

January 9, 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: Gene Bennati, Deputy Supervisor; Steve Adamkowski, John Peters and Myron Thurston, Council members. Also present: 4 community members. Absent: Randy Watson, Supervisor.

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

Deputy Supervisor Bennati asked the council members if there were any additions or corrections to the minutes from the December 26, 2022 meeting. There being none, a motion to accept the minutes as written was made by Peters, seconded by Thurston. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

PUBLIC CONCERNS:

Art Wood was present to update the Town Board on the proposed greenhouses at Vernon Downs. They have gone from two greenhouses at 2 million sq. ft. to four greenhouses at 800,000 sq. ft. growing fruits and vegetables. At this time the marijuana facility is on hold as New York State has not given them the license. Thurston recommended they get with the Discounted Utility Board that gives discounted electricity to projects. There is a federal natural gas pipeline coming up Peterboro Road. The company is willing to run a lateral line over to Vernon Downs. Currently they are looking for investors for that. Adamkowski asked about a co-generation where they will use natural gas to generate electricity and the byproduct is heat, which can be used for the greenhouses. Wood advised this is the plan including putting the carbon dioxide into the soil. They have great interest from investors. The key now is lining them up. Jeff Gural, owner of Vernon Downs has always been the champion of giving to the food banks. Thurston noted that when concerts have been held at Vernon Downs he doubles the profits and gives that to food banks. Gural believes there is no reason a child should go hungry. Vernon Downs received a tax deduction 3-4 years ago to maintain 300 employees. Because of Covid they dropped below 300. Now that Covid is over they were told they needed to get back to 300 employees. However, they have not been able to find employees to make up the 300. This has resulted in their taxes being raised to \$2 million for not having enough employees. Thurston advised Wood to let them know if there is anything they can do to show legislation their support as Vernon Downs is very important to our community. Adamkowski asked about a timeline. Wood stated that they have to start digging in April so they can have the greenhouses closed up by November of this year.

Rose Lockwood asked for an update on the Vernon Center Water project. Peters said that the engineers are going around surveying. Peters added that they are taking core sample for a geological graph. It is anticipated that this goes up for bid in April/May, then awarded in August/September.

REPORTS:

The following reports were presented:

- Town Clerk
- Codes Enforcement
- Supervisors
- Education and Libraries; Bennati advised that the Sherrill Library has put on a new roof and remodeling downstairs has begun.
- Intergovernmental Relations: Adamkowski said he will be contacting each department soon for newsletter articles. He also asked if the Highway Department would be putting up No Parking signs on Highland Ave. or if the Town would be sending out notices advising of the new local law pertaining to parking on town roads. Highway Superintendent Murphy advised that they would look into getting signs.
- Highway Superintendent.

There were no reports from:

- Planning Board
- Zoning Board of Appeals

- Assessors
- Economic Development
- Operations
- SWOCO
- County Legislator

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

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

BUSINESS:

A motion was made by Peters, seconded by Thurston to authorize Supervisor to pay all utilities, bank indebtedness and invest funds wisely without prior approval of the Board. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to appoint Rome Sentinel as the official newspaper for the Town of Vernon was made by Peters, seconded by Adamkowski. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to designate Community Bank to be used as depository for all Town funds was made by Peters, seconded by Bennati. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to allow Supervisor or Deputy Supervisor to attend SWOCO meetings as Town representative was made by Peters, seconded by Thurston. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to authorize the Highway Superintendent to purchase tools, equipment and implements in an amount not to exceed \$2,000 per purchase in 2023 without prior approval of the Town Board was made by Peters, seconded by Bennati. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion was made to approve the salary for members of the Planning Board and members of the Zoning Board of Appeals at \$150 per meeting attended with Board Chairman of each Board to receive \$275 per meeting chaired; secretary of the Planning Board and Zoning Board to receive \$150 per meeting; pay for members of the Board of Assessment Review will be set at \$200 per day with Chairman receiving \$250 was made by Peters, seconded by Thurston. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion was made to accept Highway rate of pay for 2023: Working Foreman \$27.00/hr; Heavy Equipment Operator (2) \$25.50/hr; Motor Equipment Operator (3) \$24.00/hr; Mechanic (1) \$24.35/hr; Laborer minimum wage to \$18.00/hr; Part time Laborer minimum wage to \$18.00/hr. One-week vacation after completion of one (1) year's work, two-week vacation after completion of two years' work, three-week vacation after completion of five years' work, four-week vacation after completion of fifteen (15) years' work. Six (6) personal days—noncumulative. All Vacation/Personal days to be paid at standard pay rate. Holidays: New Year's Day, Good Friday (1/2 day), Memorial Day, Labor Day, Columbus Day, Veterans' Day, Juneteenth, Thanksgiving plus following Friday and Christmas. Health Insurance: 50 per cent during first six months of work. Town pays other 50 percent if employee signs during first year of employment. Second six months and thereafter the employee will pay 15 percent of the premium per month. The Town will pay \$20 per month toward dental and vision insurance. The Town will pay one-half of single person health insurance for retiree with 30 years of service. Noncontributory retirement and disability for Tiers 1 and 2; employees pay 3 percent for Tiers 3 and 4. **Tier 5 and 6 employees pay minimum of 3 percent for entire career.** Five days sick leave cumulative to sixty (60) by Thurston, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to accept the following appointments:

