

Town of DeKalb Board Meeting

At a regular meeting of the Town Board, of the Town of DeKalb, St. Lawrence County, New York, held on the 16th day of June 2021, at the Town Hall in DeKalb Junction NY, there were present:

John Frary	Supervisor	Michael Livingston	Board Member
Ed Newcombe	Board Member	Connie Elen	Board Member
Wayne Holland	Highway Superintendent	Andrew Fenton	Board Member
Bill Chambers	Building & Codes	Barbara Creazzo	Town Clerk/Collector

Members of the community present: James Gattuso and Larry D Denesha, SLC Legislator.

Members of the community present via ZOOM: Nick Eels, The Hoffman Eels Group, CPAS, P.C. and Rachel Hunter, Gouverneur Tribune Press.

Supervisor Frary opened the meeting at 7:02PM

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Supervisor Frary, followed by a moment of silent prayer and/or reflection.

Michael Livingston moved that the minutes of the Regular Meeting, of the Town Board, held on May 19, 2021, as submitted by the Town Clerk, be and hereby approved. Seconded by Ed Newcombe and adopted unanimously.

Actions

1. Contact Bruce Green regarding water & sewer bill re-levy. **Completed.**
2. Purchase woodchips for playground. **Completed and delivered.**
3. Board to be prepared to begin the discussion regarding a new building. **On-going.**

Public Forum:

James Gattuso expressed his concerns regarding the number of trucks traveling the East De Kalb Road that have drivers who consistently use their jake brake while approaching the intersection with US Highway 11. The drivers are using the jake brake while approaching the intersection from the East De Kalb Road, as well as when approaching while on US Highway 11.

Mr. Gattuso owns three properties near the intersection, and he stated, “the windows shake, just shake when the drivers use their jake brakes”. He has spoken with Greg Coller, owner-partner of Gebarten Acres, regarding the noise, fumes, and vibrations the jake brakes make while accelerating. He believes if anything came out of the conversation, is the drivers use the jake brake even more. He is asking the members of the board, to see if road signs could be erected notify drivers, using the jake brake is not allowed. Mr. Gattuso also discussed his concern about the exhaust and noise the trucks emit when the jake brake is used, versus down shifting and braking normally. The playground for Hermon-De Kalb Central School is close to the intersection and the pollution and noise cannot be good for the kids as they are playing outside. He also stated, “jake brakes were designed to be used in emergency situations if the truck needed to slow or stop unexpectedly, not to be used as a normal means of braking”.

Supervisor Frary thanked Mr. Gattuso, for bringing his concerns to the meeting. The Board will need to investigate the legality of posting the “no jake braking signs”, on the roadways.

Attending via ZOOM, Nick Eels, reviewed with the members of the board, the Town of De Kalb Annual Financial Report and Notes of Financial Statements, which has been filed with the State of New York. Mr. Eels went over the balances at the beginning of 2020, the end balances at the end of 2020 and the gains/losses as recorded. Mr. Eels encouraged each member to review at their leisure and notify him if they have any questions.

Larry Denesha

-COVID fund money which will be dispersed in two installments, will have four years to be spent. It has been recently learned that funds can be placed in an interest generating account for each municipality receiving such funds.

-COVID report for the day has one new case. All state mandated restrictions are lifted, as of today. St. Lawrence County is currently at 64% vaccination rate for those 18 years of age and older.

- SLC Legislators recently passed a resolution declaring June, as Dairy Month. A small reception was held outside at the Legislator Meeting for some dairy refreshments in honor of passing the resolution. The Dairy Princess and her court were able to attend this year versus last year.
- Last year, the SLC Legislators allocated \$35,000 to be used toward the Bass Master Fishing Contest held in Waddington. Due to the contest being cancelled last year, the money was held until this year, for this year's contest. This money comes from the Tribal Gaming Monies that the County collects from the casino.
- Legislators passed a resolution to form an Environmental Investigation Group, which will determine if three tax delinquent properties are contaminated. If they are, the DEC will lead a cleanup of the contaminates. Once the properties have been deemed clean, the County will take ownership and once the property is sold through auction, the profit will be split between the County and DEC. One parcel is in Potsdam, one in Degrasse and one in Fowler.
- The Broadband Survey, conducted by Development Authority of the North County has ended. There were a total of 2,100 people completing the survey. DANC will now analyze the data collected and will issue a report once completed.
- Overall tax collection for the County went very well this year.
- There is Federal and State Grant monies available for individual homeowners who are in need of septic improvements throughout the County.
- A new salt storage building for the County will be built in Russell as soon as possible.
- The SLC Chair has been given the directive to sign contracts for the new County storage buildings. One building will be constructed in Lisbon and the other in Russell. The bid winners for all portions of the new construction, are St. Lawrence County business.

