

TOWN OF PLATTEKILL
REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING

March 19, 2014

Time: 7:00 PM

SALUTE TO FLAG

Supervisor Croce opened the meeting with a salute to the American Flag.

ROLL CALL

The following Town Board Members were present:

- Supervisor Croce
- Councilman Putnam
- Councilman Farrelly
- Councilwoman Delgado
- Councilman DePew

MINUTES

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes from the March 5th, 2014 Regular Town Board Meeting.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to accept the minutes from the March 5, 2014 Regular Town Board Meeting.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

On the vote: Supervisor Croce	Yes
Councilman Putnam	Yes
Councilman Farrelly	Yes
Councilwoman Delgado	Yes
Councilman DePew	Abstained (absent at this meeting)

ADDITIONS

Councilman DePew suggested that the Town Board should look at going out to bid for mowing the lawns and probably even for the haying of the field, before it gets closer to spring and we need the grass mowed.

Supervisor Croce stated that we could do this at the next Town Board meeting and Highway Superintendent Wager stated that he had not thought about this yet.

Mr. Wager explained that it was getting close to the time to do this and the bids are the same as last year, so if the Town Board wanted to do it this evening, we could add it to the agenda.

The Town Clerk stated that she would just have to update the bid packages from last year and if we decided this evening, the legal notices would not be in the newspaper until next Wednesday.

* Councilman DePew made a motion to go out to bid for Lawn Mowing and Shrubbery Trimming of the Town properties and to also go out to bid for the mowing of the Hay Field on Town Property for the 2014 season.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

Councilwoman Delgado questioned if this was for all the Town facilities?

Supervisor Croce stated yes.

On the vote: all ayes.

PUBLIC INPUT:

Supervisor Croce asked if there were any comments or questions from the public?

Highway Superintendent Wager thanked Councilman DePew for reminding him about the mowing bids.

There were no further comments or questions from the public.

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to close the Public Input Section of the meeting at 7:10 PM.

Councilman Farrelly seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

REPORTS:

SECTION 1 – DOG CONTROL MONTHLY REPORT

Councilman DePew read the Dog Control monthly report from February 2014. He read that there were 8 calls received from the Plattekill Police Dept. and the Ulster County Sherriff's Dept., that there were no open cases, 3 dogs were either impounded or seized, 1 dog was redeemed, there were no dogs adopted nor were any tickets issued, there are currently 2 dogs in the kennel and there are no cases in Court.

Councilman DePew finished by reading that there was 1 animal welfare complaint which was referred to the Ulster County SPCA and they promptly addressed and resolved the issue. The report stated that Mr. McKee would like to thank the UC SPCA as they have been a reliable resource to the Town of Plattekill Dog Control Dept. and they promptly respond to calls when he has requested their assistance.

Councilman DePew stated that when he was reviewing the vouchers for payment, he noticed that we spend a lot on heating the kennel. He was wondering if insulation could be added to the walls or maybe during the winter, a smaller area within the building could be sectioned off for use.

Supervisor Croce stated that the building was just renovated by an Eagle Scout project and there was insulation put in and the kennel space is not very big.

Highway Superintendent Wager stated that Mr. McKee does keep the heat on low and he does use a lot of blankets to keep the animals warm. The animals do have to be able to go in and out and it has been very cold this winter.

SECTION 2 – RECREATION DEPARTMENT REPORT

Councilman Farrelly read the report from the Recreation Director. The report stated that Rocking Horse Ranch hosted a beautiful day for 139 residents who spent March 19th tubing, skiing, snowboarding and swimming in the indoor water park pool. The report stated that the Basketball Program for 15-19 year olds was extended through the month of April and they will be playing at the New Hurley Church gymnasium on Rt. 208 and New Hurley Road from 6-9 PM on Wednesday nights.

