

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION AGENDA

MONDAY, MARCH 21, 2016

Board Attendance: Supervisor Schaffer; Board Members: Messina, Agneshwar, Majewski
Absent: Fitzgerald

Also Attending: Town Attorney David Berger, Comptroller Laura McKane, Human Resource Officer Nancy Olmstead, IT Director Dan Williams and Town Clerk Emil Bielecki.

Supervisor Schaffer convened the Work Session at 6:00 PM.

6:00 PM Discussion about renewal of stop loss health insurance and administrative services.

Comptroller Laura McKane informed the Board that the stop loss policy in our health insurance plan is expiring at the end of March and needs to be renewed. After a thorough analysis of our claims, she and the Town's insurance consultant are recommending that we increase the specific deductible on the policy from \$120,000 to \$150,000. This change would save the Town \$41,564 in premiums. We have not had any case go over that amount in the last few years. Going with the higher deductible is a reasonable risk based upon our experience. We can absorb this risk with the health insurance reserve fund. No one on the Board expressed any objection to Comptroller McKane's recommendation. Comptroller McKane will prepare the resolution to **renew the stop loss insurance contract** (with a \$150,000 deductible) for the Boards approval at the Regular Meeting on Wednesday, March 23rd.

Comptroller McKane also stated that the health insurance administrative services contract is up for renewal on May 1st. Excellus is seeking a 4% increase but we have asked that the contract be renewed at the current rate. Also, there will be a change in how we pay for the Smoking Cessation Program from a monthly fee to a flat rate. We have not yet reached a definitive agreement but are negotiating for no increase. The worst case scenario would be a 4% increase. Councilwoman Agneshwar asked how the company justifies the rate increase. Comptroller McKane replied that their primary justification is our higher level of claims.

6:15 PM Discussion about the Town's timekeeping software

Comptroller McKane and IT Director Dan Williams informed that Board that Kronos, our current timekeeping software vendor is forcing us to upgrade to a higher version of the software which will cost an additional \$16,700. We are considering alternative software called Novatime from Andrews Technology. Andrews Technology works only with the public sector and they do not charge for software upgrades. They continue to support all previous versions. IT Director Williams noted that the Town has had numerous issues with Kronos because the software uses Java. Novatime does not use Java. If the Town switched to Novatime, there would be additional one-time costs primarily because all the timeclocks would have to be replaced. The new clocks would provide much more information to employees.

Comptroller McKane noted that neither the upgrade of the Kronos software nor the possible move to a different timekeeping software package have been budgeted. The additional cost to the general fund of switching to Novatime would be about \$24,300 in 2016. The funds would have to come out of either the contingency account or fund balance. It was noted that the projected 5 year cost of the Novatime software (including the new clocks) is about \$43,000 vs. about \$61,000 for Kronos.

Councilman Majewski noted that there may be additional issues and costs involved in importing the data from Kronos to Novatime. Supervisor Schaffer asked the Comptroller and the IT Director to do some additional research and to present the updated information for the Board's review at the next Work Session on April 11th.

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COMMITTEES

7.1 PUBLIC WORKS (FITZGERALD/Majewski)

1. Request from Highway Superintendent Rocco Turdo for approval to advertise for Highway Materials on April 6, 2016 with the bids to be opened on April 20, 2016 at 2:15 PM.

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

2. Request from Water & Wastewater Superintendent Scott Groats for approval to advertise the West Hill & Carnegie storage tank repainting on Wednesday March 30, 2016 with the bids to be opened on Wednesday April 20, 2016 at 2:00 PM.

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

7.2 FINANCE (AGNESHWAR/Fitzgerald)

1. Warrants: 2016-10, 2016-10E, 2016-11, 2016-11E, 2016-11L

Councilwoman Agneshwar stated that she is concerned about the large number of purchases from Lowe's and has spoken with the Business Office about it. There are so many trips being made to that store that it brings up the question of gasoline usage and labor hours. It may be worth a closer look to see if any changes could be implemented.

Supervisor Shaffer and Councilman Majewski noted that the Town does not have a central storage facility and departments purchase items as they are needed.

OK – This item will be placed as a 'Receive and File' on the Agenda for the next Regular Meeting.

2. Request for Town Supervisor John Schaffer to sign agreement with Vestal Central Schools for the rental space at Central Junior High for the Senior Citizens Center from March 1, 2016 – February 28, 2017 at the cost of \$783.00 per month.

Several Board members asked if the \$783.00 rental rate was higher than the current amount.

Town Clerk's note: The monthly rent under the current contract is \$770.00.

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

3. Request to pay Michael J. Heenan \$1,125.00 for services rendered as the Town's expert in the Hicks vs. Town of Vestal litigation.