Financials:

Andrew Fenton made the motion to accept the Court Clerk Audit as presented, seconded by Ed Newcombe. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes, John Frary yes.

Constance Elen made the motion to accept the Town Clerk Audit for the clerk's clerk and tax accounts, seconded by Michael Livingston. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes, John Frary yes.

Clerk Report: Barbara Creazzo

-A total of \$1864.40 was collected for the month of May, with the town retaining \$1718.86. The breakdown of collections is as follows: DEC, \$127.54, NYS AG & Markets \$18, the town retained \$7.46 for DEC licensing, \$67.50 for dog licensing, \$1570 for building permits, \$30 for death certificates and \$43.90 for copies made.

-Water and Sewer Collections, water collected \$84.75, and sewer collected \$71. This is the third month of a quarter, so collections are small.

-Taxes that were collected for May, totaled \$49,240.41. Collection ended on June 1, 2021, with 92.83% of the tax warranted collected, which meant \$133,314.78 was not collected of the \$1,860,619.48 warrant. A total of 95 parcels had no payment of taxes, this is down from previous years.

-Deputy Clerk, Wanda Law, did not work any hours during May.

Supervisor Frary distributed the 2021 Payroll Check Audit and General Check Audit for the members of the board to review.

Andrew Fenton made the motion to approve the 2021 Payroll Check Audit and General Check Audit, as presented. The motion was seconded by Michael Livingston. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes.

Supervisor Frary also distributed the Financial Report from January to present for review by the board. All budget lines continue to look good.

Water & Sewer Report:

Water- a total of 701,600 gallons of water were metered in the month of May, with an average daily flow of 22,632 gallons. A total of 6 gallons of sodium hypochlorite were used in the treatment of the water produced. Daily, weekly, monthly, inspections and or maintenances were

completed. All daily flow graphs are included in the monthly report. One random distribution sample for bacteriological testing was conducted and the test result was satisfactory.

Sewer – a total of 1,647,000 gallons of wastewater were treated in the month of May, with an average daily flow of 53,129 gallons. There were no SPDES permit violations. Daily, weekly, monthly, inspections and or maintenances were completed. All daily flow graphs are included in the monthly report. One hour per day rotation of the RBCs continues.

Supervisor Frary has filed the paperwork for reimbursement monies for the preliminary work completed for the proposed work at the sewer plant.

Supervisor Frary informed the board that the tanks at the plant are in the process of being pumped and that they were able to go longer than a year. By doing so, this was able to save the sewer district money. The bill for pumping will be presented at next month's meeting.

An inspection by SLC Risk Manager, Jody Wenzel, was completed, and he recommends a couple of safety signs be replaced, as they have become faded and difficult to read. Signs will be ordered.

Members of the board were given a copy of the recent CCTV Inspection of the De Kalb Sewer System. This copy includes a mapping of all manhole locations with numbers to correspond with the CCTV report.

Highway Report: Wayne Holland 05/19/21 – 06/16/21

- Cutting shoulders were needed.
- Cold patching.
- Hauled blacktop for Gouverneur for 3 days as part of shared services.
- Prepping the Ritchie Road, installed 160 feet (4 pipes) of culvert pipe.
- Installed 20 feet of culvert on the Streeter Road and 40 feet on the Sayer Road.
- Mowing roadsides for the second time.
- Spent 3 days mowing county roads for shared services.
- Replacing old worn-out road signs with new.

The new truck is scheduled to be delivered to Viking in November for plow installation.

There has been a request for the sign signifying the Hamilton camp road be replaced, as it has come up missing. While this is not a town road, it is a safety issue to have the road marked due to the significant number of camps and campers located along the river and who use this as an access road.

Proposed funds of \$316,536.00 to be spent on 4.4 miles for the following roads this summer:

- Ritchie Road from the Stevenson Road end, as distance of 2 miles at a cost of \$147,560.
- Boland Road from the Hermon Town Line and leading to the Hayden Rd, 0.7 mile at a cost of \$49,352.00.
- Colton Road, starting at Maple Ridge Road and leading to the Jenkins Road, 0.7 mile at a cost of \$38,264.00.
- Maple Ridge Road to the Gouverneur Town Line, leading to the Colton Road, 1 mile at a cost of \$81,360.00.

Andrew Fenton made the motion for the Highway Superintendent to spend \$316,536.00 for the proposed blacktopping of 4.4 miles of roadway in the Town of De Kalb. This motion was seconded by Constance Elen. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes, John Frary, yes.

