

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES
MONDAY, AUGUST 26, 2013

In Attendance: Supervisor Schaffer, Board Members Marnicki, Fitzgerald, Milkovich and Majewski

Also Attending: Town Attorney David Berger, Human Resource Director Nancy Olmstead
Comptroller Laura McKane, Parks Superintendent Jim Bukowski, Museum Director Virginia Wood,
Tax Receiver Debra Wallace, Highway Superintendent Brock Leonard and Town Clerk Emil Bielecki.

WORK SESSION - Supervisor Schaffer convened the meeting at 6:00 PM.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion of Councilman Majewski, seconded by Councilman Milkovich, the following was

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Majewski, Fitzgerald, Milkovich, Marnicki, Schaffer
 Nays 0

Resolved the Board enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing a personnel matter concerning an employee accident. The time was 6:01 PM.

On a motion of Councilman Majewski, seconded by Councilwoman Fitzgerald, the following was

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Majewski, Fitzgerald, Milkovich, Marnicki, Schaffer
 Nays 0

Resolved the Board leave the Executive Session and resume the open Work Session. The time was 7:00 PM.

Marcie Kretzmer, Community Electronic Information Signage (CEIS)

Marcie Kretzmer, a representative from CEIS stated that after making several presentations to the Board, she has not received any feedback. She wants to know what can be done to move the project ahead.

Supervisor Schaffer, noted that he personally likes the company's proposal, but has somewhat 'dropped the ball' on this because of a lack of consensus on the Board. It appears that the Board wants to invite another company to hear their presentation. He has scheduled them to come to a Work Session.

Councilman Majewski stated that the Town would need to do a Request for Proposals (RFP) to proceed with a project of this nature. Town Attorney Berger noted that an RFP may not be necessary if there is no cost to the Town, but we should at least look at a few firms to compare proposals.

Debra Wallace / Laura McKane - Collection of School Taxes

** In view of the fact that M & T Bank will no longer collect Vestal School Taxes, Tax Receiver Debra Wallace recommended that her office undertake that function starting in 2014. She cited numerous advantages of her office doing the collection of school taxes including the following:

- One-stop shopping and faster service
- Elimination of confusion as to where people should go to pay the taxes
- Unlike M & T, we can accept cash, provide new bills and generate printed receipts
- Ability to provide expanded information on a timely basis about Town, County and School tax bills.

Comptroller Laura McKane stated that there would be additional expenses connected with this new service, but there are several means to offset these costs and perhaps generate some additional revenue.

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One possibility would be to impose a small collection charge on all the school tax bills. For example, a collection fee of .01% on each school tax bill would generate over \$43,000 in revenue. Another possibility would be to negotiate the retention of interest charges and late payment fees.

After a brief discussion of this issue, the Board, by consensus, authorized Tax Receiver Wallace and Comptroller McKane to proceed with the information gathering and negotiations necessary to assume the function of collecting school taxes. They are to work closely with and report regularly to the Finance Committee.

** Town Clerk's note: It has been noted by representatives from the Vestal School District and M & T Bank that M & T Bank plans on continuing to provide this service.

Highway Department – discuss an equipment trade

Highway Superintendent Brock Leonard provided the Board a memo with financial estimates provided by an equipment dealer to trade a 2011 John Deere rubber tired backhoe (currently owned by the Town) for a 2013 John Deere 60G excavator 2011 310 SJ with approximately 1450 hours. He left the meeting prior to the Board discussion of the item and was not available to answer questions.

Supervisor Schaffer stated that this appeared to be a good deal in view of the fact that the excavator is a more multi-task piece of equipment.

Councilman Majewski and Town Attorney Berger expressed concern about the fair value of this transaction and whether this would be a fair swap.

The consensus of the Board was to have the Public Works Committee meet with the Highway Superintendent to get more information and to report back to the Board.

COMMITTEES

7.1 PUBLIC WORKS

1. Request from Scott Groats, Water Superintendent to advertise for bids of water meters for a term of one year with an additional two year extension if agreed upon, advertise September 11, 2013, with bid opening on September 23, 2013 to open at 1:30 pm.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

2. Request to arrange advertisement for bids for the replacement of the generator at Town Hall. This project was identified and funded in 2013 capitals, advertisement on 9/4/13 with bid opening on 9/23/13 and opening at 2:00 pm.

Supervisor Schaffer suggested that we should also check to see if there is a generator available through Army surplus.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

7.2 FINANCE

1. Warrants - 2013- 33, 33E, 34, 34E, 34L

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Councilman Majewski had a question about several bills from the Fire Department. Supervisor Schaffer said he would look into it.

OK - This item will be placed on the Agenda as a Receive and File item at the next Regular Meeting.

2. Discuss the DirectAccess Whistleblower Service Hotline proposal

ENI, a Human Resource Solutions provider, already provides various services to the Town. In a communication to the Town Comptroller, ENI is proposing a new service called the DirectAccess Whistleblower Hotline. DirectAccess offers a confidential, anonymous, and secure third-party service that employees can use to report any kind of inappropriate/illegal behavior. According to ENI, the service has the potential to save the Town money by preventing theft and the lawsuits that may result from employee misconduct.

