

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 17th day of May 2023, at the Town Hall in DeKalb Junction NY, there were present:

John Frary	Supervisor	Michael Livingston	Council Member
Ed Newcombe	Council Member	Connie Elen	Council Member
Andrew Fenton	Council Member	Barbara Creazzo	Town Clerk
Wayne Holland	Highway Superintendent	Bill Chambers	Building & Codes
Suzanne Arquette	Assessor	Charles B Nash	Town Attorney
Thomas Manley	IT		

Members of the community present: Janice Brabaw, to speak, Kelly Davis, to listen, Jordan Deleel, to speak, and Larry D Denesha, to speak.

Members of the community attending via ZOOM: Nick Eells, accountant of Hoffman Eells, Charles Prior, Engineer of EDR

Supervisor Frary opened the regular meeting at 7:00 PM.

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

Constance Elen moved that the minutes of the Regular Meeting, of the Town Board, held on April 19, 2023, as submitted by the Town Clerk, with one correction, be and hereby approved. Seconded by Michael Livingston and adopted unanimously.

Actions

1. Set up a meeting with Janice Brabaw to discuss DRC ideas. **Completed.**
2. Board to review and be ready to discuss water meter quotes during May's meeting. **Completed.**

Public Forum:

Nick Eells presented an overview of the *Annual Financial Report Update Document for the Town of De Kalb for the year 2022*. The CFA has been sent to Albany and has been accepted. All accounts were presented, (General A, General B, Highway DA, Highway DB, Street Lights, Sewer, and Water). All have a positive fund balance except for Street Lights. This was anticipated due to the updating of the street lighting in the hamlets of De Kalb Junction and Bigelow.

Charles Prior informed the board that a letter has been sent to the State requesting an extension for the completion of the Disinfection System Improvement, that was to be in place Spring of 2024. The request is for it to be extended to the Fall of 2025. It was hoped that bidding would have already been completed by this time with shovels in the ground. The delay is due to the fact the town has not received complete approval for the project by NYS DEC. It is hoped that bidding will occur soon after Labor Day. The good news is that all funding that has been secured will remain in place. Also, 84% of the projected project is funded.

Tom Manley spoke to the board regarding the recent AI malware that infected the Assessor's computer. Mr. Manley has been in communication with Microsoft to assess the damage and the best course of action. Suzanne's computer is now clean, and my team will be scanning all computers for the town to ensure there are no more concerns. Will be purchasing new software that I have had a demonstration of and believe it to be the best out there to detect other forms of AI. Once purchased, it will be placed on all town computers.

Jordan Deleel asked about the proposed parking lot extension for Pipeline Park, since it shows to be on property owned by the fire department, where does the liability lie? Supervisor Frary will check with the insurance company for clarification.

-Mr. Deleel also asked about the progress with the drainage ditch within the hamlet. Supervisor Frary apologized for not having the report yet, as he had anticipated it would be available for this meeting and it is not.

Larry D Denesha

-The three (3) highway outpost projects are completed. The cost of the three was projected to be \$9,926,936 and the end cost was \$174,000 under budget.

-ARPA Funds, the IDA is administering 2.9 million dollars which is assisting with the improvement of infrastructure for homeowners and small businesses, CDL training, Childcare training, as well as tourism throughout St. Lawrence County. To date, \$1,754,197 has been awarded to various projects.

-The Federal money that is supposed to come to the counties to assist with the cost of Medicaid, will over the next four years, be transferred to the State. Therefore, the County will need to generate the necessary funds to cover the cost through the increase of taxes. It could mean a 6% increase in taxes in the future, just to be able to cover the cost of this benefit.

-Over the past several years, the legislators have established a derelict fund. The money from this fund comes from any extra money that is gained when a foreclosed piece of property is sold at auction. The fund money is used to clean up properties that are not sellable due to their condition. They may not sell because the new owner does not want the cost of demolishing a dilapidated building, old junk lying around, or for some other reason. These funds pay to have the property made more marketable. The State is proposing a law that any money earned once the property is sold, should go to the owner of the property when it was foreclosed. Hopefully this will not pass.

-Sales tax is strong for the first quarter.

-In the past, DMV was able to retain 12 ½ cents for each dollar it took in. Now, it is only allowed to retain 10 1/2 cents per dollar. This is due to new state regulations.

-The Spring Burning Ban has been lifted.

Financials:

Constance Elen has a question for Sheila Gardner, Court Clerk, regarding the Justice Clerk Audit. Therefore, audit will not be completed until clarification has been made.