The town has never had a response from the NYS DOT regarding the request for cross-walking markings to be installed at or near the post office. Nor has there been a response to the request

for no-passing lines to be installed for the US Highway 11 and Jeffers Road intersection. At one time this was designated as a no-passing zone but was eliminated. Supervisor Frary will resubmit these two requests to the NYS DOT for review and possible action.

Local Government Efficiency Grant Opportunity, the Development Authority of the North County is soliciting partners for a Department of State Local Government Efficiency shared services grant application to develop municipal GIS datasets. The Authority will prepare and submit the grant application at no charge. This mapping will assist with management of bridges and culverts, road signs, County Road center line striping, sidewalks and curbs, municipal-owned cemeteries, municipal electric systems, and water/wastewater infrastructure maintenances/replacements. The program has a 10% match requirement, so participating municipalities will be responsible to contribute 10% of their portion of the overall project budget, in cash funds. The remaining 90% will be covered by the grant. The application deadline is July 30, 2021, and the grant awards will be announced in December 2021.

A motion was made by Constance Elen and seconded by Michael Livingston to apply for the Local Government Efficiency Grant Opportunity. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes, John Frary yes.

A request has been received to expand the parking lot at the playground. Upon inspection of the area, this request cannot be met at this time. For the expansion, well developed trees would need to be eliminated. At this time, the board feels it is counter-intuitive to remove trees when money has been spent to plant trees at the playground. If the need to expand continues, the board will re-examine the request for expansion.

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Resolution # 4

Town of DeKalb

**Resolution in support of a 2021 Local Government Efficiency Grant Application
for a North Country Regional Shared Geographic Information System Project**

Whereas, the Councilpersons of the Town of DeKalb (Town) has an existing agreement with the Development Authority of the North Country to be part of the Authority's regional shared services Geographic Information Services (GIS) platform, and

Whereas, the Town will act as a participating municipality for a shared services project, involving multiple local governments in the North Country to develop GIS datasets for municipally owned assets, including water, wastewater, electric, highway, public works, and cemeteries, and

Whereas, the project partners will submit an application to the Department of State Local Government Efficiency (LGe) Implementation Grant Program, anticipated to be part of the 2021 Consolidated Funding Application, and

Whereas, the Town understands that they will be required to contribute a 10% match for the Town's portion of the overall project budget, up to \$700, which will be paid to the lead agency.

Now, Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Town of DeKalb will participate as a municipal partner as required for the LGe grant application to be filed with the NYS Department of State, and

Be It Further Resolved, that the Town authorizes the Supervisor to execute all financial and/or administrative processes relating to the implementation of the grant program project as a participating applicant, and

Be It Further Resolved, that the Town will provide the required documentation and the support of its staff (as necessary) to the Development Authority of the North Country in performance of the North Country Regional Shared GIS Implementation Project.

Barbara Braggio
Town Clerk
06/16/2021

John M. Gray
6/16/2021

Dog Control: Daniel Moyer

- Have spoken with the owner of a Blue Healer, located on County Route 17, regarding the dog growling at kids as they pass by.
- Picked up a stray dog in Richville that belonged to the owner who lives in Edwards, as they were visiting family in Richville.
- Looking into stray dog/coyote that is entering a yard on County Route 17, this animal has shown up several times.

Code Enforcement Report: Bill Chambers

A total of 14 permits have been issued since the last meeting. Project cost of the permits issued is \$350,450.00 and the fee amount is \$1,716.00. The permits issued are for the following: 1 mobile home, 2 decks, 2 accessory structures, 2 pole barns, 4 additions, 2 above-ground swimming pools, and 1 re-roofing.

The situation on Tanner Street regarding the garbage has been resolved.

Assessor Report: Robert Ball

- 28 property transactions have taken place since January 1st of this year. Of these sales, 10 are arm's length sales that the State will use to determine the Town's Equalization rate. These sales have all been reviewed, processed, and sent back to NYS. A list of sales is attached.
- Grievance Day was held on Wednesday May 26th from 4pm to 8pm. A list of the changes is attached.
- The changes for the 2021 Final Assessment Roll have been sent to the County. They are making the necessary changes and will be printing the Final Roll in the next week. When completed, the Final Roll will be filed with the Clerk and posted on the Home Page of the Town's website per Real Property Tax Law.
- I submitted a written notice to the Clerk to be placed in the local newspaper, Barbara has submitted the paperwork and the official notice for the filing of the 2021 Final Assessment Roll will be in the July 1 issue of the of the Watertown Daily Times Newspaper.
- Currently I have 122 open permits/property reviews that are new this year or have carried over from last year. I will be reviewing these properties over the course of the summer and making assessment changes to them for the 2022 Assessment Roll.
- I have sent NYS Office of Real Property the Resolution passed by the Town Board to conduct the Reassessment Project for the 2023 Assessment Roll. I will be working closely with them over the next year and a half to conduct the project.

