

**VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES**  
**MONDAY, AUGUST 10, 2020**

**WORK SESSION**

**Board Attendance:** Supervisor Schaffer; Board Members Fitzgerald, Messina, Fletcher, Ellis

**Also Attending:** Town Attorney David Berger, Director of Human Resources Nancy Olmstead, Town Comptroller Laura McKane, Town Engineer Vern Myers, Deputy Town Clerk Kelcy Wickman

Supervisor Schaffer **convened the Work Session at 6:01 PM.**

**SUPERVISOR ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Supervisor Schaffer gave an update on COVID and reminded everyone of the safety steps.

Supervisor Schaffer stated that the Town's Emergency Plan has been updated and the Board members signed. The last time it was revised was 2018.

**UPCOMING PUBLIC HEARINGS**

**COMMITTEES**

**7.1 PUBLIC WORKS (ELLIS/Messina)**

1. Request from Vern Myers, Town Engineer to advertise on September 2, 2020 for a public hearing on September 16, 2020 to issue an Aquifer Permit to Upstate Tower to construct a 160 foot high communication tower at 420 Old Mill Road.

Councilman Ellis stated that this has already passed the Planning Board. Town Engineer Myers stated that they have a battery backup on generators and sees no problems with this.

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

2. Request from Rocco Turdo, Highway Superintendent to award Highway Materials Bid as indicated in memo dated 8/3/2020.

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

3. Request from Fred Neebe to donate signs for a proposed wetland trail off of the Vestal Rail Trail.

Town Attorney Berger asked if the Town maintains the trail. He is concerned with people getting injured if it is not maintained and we are putting signs up advertising the trail. Town Engineer Myers stated that he thinks the Town mows it, but will check. Supervisor Schaffer stated he will go down to look at the trail. Town Attorney stated that since we do not maintain it that maybe we should add a sign that says "Not maintained by the Town. Enter at your own risk."

**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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4. Request from Vern Myers, Town Engineer to approve John Schaffer, Town Supervisor signing the preliminary and final Design Engineering agreement with McFarland Johnson Engineers for the Federal/State funded project to rehabilitate Meeker Road Bridge over Choconut Creek.

Supervisor Schaffer asked what the timeline would be and Town Engineer Myers stated it could begin next year.

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

5. Request from Scott Groats, Water/Wastewater Superintendent to award Chemicals Bid to JCI Jones Chemicals and to Slack Chemical Company.

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

### 7.2 **FINANCE** (MESSINA /Fletcher)

1. Warrants: 30, 30E, 31, 31E, 32, 32E

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

2. Request from Laura McKane, Town Comptroller to authorize the renewal of Retiree Health Plan with United Healthcare.

Town Comptroller McKane stated that everyone has been happy with the coverage and has not heard any complaints.

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

3. Request from Laura McKane, Town Comptroller to sign proposal which moves the town's self-funded dental plan to Excellus.

Town Comptroller McKane stated that we have been with Lifetime Benefit Solutions which is a branch of Excellus and they are getting out of the self-funded dental plans.

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

4. Request from Nick Angeline, Deputy Comptroller to approve budget transfers dated 8/10/2020.

**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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**7.3 PERSONNEL (FLETCHER/Fitzgerald)**

1. Request to authorize the appointment of Craig Hiller, current Deputy Highway Superintendent, as acting Highway Superintendent effective August 15, 2020 with wages based on the 2020 salary of the current Highway Superintendent (\$84,282).

**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 (FITZGERALD/Messina)**

1. Request to advertise Local Law B “Amending the Code for the Town of Vestal, Chapter 5, Article 5” Signs on August 26, 2020 with the public hearing on September 16, 2020.

Town Attorney Berger stated he wants to look at it again to make some parts clearer and will have it to us by Wednesday.

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

2. Request from Jerry Willard, First Ward Council for a letter of support from the Town for the planned addition at Vestal Pines at 2040 State Route 26.

**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 (MESSINA/Fletcher)**

1. Request from John Butler, Chief of Police to accept a \$25,000 grant for the purchase of a forensic van.

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

2. Request from John Butler, Chief of Police to purchase a forensic van for \$30,515.67.

Town Comptroller McKane advised that there will be budget amendments to increase line A3120.2230 for the purchase of forensic van and to reflect funding coming from the \$25,000 grant and remainder from the appropriating asset forfeiture reserve funds.

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

3. Request from David Harrington, Fire Chief to approve Maxx Kies as a member of Fire Station 3.

**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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### 7.6 ADMINISTRATION (ELLIS/Fletcher)

1. Discuss vacation carry over.

Director of Human Resources Nancy Olmstead stated Chief Butler is concerned about the police union's carryover limit of 5 days. Due to the unique situation this year with COVID-19, retirements and 4 people in the academy, the Chief would like to look into having 10 days carried over for 20/21. Councilman Fletcher asked if she knew how many were looking into carrying over and Olmstead stated that she was unsure but the Chief would know who has vacation time scheduled. Councilman Ellis asked if a date could be requested for the police department to let Human Resources know and she said that they have to by a certain date contractually. The Board decided to wait until there was information before making a decision.

**Hold for more discussion.**

2. Request to move September work sessions to 5pm for budget discussions

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

3. Request from Cherese Weisner-Rosales, Museum Director to accept a \$1000 Grant from Chenango County Arts Council for the Second Saturday Music Night.

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

4. Request from Cherese Weisner-Rosales, Museum Director to allow the museum to erect tents along the Rail Trail on October 10 for the Haudenosaunee Festival (Iroquois Festival).

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

### UNFINISHED BUSINESS

#### NEW BUSINESS

Supervisor Schaffer stated that he received a letter from Anna Lake, the Youth Services Librarian at the Vestal Library, asking for Board approval to place laminated book cards in Town parks for children to find and return to the Library for a free book. Supervisor Schaffer thought it was a great idea and the Board agreed. It will be placed on the Town Board Meeting Agenda for Wednesday.

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**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

On a motion of Councilwoman Messina, seconded by Councilwoman Fitzgerald, the following was  
**ADOPTED**

Ayes 4            Fitzgerald, Messina, Fletcher, Ellis, Schaffer  
Nays 0

**Resolved** the Board enter into Executive Session to discuss the following items:  
Potential litigation involving former employee

The time was 6:38 PM.

On a motion of Councilman Fletcher, seconded by Councilman Ellis, the following was  
**ADOPTED**

Ayes 4            Fitzgerald, Messina, Fletcher, Ellis, Schaffer  
Nays 0

**Resolved** the Board leave the Executive Session and adjourn the Work Session.

The time was 7:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,  
Debra Wallace, Town Clerk