Constance Elen made the motion to accept the Town Clerk Audit for the Clerk's Sewer Account and Water Account, seconded by Michael Livingston.

Town Clerk Report: Barbara A Creazzo

-A total of \$906.40 was collected for the month of April with the town retaining \$649.72 of the collected money. Breakdown is as follows: NYS DEC, \$193.68, town \$11.32 for licenses sold, Ag & Markets, \$63, town \$189 for dog licenses, the town also retained \$418.60 for building permits, and \$30.80 for copies made.

-Wanda Law, Deputy Clerk, worked a total of 22 hours in April.

-A total of \$1,881.02 was collected for water and \$3,060.88 was collected for sewer.

-Taxes continue to be collected, as another \$100,000 was paid to the St. Lawrence County Treasurer's office in April. Of the \$1,994,344.89 warrant, \$1,698,633.01, or 85.20% has been collected as of the end of April. We are now into the last month of collection, as final payments are due May 31st.

Supervisor Frary distributed the year-to-date Financial Report for review. All budget areas remain in good standing.

Water & Sewer Report:

DANC-a total of 488,600 gallons of water were metered in the month of April, with an average daily flow of 16,287 gallons. A total of 1 gallon of sodium hypochlorite was used in the treatment of the water produced. The full report contains all the daily flow charts. Daily, weekly, and monthly inspections and maintenance were completed as scheduled. One random distribution sample for bacteriological testing was completed with a satisfactory result.

-A total of 2,172,000 gallons of wastewater were treated in the month of April, with an average daily flow of 72,400 gallons. There were no SPDES permit violations. The full report contains all the daily flow charts. Daily, weekly, and monthly inspections and maintenance were completed as scheduled. The RBCs continue to run in reverse for one hour each day.

Supervisor Frary asked how the new buckets were doing for the RBC, Superintendent Holland indicated they were not great but okay. There are two on each at this time, Scott McConnell would like to have the original four reinstated. Superintendent Holland does not believe the

motors can handle them at this time. Supervisor Frary suggested this be investigated further by contacting the company that has evaluated them in the past. Contact will be made.

At last month's regular board meeting, Supervisor Frary distributed three (3) quotes for the study of switching from touch reading water meters to radio reading meters. He asked that each board member read over the quotes and be ready to decide this month as to which quote to accept, if any. The current meters are over twenty years old and are beginning to fail. It is inevitable that the meters will need to be replaced. If doing so, they should be upgraded. Along with this, a new software program for billing can be implemented with the new data from the meters, improving the entire billing system.

The quotes received are as follows:

- c2ae with a quote of \$7,750
- EDR with a quote of \$9,850
- Barton & Loguidice with a quote of \$9,750 (preliminary design only)

A motion was made by Michael Livingston and seconded by Andrew Fenton, to accept the quote of \$7,750 submitted by c2ae for the study of water meter changeover. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen no, Andrew Fenton yes, John Frary yes.

Highway Report: Wayne Holland (4/19-5/17/23)

- Unharnessed trucks
- Serviced trucks
- Installed 200 feet of culvert pipe
- Drawing stone and gravel
- Made 1200 ton of mulch for shoulders
- Hung up flags in De Kalb and Richville
- Cold patching
- Got new excavator
- New truck is at Viking

CHIPS money to be received is \$423,032 and have \$67,910 remaining from last year. The roads and distance to be paved are as follows:

- Old Canton Road 3/10 of a mile
1800' X 18' x 2 1/2" = 500 tons of type #6 (RAP), 2 rebates, pave toward Risley Road
- Risley Road 1 mile
4300' x 17' x 2 1/2" = 1150 tons of type #6 (RAP), Shim & top, 1 rebate for now at the start
- Childs Road 1 mile
5,800' x 18' x 2 1/2" = 1600 tons of type #6 (RAP), pave towards SH 812, start on dirt road end, Shim & top, 1 rebate
- Winter Road 1 mile
5700' x 17' x 2 1/2" = 1500 tons of type #6 (RAP), pave towards SH 812, 2 rebates

Have ordered the new truck that was approved earlier this year. It is most likely 2 years out.

Have received a Holding Harmless the Town of Gouverneur for Providing Service for 2023 document, to be approved by the De Kalb Town Board and signed by the Town Supervisor. The town has received a similar document from the Town of Gouverneur that was signed by their supervisor.

A motion was made by Ed Newcombe and seconded by Constance Elen, for Supervisor Frary to sign the Holding Harmless document from the Town of Gouverneur. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes, John Frary yes.

The rubber tire excavator was placed on Auction International again. It was pulled from the auction last fall due to low interest. This time the high bid is \$29,200 and bidding has closed. The board needs to decide if this is an acceptable offer or not.