After a brief discussion, the Board determined that it does not wish to pursue this proposal at this time.

7.3 PERSONNEL

1. Request to authorize Virginia Wood, Museum Director, to hire Kate Ellenberger to the vacant position of part-time Museum Curator at the 2013 rate of \$8.86 per hour effective August 29, 2013.

Museum Director Virginia Wood stated that this is an excellent candidate and is requesting that the Board approve the hiring. She has the money in the budget to cover this part-time position.

Human Resource Director Nancy Olmstead added that this person is working to complete her PhD and shows signs that she plans on staying in the area. She expressed a lot of interest in the job and appears to have the flexibility to accommodate the Museum schedule.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

7.4 PLANNING & ZONING

1. Request from Make A Wish Foundation to use the rail trail for a fundraising 5k Walk/Run event for April 26, 2014.

Noting that the request also includes the possible installation and use of port-o-potties, tables, tents and generators, several Board members expressed concern that the Rail Trail may not be the proper venue to hold this type of large event.

The Board deferred a decision on this request and asked Councilwoman Fitzgerald to contact the organization for additional information, including the feasibility of scaling back the size of the event.

2. Request from Vestal United Methodist Church to hold a Doug's Fish Fry on October 23, 2013 at the library parking lot.

Town Attorney Berger noted that the applicant will also need to sign the Indemnification Agreement.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

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3. Request from Wendy's Walk for Kids Partner's to hold a Gance's Fundraiser on September 19, 2013 in the library parking lot from 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM.

Town Attorney Berger noted that the applicant will also need to sign the Indemnification Agreement.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

7.5 PUBLIC SAFETY

1. Request for the Board of Fire Commissioners to approve the following training request:

- a) FF Bob Warner and Chris Steenstrup for NYS Fire Police Course to be held at Endwell Fire Dept. starting October 1, 2013
- b) FF Paul Goon and Keith Chason for NYS Firefighter Survival, Sept 4 and 7th at Endwell/Vestal
- c) FF's Tyler VanDervort and Shelby Frisbie for NYS Rescue Tech Basic at Town of Binghamton Fire Department on Saturday September 7, 14, and 21st
- d) FF Keith Chason for NYS Firefighter II starting October 23rd at Port Crane Fire Department
- e) FF Paul Goon and LT Phil Walter for the following fire training courses - Live Fire Training Safety- January 13, 2014 at the Public Safety Building Conducting Live Fire Training- January 20, 2014 at the Public Safety Building
- f) FF's Justin Petcosky and Brian Terrell for NYS Rescue Tech Basic at Port Crane Fire Department on Saturday March 8, 15, and 22.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

Use of Fire Department equipment

Supervisor Schaffer informed the Board that he has received some complaints concerning the deployment of Fire Department equipment during the Presidential visit to Binghamton University. No one on the Board was notified of this action. He will remind the Fire Department that Board approval is required to use Fire equipment for special events.

2. Request for the Board of Fire Commissioners to approve the Vestal Fire Department Membership for Station 3's Ladies Auxiliary Spaghetti Dinner being held on Saturday, September 21st from 4 to 7pm at Vestal Fire Department Station #3, and for the Station 3's Ladies Auxiliary Bake Sale being held on Tuesday, November 5th from 6am to 9pm at Vestal Fire Department Station # 3, Owego Road in Ross Corners.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

7.6 ADMINISTRATION – no items were brought for consideration.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. **Coal House Insurance** – The Town Attorney is working on the issue

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- 2. Reduction of speed on Juneberry Road** – At a previous Work Session, the Board determined that it would not authorize the placement of Children at Play signs in this area. However

Councilman Milkovich wanted to contact the Police Department about possibly reducing the speed limit in the area.

Councilman Milkovich stated that he had contacted the Police Department and was told that historically there has been a very low amount of accidents on Juneberry Rd. and there have been no recorded accidents over the past ten years on Juneberry Court. At this point, it appears that signs reducing the speed limit on Juneberry Rd./Juneberry Court are not necessary.

SUPERVISOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Museum "The Wheel Spins 'Round'" Sept 7- Nov 22

Open House Sept 7, 10-12 noon

Fiber arts exhibits and demonstrations by Lamb to Loom Fiber Guild

Demonstrations by Guild members select Saturdays during Vestal Farmers Market

Exhibit includes: brief history of spinning and yarn textiles, old and new fiber arts equipment, natural dye exhibit, step by step process, hand-made articles.

Museum open Wed - Sat 10-3pm.

Public welcome, free admission.

A MOTION WILL BE MADE TO ENTER INTO AN EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF: Review contract issues with M Squared. ***

*** At the recommendation of Town Attorney David Berger, no motion was made to go into Executive Session at this time to address this item.

The Work Session adjourned at 8:22 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Emil Bielecki, Town Clerk