentioned that this is very similar to the hydrofracking issue and the Board attended many seminars and meetings to make an educated decision on it and it is everyone's right and responsibility to voice their concerns.

Assessor Chairman Laguzza mentioned that there are currently about a dozen solar panels in residential areas, so he needs clarification on this as an assessor because if it's not addressed, is it allowed.

McDonough responded that those panels are different because you cannot have a commercial power generating facility in an agricultural district without a law that addresses it.

Adamkowski mentioned that the Board wants to be more educated on this because they have to decide if they want to allow solar or not in agricultural districts in the town, it's not just about this project.

Peters announced that there are free public meetings on solar on May 23<sup>rd</sup> at the Stanwix Heights Fire Hall from 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm and at MVCC on June 9<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 - 8:00 pm.

Fanny Krawiec asked if the State is putting on the MVCC meeting because it may be biased.

Peters mentioned that it is still more information and questions can be asked.

McDonough added that it is a non-issue right now, but they do want to sift through all the information to make an educated decision.

On another subject, Mike Hennessy urged the Board members to write a letter to our County Executive to oppose changing the formula used to distribute sales tax revenue because we would get less funding.

#### REPORTS:

The following reports were presented: Town Clerk, Codes Enforcement, Supervisor's, Assessors: Laguzza mentioned that the tentative assessment rolls are complete and available to the public. Education and Libraries: Bennati said that the new Vernon Library Director is doing a great job. Intergovernmental Relations: Adamkowski reported that he and our Assessors had a meeting with Martha Group and the V.V.S. administration regarding a couple of businesses that are requesting reductions in assessments, which would result in about \$90,000 in decreased funds for the town and the school. Since this may involve some court fees, Martha Group would ask the School Board to consider helping with that cost. SWOCO: Bennati wondered if we

could petition the State to close the landfill site. Highway Superintendent: Freemire announced White Goods Day is May 14<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am- 1:00 pm.

County Legislator Schiebel reported: 1) the first quarter sales tax revenue was up 3%, 2) the County Executive has not yet shared the 2015 closed books, 3) there is no proposal yet for the redistribution of sales tax revenue, 4) there is state funding for water projects, 5) funding came through from flood mitigation projects and 6) Verona enacted a 6 month moratorium on solar arrays at their Board meeting last Monday.

There were no reports from Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, Economic Development, Operations and Historian.

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

A motion to pay the bills was made by McDonough, seconded by Bennati. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

#### BUSINESS:

A motion to approve a new sign requested by Utica-Rome Speedway was made by McDonough, seconded by Bennati. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to approve the use of the Town Office Building by the Historical Society for meetings on May 24<sup>th</sup>, June 28<sup>th</sup>, July 26<sup>th</sup>, August 23<sup>rd</sup>, September 27<sup>th</sup> and October 25<sup>th</sup> was made by Bennati, seconded by McDonough. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to obtain a couple of quotes to clean and strip floors and clean carpets in the Town Office Building was made by Adamkowski, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

Attorney Rossi explained the proposal for the geomorphological study and the FEMA Hazard Mitigation agreements regarding the Environmental Site Assessment and Pre-Demolition Asbestos Survey of the properties involved in the flood. A motion to pass both resolutions for the geomorphological study and the FEMA assessments and asbestos surveys was made by McDonough, seconded by Bennati. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to approve up to \$1500 to enhance the landscaping in front of the Town Office Building was made by McDonough, seconded by Adamkowski. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to approve the Town of Vernon as the Lead Agent for the Youngs Road Water District extension was made by McDonough, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to apply for funding under Round 2 of NYS Water Grant Program was made by Adamkowski, seconded by McDonough. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

Highway Superintendent Freemire requested the construction of a shelter for the new lawn mower to be placed in the back section of the Town Office Building. A motion to approve the construction of a building with a locked gate for approximately \$2300 was made by Bennati, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

Notification was received from Michael's Fine Food & Spirits to obtain a NYS liquor license for all events at the Hayloft on the Arch in Vernon Center.

A motion to change the July 11, 2016 Board meeting to July 18, 2016 was made by Adamkowski, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to pass resolution to write a letter to the Governor opposing the formula change in sales tax revenue was made by McDonough, seconded by Adamkowski. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to sell the old Ford pickup truck was made by Bennati, seconded by Adamkowski. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

None

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion to enter into Executive Session at 9:09 p.m. to discuss County business was made by Bennati, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

Supervisor Watson announced that no further business would be conducted.

Council returned from Executive Session at 9:35 p.m. A motion to adjourn at 9:36 p.m. was made by Adamkowski, seconded by Bennati. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

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

Julie A. McElroy  
Town Clerk

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

COMMUNICATIONS:

None