Deputy Supervisor	Gene Bennati
Deputy Town Clerk	Julie McElroy
Bookkeeper to the Supervisor	Wendy Coston

Bookkeeper to Hwy Superintendent	Wendy Coston
Personnel Director	Wendy Coston
Deputy Hwy Supt/Working Foreman	George Vencek
Clerk to Town Justice	Shelly Reinold
Prospect St Water Dist Collector	Wendy Coston
Prospect St Water Dist Biller	Jennifer Champney
Prospect St Water Dist Meter Reader And Repairman	Kevin Champney
Registrar of Vital Statistics	Jennifer Champney
Deputy Registrar of Vital Stat.	Julie McElroy
Records Management Officer	Jennifer Champney
Budget Director	J. Randall Watson
Chairman, ZBA	Brian Dam
Chairman, Planning Board	Brian Dam
Chairman, Board of Assessors	Duane Munger
Assessors' Clerk	Jennifer Tyczinski
Attorney for the Town	Vincent Rossi Jr
Codes Enforcement Officer	Jody Thieme
Building Inspector	Reay Walker
Codes Clerk	Heather Mair
Potash Hill Cemetery Custodian	Elizabeth Janowski
Marble Hill Indian Cemetery Custodian	Melvin Phillips
Preretirement Seminar Coordinator	Wendy Coston
Dog Control Officer	Clayton Conover
Filey Road Plowing	Kevin Mumford
Town Engineer	Delta Engineering

Supervisor: Committee Appointments:

Education and Libraries	Gene Bennati
Intergovernmental Relations	Stephen Adamkowski
Economic Development	John Peters
Operations	Myron Thurston

was made by Peters, seconded by Thurston. Ayes 4. Nays 0. No discussion. Motion carried.

A motion to include these salaries in the Board Minutes:

Salaries not to exceed the following:

Supervisor	J.Randall Watson	\$23,000.00
Deputy Supervisor	Eugene Bennati	\$4,200.00
Budget Director	J.Randall Watson	\$2,656.00
Bkpr to Supv	Wendy Coston	\$37,820.00
Bkpr to Hwy Supt	Wendy Coston	\$9,836.00
Personnel	Wendy Coston	\$2,040.00
Justice	Robert Suttmeier	\$21,660.00
Councilperson	Gene Bennati	\$8,200.00
Councilperson	Stephen Adamkowski	\$8,200.00
Councilperson	Myron Thurston	\$8,200.00
Councilperson	John Peters	\$8,200.00
Town Clerk	Jennifer Champney	\$28,434.00
Tax Collector	Jennifer Champney	\$8,067.00
Rgstr of Vt Stats	Jennifer Champney	\$4,950.00
Rcds Mgmt Officer	Jennifer Champney	\$1,665.00
Deputy Town Clerk	Julie McElroy	\$19.50/hr
Assessor, Chrmn	Duane Munger	\$21,000.00
Assessor	Frank Laguzza	\$20,300.00
Assessor	Timothy Wagner	\$20,300.00
Assessors' Clerk	Jennifer Tyczinski	\$16.00/hr
Supt of Hwys	Timothy Murphy	\$70,000.00
Prsp St Biller	Jennifer Champney	\$600/qtr
Prsp St Collector	Wendy Coston	\$600/qtr

Prsp St Meter Rdr	Kevin Champney	\$600/qtr
Codes Enf Officer	Jody Thieme	\$31.00/hr
Building Inspector	Reay Walker	\$25.50/hr
Codes Clerk	Heather Mair	\$17.00/hr
Clerk to Justice	Shelly Reinold	\$17.00/hr
Town Engineer	Delta Engineering	\$700.00/yr
Dog Control Off	Clayton Conover	\$8,400.00/yr
Filey Road Plowing	Kevin Mumford	\$395.00/yr

General Office Help(Part time depending on experience) Minimum Wage to 18.00/hr
Election Workers – to be paid by Oneida County Board of Elections
Potash Hill Cem.Custodian Elizabeth Eastman \$750/yr
Marble Hill Indian Cem Cust Melvin Phillips \$750/yr

was made by Peters, seconded by Adamkowski. Ayes 4. Nays 0. No discussion. Motion carried.

A motion to audit Town books on February 13, 2023 at 6:30p.m. was made by Peters, seconded by Thurston. No discussion. Ayes 4. Nays 0. Motion carried.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Thurston shared that he and his wife own property in Madison County, Town of Verona and Town of Vernon. By far the Town of Vernon is the cheapest place to live around here. The Town Board is very careful on spending.

Bennati asked Art Wood to let Mr. Gural, owner of Vernon Downs, know from the Town of Vernon that we appreciate everything he does for the town and surrounding communities. Thurston added that Vernon Downs lowers the taxes by the VLT (Video Lottery Terminal) money received as each year the Town has received anywhere from \$100,000 to \$300,000.

Bennati mentioned that someone stopped into the offices and asked if it was okay to carry a firearm on the premises. He noted that when we had our Veterans Day Ceremony in November the legion could not come and do a gun salute due to Governor Hochuls new law, no guns on the premise.

Highway Superintendent Murphy thanked the Board and said 2022 was a good year.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

None

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn at 7:35 p.m. was made by Adamkowski, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 4. 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