A motion was made by Andrew Fenton and seconded by Michael Livingston to accept the bid of \$29,200 for the excavator. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes, John Frary yes.

Supervisor Frary informed Superintendent Holland that the town is now responsible for maintaining the Osborne Cemetery, located off County Route 11. An individual who has taken care of the cemetery for years, passed away this past winter at the age of 98.

The highway crew have been sweeping intersections and scraping roadsides in the hamlet. To do this, the department needs to rent a skidster each year. It would be very beneficial if we had one of our own. This year, had to rent one out of Watertown, as there were no enclosed ones available during our time of need in St. Lawrence County. Quotes will be obtained and presented at the next meeting.

The drop-off day at the town barn was successful, as there were three (3) dump truck loads taken to the transfer station. It was reported that three (3) individuals from the town of Gouverneur brought items for dropping off.

Dog Control: Daniel Moyer

No report this month

Code Enforcement Report: William Chambers

-Nine permits have been issued since the last board meeting. Project cost of the nine permits is \$316,700 and the permit fee amount is \$2,135.80. Year-to-date, eighteen permits have been issued at a project cost of \$493,000 and fee amount is \$3,000.80.

-The property owner who was issued a clean-up notice is continuing to cleanup the property. If it is notice that progress has stopped, then attorney, Charles Nash will be contacted.

-Corning Glass has approved one new project to move forward, so will be expecting the permit application. They have another project that they have just begun the preliminary planning for.

Assessor Report: Suzanne Arquette

-The tentative roll was completed on April 25, 2023. This past year, I have reviewed building permits, as well as reviewed Star, Senior Star, Veterans, Religious & Non-Profit, Disability, Fireman/Rescue, and Agriculture exemptions.

-Senior Star: postcards were sent out from the Real Property office to all Enhances Star applicants per NYS law as of this year. Out of 20 renewal applications mailed out of my office, there were 11 renewal applications approved. There were 3 new applications approved.

-Religious & Non-Profit: renewal applications were mailed out and sent back in a timely manner.

-Disability: of the four renewal applications mailed, only one qualified. There was one new application that was approved.

-Fireman/Rescue: there were nine exemptions renewals that were sent out, and seven were received. Two properties were sold in the meantime.

-Agriculture: I had sent out 199 renewal applications with a letter to all property owners requesting that they send in their income (Schedule F or other proof for Ag/Farm income). I have received 156 renewal applications. There are seven (7) new applications and modified one as there was a property split.

-I am now holding grievance hearing dates and times (aka stipulated hearings) to anyone who would like to grieve their assessed value. I have held two dates already, and they were:

Thursday, May 11th and Monday, May 15th. The other two dates are tomorrow, Thursday, May 18th from 4 pm – 8 pm and Saturday, May 20th, from 8 am – 12 pm (noon). The last day to grieve your assessed value will be Wednesday, May 24th from 4 pm – 8 pm and that would be in front of the BAR (Board Assessment Review).

Communications:

-Pavilion prints were distributed to those in attendance. There is planned electricity and Wi-Fi in the pavilion, along with cameras. Have been unable to locate a Port-a-Potty distributor who will lease to the town because of damage done to them in the past. Mr. Denesha asked for approval to begin the painting and marking of the Pickleball Courts. Equipment for the courts is here at the town hall. Once he has completed the markings, nets will be installed.

-Supervisor Frary will follow up regarding the report on the ditch drainage.

-Nothing to report on pole outlets currently.

-Surveying quotes for the property owned by the town on County Route 17. Have only received two quotes but have two other Surveyors to reach out to. Hope to have for next month.

-The AMVETs building has been sold to Scott Fenlong. Mr. Fenlong has given to the town a Standardized NOTIC FORM for Providing 30-Day Advance Notice to a Local Municipality, his

intentions for applying for a license to sell liquor, wine, beer & cider. Also, to provide a menu that meets legal minimum food requirements, and that recorded music will be available.

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 #5-2023. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes, John Frary yes.

A motion was made by Ed Newcombe and seconded by Constance Elen, to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned at 9:40 PM

Respectfully submitted by

Barbara A. Creazzo
Town Clerk

Actions

1. Contact company regarding RBCs at sewer plant.
2. Send a letter to c2ae, awarding them the study of new water meters for radio reads.
3. Return signed Hold Harmless document to the town of Gouverneur. **Completed 5/19/23.**
4. Obtain quotes for a skidster.
5. Continue to look for a port-a-potty distributor.
6. Follow up regarding ditch drainage.