

October 10, 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 considering a Local Law increasing the tax exemption eligibility for seniors and persons with disabilities with limited income pursuant to RPTL Sections 467 and 459-c. Council members present: Randy Watson, Supervisor; Gene Bennati, Steve Adamkowski, John Peters and Myron Thurston. Also present: 15 community members. The meeting was called to order by Supervisor Watson at 6:45 p.m. Assessor Chairman Duane Munger explained that currently if your household income is less than \$18,500 the senior exemption is 50% and as you make more the percentage goes down. They are looking to go to the same scale Oneida County has adopted which increases the income level up to \$29,500 for 50% discount. The scale increases up to \$37,900 for a 5% discount. The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

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; 2 Delta Engineer Representatives and 12 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 September 11, 2023, meeting. 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:

Delta Engineer Representatives gave an update on the Vernon Center Water District. Delta is asking that the board vote tonight to declare themselves lead agency for the environmental assessment review. As lead agency they will complete a 239 review after Delta provides them with the final plans. This will go to Oneida County Department of Planning and other interested parties including Dept. of Health, DEC, Dept of Transportation, DPW and the Village of Vernon. Once sent, the agencies have 30 days to provide comments back to the town. After this the Town will complete the SEQR review. Town Attorney Rossi added that they are waiting on the Federal Wetlands map and DELTA's Engineering report.

Vernon Library Board members attended the meeting to introduce themselves as they have many new members and a new Director. Library president Laurie advised that they are working with Mid York Library for guidance to get the library going in the right direction as funds were very low after the resignation of previous library members. The goal is to partner with the Sherrill Library to be the best they can be for the community if it does not negatively impact the Sherrill Library.

Kaylee Sierson requested use of the Town Office Building on October 23rd at 6pm for a meeting between local businesses as they are looking to start a Chamber of Commerce. Supervisor Watson approved the use.

Sierson notified Board members that local ATV Club members were out at 10pm on Arqunt Rd going 45 mph. Peters will reach out to the Club.

REPORTS:

The following reports were presented Town Clerk, Codes Enforcement, Zoning/Planning Board, Education and Libraries: Bennati acknowledged the positives they have seen from the Vernon Library recently. He wanted to thank them for their efforts on behalf of the Town Board and community members. Intergovernmental Relations: Adamkowski is advised they are planning on planting memorial trees next week. There are 5 trees to be planted and they will

need to wait until the spring of 2024 to plant the oak tree. SWOCO; Watson stated that they are looking into having solar installed at the closed landfill, Supervisor, County Legislator: Schiebel submitted a written report of the Oneida County 2024 Budget Address. Schiebel advised that there was a community member that attended the last meeting that had ditching concerns. He followed up with Oneida County DPW for the community member and he believes the issue was resolved. Upcoming public hearings meetings will be held on Thursday November 2nd, 6pm at the Utica Board Chambers and on Monday November 6th, 6:30pm at Rome MVCC. He encourages the Town Board members to attend.

There were no reports from Assessors, Economic Development, Operations, and Highway Superintendent.

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

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

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion to enter executive session to discuss Personnel at 8:00p.m. was made by Thurston, seconded by Adamkowski. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried

Board members returned from Executive Session at 8:17 p.m.

A motion to enter Business session was made by Thurston, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried

BUSINESS:

A motion to approve Attorney Rossi to look into personnel issues was made by Peters, seconded by Bennati. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to enact Local Law to increase tax exemption eligibility for the disabled and seniors was made by Bennati, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

The 2024 Preliminary Budget is on file with the Town Clerks Office.

A motion to schedule Fire Contract Public Hearing for November 6th at 6:30p.m. was made by Peters, seconded by Thurston. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to schedule the 2024 Budget Public Hearing for November 6th at 6:45p.m. was made by Bennati, seconded by Peters. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to approve 2023 Vernon Library Contract payment of \$1500.00 was made by Peters, seconded by Bennati. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to approve a resolution for “The Board of the Town of Vernon to authorize the Vernon Town Court to apply for a JCAP grant in the 2023-2024 grant cycle up to \$7,000” was made by Adamkowski, seconded Thurston. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

A motion to approve Town of Vernon to be Vernon Center Water Lead agency for the SEQRA environmental review was made by Adamkowski, seconded by Peters. Ayes 5. Nays 0. No discussion. Motion carried.

A motion to approve Vernon Center Water Maintenance/Operation agreement with the City of Oneida Water was made by Peters, seconded by Thurston. Ayes 5. Nays 0. No discussion. Motion carried.

A motion to approve No Sheep Designs estimate onetime fee of \$1000.00 to make town website ADA compliant was made by Peters, seconded by Adamkowski. Ayes 5. Nays 0. No discussion. Motion carried.

A motion to approve Total Solutions quote of \$3,440.73 to update utility room WiFi/firewall equipment was made by Peters, seconded by Thurston. No discussion. Ayes 5. Nays 0. Motion carried.

AIM check from New York State was received in the amount of \$32,319.

New York State CHIPS, PAVE NY, EWR checks were received in the amount of \$182,009.38.

GOOD OF THE ORDER:

Bennati mentioned that he was thinking of proposing the idea of closing the offices earlier on Fridays to the Board Members as there are few in the office. Coston mentioned the possibility of changing either court hours or closing early on a court day due to the risk of the public having to come to the office during court. Watson added that this would result in hourly employees losing income and other employees losing benefits if weekly hours are not met. Adamkowski suggested they look into it further. Thurston stated that his concern has always been having one person in the building alone at any time. But there is no easy solution to this without it costing money.

Community member Lockwood asked if the Board had heard of any issues from illegal immigrants in the area. They are sure there are some in the area but have not heard of local problems.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn at 8:28 p.m. was made by Peters, seconded by Adamkowski. 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