Communications:

- NY Municipal Insurance Reciprocal, recently conducted a visit to all town structures for an updated appraisal of said structures. Will be receiving a copy of the report before next month's meeting. During the visits, each structure was measured and assessed for type of construction, (metal/wood).
- LWRP, Constance Elen provided the board with a report from the last meeting, providing an over-view of the boundaries and draft. All paperwork for this portion must be submitted by the 30th of June 2021. The next phase will address legal issues that are anticipated to arise. When available, all documents thus far, will be posted on the Town's Website.
- Soar Projects have had no movement. Permits are set to expire soon, once they do, they must go through the process of resubmitting for the permits, as an extension as already been received and that is what is about to expire.
- Streetlight update is unchanged.
- Phones are in placed but have not made the final switch over yet.
- Appoint three people to a committee for the town hall project. Supervisor Frary asked Michael Livingston, Andrew Fenton, and Barbara Creazzo to sit on this committee.
- Appoint a committee for looking into government funds usage for the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) to distribute Coronavirus Local Fiscal Recovery Funds. Supervisor Frary asked Constance Elen to join him for this task.
- Before, during and after the storm – National Grid has provided a detailed information packet which is posted in the clerk's office. Copies will be made upon request.

-Safety Committee for the town. Due to the fact the town contracts with a safety office to provide Safety Training, the SLC Risk Manager completes safety checks, and NYMIR also completes safety checks, Supervisor Frary would like to disband the Safety Committee, but continue safety checks on an informal basis. There is no opposition to this request, as any board member can visit any of the town's facilities. Larry Denesha asked if he could become part of the informal group and visit sites as well. The answer was yes.

-As mentioned earlier, Jody Wenzel, Risk Manager for St. Lawrence County, recently visited all town buildings to conduct a safety inspection. A report has been received for each building listing the safety concerns. As each concern is addressed, it will be documented, and the correction will be relayed back to Mr. Wenzel.

-Supervisor Frary informed the members of the Board, that he would be writing a letter of support for the continuation and expansion of LC Drives, located in Potsdam. Their presence in the north county is paramount for economic growth.

Supervisor Frary announced the board needed to discuss contract negotiations for the highway department.

At 8:40pm, Constance Elen motioned for the board to enter executive session, for the purpose of discussing contract negotiations with the highway department. Motion was seconded by Andrew Fenton. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes.

Constance Elen motioned at 9:02pm, to exit executive session and reenter the regular board meeting. Seconded by Ed Newcombe. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes.

John Frary made the motion to accept the contract between the Town of De Kalb, and Town of De Kalb Highway Department employees for a 3-year contract, with the following: Excluding the Highway Superintendent, the employees of the highway department, will receive a seventy-five-cent hourly increase, starting July 1, 2021, for the next eighteen months. The remainder of the contract will be paid at an hourly increase rate of fifty-cents. Health Insurance contributions will remain as is. The annual boot allowance will move from \$150 to \$200 and will be issued at the beginning of the year. This motion was seconded by Constance Elen. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes, John Frary yes.

After reviewing all bills presented, and signing all bills over \$500.00, a motion was made by Andrew Fenton and seconded by Constance Elen to approve payment of the bills as entered on Abstract #6-2021. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes and John yes.

A motion was made by Ed Newcombe and seconded by Michael Livingston, to adjourn. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes, John Frary yes.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Barbara A. Creazzo
Town Clerk

Actions

1. The Board to investigate the legality of posting, "No Jake-Brake Use", signs on town roadway. **On-going.**
2. Each area inspected by SLC Risk Manager, Jody Wenzel, will have recommendations addressed and notification of such to him will be completed. **On-going until completed.**
3. Highway department to replace missing Hamilton Road sign.

4. Highway department to resurface the roads as indicated.
5. Supervisor Frary to resubmit the request for a crosswalk at or near the post office located in the hamlet, as well as a request for a no passing zone to be indicated at the US Highway 11 and Jeffers Road intersection. **Completed.**
6. Supervisor Frary to apply for the Local Government Efficiency Grant. **Completed 6/28/2021 with letters sent.**
7. Committee for Town Hall project. **On-going.**
8. Committee for the use of the American Rescue Plan Act funds. **On-going.**
9. Address SLC Safety concerns at each site as indicated and report to Risk Manager. **On-going.**
10. Contact Labor Union for the De Kalb Town Highway Department, of its approval of the proposed contract. **Completed.**