Town Attorney Berger asked that discussion of this item be deferred to an Executive Session.

4. Request to pay Greene, Hershendorfer & Sharpe \$1,420.00 for legal services rendered in the Hicks vs. Town of Vestal litigation.

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

5. Request from Deputy Comptroller Nick Angeline to approve budget transfers dated 12/31/2015 to cover 2015 year-end budget and budget transfers dated 2/29/16 – 3/14/16 as attached to

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his memo dated March 16, 2016.

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

7.3 **PERSONNEL** (MESSINA/Majewski) – no items were brought for consideration.

7.4 **PLANNING & ZONING** (MESSINA/Agneshwar)

1. Request from Dick's Sporting Goods to use three "sea box" type trailers and one tractor trailer for merchandise storage for an indefinite period of time.

Councilwoman Messina stated that there is no reason that their requests should be coming to the Board. The ordinance regulating storage trailers is clear and if an application does not meet the criteria, it should be rejected by the Code Department. There are some provisions in the ordinance that should perhaps be amended. For example, the current ordinance does not place a limit on the amount of trailers that could be placed in one location. The Board, by consensus, rejected this application.

7.5 **PUBLIC SAFETY** (FITZGERALD/Messina) – no items were brought for consideration.

7.6 **ADMINISTRATION** (MAJEWSKI/Messina)

1. Request from Museum Director Ramona Kacyvenski to approve the following event at the Vestal Museum on April 9, 2016: Grand Army of the Republic, a Commemorative Exercise in remembrance of the April 6, 1866 beginning of the national organization for Civil War Veterans at Decatur, Illinois.

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

2. Request from Museum Director Ramona Kacyvenski to use \$50.00 from the CM0308 donation funds to pay an honorarium to speaker presenter Allen Mesch in April.

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

3. Request from Museum Director Ramona Kacyvenski to approve Fangyuan Ji, a Binghamton University student, as unpaid intern at the Vestal Museum, starting March 31, 2016.

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

NEW BUSINESS

Supervisor Schaffer stated that the Board should continue to study the provisions of the State law that exempts large scale solar panel arrays from local property tax. There are potential environmental issues with such large scale projects, particularly if they are abandoned in the future. We should consider opting out of the property tax exemption provision so that if these projects are built, at least we can benefit from some additional revenue. Councilwoman Messina stated that she has some of the same concerns.

Councilman Majewski stated that the technology is already there to protect against any potential environmental damage. Town Attorney Berger reiterated that the Town could also choose an option to negotiate PILOT agreements on any such projects. Going that route could allow the Town to gain additional revenue and to retain more control over the development.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Wash Bay at the Highway Department (in response to the EPA field audit)

Update on 03/021/16: Town Engineer Vern Myers is working with the Highway Department on a plan to install a vehicle washing unit in the far bay of the Highway garage.

2. Community Use of Municipal Facilities Policy

Update 03/21/16: Supervisor Schaffer is reviewing the comments from the Board and expects to have a draft policy in the near future.

3. Proposed Gas Card System for the Purchase of Fuel for Town Vehicles

Update on 3/21/16: Supervisor Schaffer directed the Town Engineer to prepare a cost benefit analysis of upgrading our system vs. going with an outside fuel vendor.

4. Employee Performance Evaluations

Update on 03/21/16: Human Resource Officer Nancy Olmstead has completed the job descriptions and is in the process of reviewing them with the other people involved in this project.

5. Update on Museum Safety Concerns

Human Resource Officer Nancy Olmstead stated that a walk through was done at the Museum that also included the Town Engineer, Police Chief and the Maintenance Technician. It was agreed that new locks would be installed to gain better control over who has access to the building and various other options are being considered to provide additional safety when only one person is in the building.

SUPERVISOR ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- **Citizens Police Academy:** March 24th-May 26th, on Thursday nights from 6:30 pm-8:30 pm, in the Town Board room. Email skintner@vestalny.com to sign up.
- Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has an OPEN BURNING BAN policy in place from March 16th to May 14th. Burn Permits will not be issued during this time.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

ADOPTED Ayes 4 Agneshwar, Messina, Majewski, Schaffer
Nays 0 Absent 1 Fitzgerald

Resolved the Board enter into Executive Session to discuss the following:

- Hicks vs. the Town of Vestal litigation
- UHS vs. the Town of Vestal litigation
- Legal proceedings concerning the alleged motocross facility on Tracy Creek Road

The time was 7:17 PM.

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

ADOPTED Ayes 4 Agneshwar, Messina, Majewski, Schaffer
Nays 0 Absent 1 Fitzgerald

Resolved the Board leave the Executive Session and **adjourn the Work Session. The time was 8:00 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,
Emil Bielecki, Town Clerk