

February 10, 2025

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: 7 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 January 13, 2025 meetings. There being none, a motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Thurston, seconded by Bennati. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

PUBLIC CONCERNS:

Art Wood gave an update on Vernon Downs. Things are going well. Their current tax break expires in 2027. They currently have approximately 270 employees. The state says they must have at least 180. Working on new lighting for the track.

Nate Richter asked the board if they would be requesting audits from all of the Fire Departments after the recent news of the Former Vernon Center Fire Department Treasurers arrest for stealing over \$300,000.00. Supervisor Watson advised that although it is not currently in the Fire contracts, that it will be in the future. He did mention that the Vernon Fire Department already does a yearly audit. Richter also questioned whether there would be money for the CAC. Watson advised that there is \$15,000 in youth funds that will be given to the City of Sherrill for the CAC in 2025. The Town Board has also signed a contract with the Village of Vernon for repairs to the baseball field. Richter thanked the Town Board.

Residents asked for an update on the Vernon Center Water District. Supervisor Watson explained that they are waiting on the Health Department. They are considering reaching out to Joe Griffo for assistance. James Morrissey encouraged the board to follow up on getting the pre bid out on the Contract Reporter.

REPORTS:

The following reports were presented: Town Clerk, Codes Enforcement, SWOCO; Watson re-elected as Chairman, Supervisor, Intergovernmental Relations; Adamkowski advised he is finishing up getting the submissions for the newsletter. County Legislator Schiebel submitted a written report and gave a brief overview. He also invited all to attend "An Hour and Dessert with Joe" to be held on Thursday, February 27th at 6:00pm at "The Spot".

There were no reports from: Zoning/Planning Board, Education and Libraries, Operations, Highway Superintendents, Assessors, and Economic Development.

A motion to accept the 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 approve an audit of the Town of Vernon Court reviewed by the Town Board was made by Bennati, seconded by Adamkowski. Ayes 5. Nays 0. No discussion. Motion carried.

A motion to approve audit of the Town of Vernon books conducted on February 10, 2025, was made by Thurston, seconded by Peters. Ayes 5. Nays 0. No discussion. Motion carried.

A motion to approve NYS Retirement for Standard Workday and Reporting, was made by Peters, seconded by Thurston. Ayes 5. Nays 0. No discussion. Motion carried.

Annual Local Government Conference by Tug Hill Commission will be April 1, 2025, from 7:30am – 4:15pm at Turning Stone. Will need number of attendees. A motion to approve closure of the office building on the day of the conference was made by Peters, seconded by Thurston. Ayes 5. Nays 0. No discussion. Motion carried.

A motion to approve Vernon Verona Sherrill School District request to use Town Office Building for Budget Vote and School Board Elections on 5/20/25 noon – 9:00pm was made by Thurston, seconded by Adamkowski. Ayes 5. Nays 0. No discussion. Motion carried.

A motion to approve Vernon Historical Society request to use Town Office Building for meetings on Tuesdays at 7:00pm on 3/25, 4/29, 5/19 or 5/22, 6/24, 7/29, 8/26, 9/30 and 10/28 was made by Bennati, seconded by Adamkowski. Ayes 5. Nays 0. No discussion. Motion carried.

A motion to approve Vernon Volunteer Fire Department request to use Town Office Building and Pavillion for their 200-year anniversary on July 19, 2025 was made by Thurston, seconded by Peters. Ayes 5. Nays 0. No discussion. Motion carried.

Received 3rd Quarter Mortgage tax \$44,048.59 down by \$71,544.07 from last year.

Received 2nd half of 2024 Mowing Contract from Oneida County \$9,583.05.

Received from City of Oneida 2025 Water Rates for Prospect Street Water District increase of \$0.7517 per 1000 gallons.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Board members issued the following preliminary statement as an official statement has not been approved by Town Lawyer, Vincent Rossi.

“The Town of Vernon learned for the first time in mid-January 2025 that the Vernon Center Fire Department had sustained a substantial loss, apparently as a result of the misuse of funds. The Town has no direct knowledge of what happened. No Town official or Town employee had anything to do with what happened. The fire Company has performed good service for the Vernon community for many years. The Town will do what it can to support the Fire Company in this difficult time.”

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion to enter executive session to discuss Vernon Center Water District at 7:28p.m. was made by Bennati, seconded by Adamkowski. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

Board members returned from Executive Session at 8:56p.m.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn at 8:57 p.m. was made by Adamkowski, 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