Councilman Farrelly read that the first Kids Movie Night was held at the Methodist Church gym. The movie and popcorn were free and there were drinks, coffee and donuts available for purchase from the Church. There were 24 children who attended and he is looking forward to having another movie night in April. The report stated that he was also looking to do a Classic Movie Night for Seniors which will be held in the afternoon and offer coffee and dessert along with the movie, all for free, due to donations.

Councilman Farrelly read that the Spring Soccer Session would be set up soon and notices will be going out for this program that will be for 5-12 year olds starting on April 18th and running for 6 weeks. The coaches will be volunteers from the Ulster County Community College Men's team and the hours will be from 5:00 PM to 6:30 PM at the Town Park. He read that there would also be a Spring Rugby session with coaches from the Hudson Valley Rugby League for kids 7-11 years old and this would also be starting in April and will run for 5 weeks. Anyone wanting to volunteer to help in one, or more, of these programs, please do not hesitate to contact him at the Recreation Dept.

SECTION 3 – BUILDING DEPT. MONTHLY REPORT

Councilman Putnam read the Building Dept. monthly report from February 2014. He read that there were 6 Field Inspection done, 1 violation issued for a Fire Suppression System, 0 violations closed, 1 complaint taken, 0 structure fires, 7 building permits issued, 0 Certificates of Occupancy issued, 1 Certificate of Compliance issued, 10 Municipal Searches done, three Court dates set, 0 site plan reviews, 14 fire safety inspections done and 4 Office Meetings held. These numbers do not include returning phone calls and residents coming in for assistance with codes, building permits and zoning and subdivision issues.

Supervisor Croce stated that one of the Building Inspectors, Scott Mandoske, spoke with him about a case that he feels should be reviewed by a Town attorney. Mr. Mandoske asked to consult with the attorney because there is a situation and they can't just walk on the property to look at what is going on without permission from the owner.

SECTION 4 – ASSESSOR MONTHLY REPORT

Councilwoman Delgado read a portion of the Assessor's monthly report from February 2014. She read that the State has mailed letters to property owners who did not re-register for STAR informing them that their basic STAR exemption is going to be removed for the 2014 assessment roll.

Councilwoman Delgado continued reading that the deadline for submission of exemption applications was March 1, 2014 and those applications that were submitted are currently being reviewed and processed.

Councilwoman Delgado read that late last year the State Legislature passed legislation to allow School Districts to have Veterans Exemptions for School Taxes. Currently they are only allowed on Town and County taxes. School Districts would have to adopt a resolution by March 1st to allow the exemption for this year's school tax and so far Marlboro and New Paltz School Districts have done so. Highland and Wallkill School Districts will be reviewing the impacts this could have on the school tax levy and they will make a decision next year whether to adopt the resolution or not.

Councilwoman Delgado finished the report reading that the 2014 Update Project is almost complete and notices should be out to all property owners by the end of March. The Assessor will be available to meet with property owners through March and into early April if anyone would like to discuss their assessment.

Supervisor Croce stated that there was a sales page attached to the Assessor's monthly report and if anyone would like to have or view a copy, one can be obtained at the Town Clerk's Office during regular business hours.

SECTION 5 – POLICE DEPARTMENT MONTHLY REPORT

Supervisor Croce read the Police Department monthly report for February 2014. He read that there were 332 documented calls for service, that there were 56 traffic tickets issued and that there were 14 motor vehicle accidents handled by the Plattekill Police Dept. with 9 persons suffering injuries.

Supervisor Croce did not read the Arrest Blotter as this section was quite lengthy. He continued reading that the Detectives were working on a number of burglaries and were still assisting the Attorney General's Office with the raid on the Organized Crime Cockfighting Ring. The Detectives had also closed several Larceny and Burglary cases due to investigations into these matters.

Supervisor Croce read that there were no problems with most of the vehicles, however the replacement vehicle had been ordered for the patrol car that was involved in an accident.

Supervisor Croce read that there were 15 interviews for open positions within the Department and one candidate was selected and will be working undercover with the U.R.G.E.N.T. Task Force. The candidate's name will not be released due to the risks involved with releasing the officer's identity. The Department received a check for \$14,000.00 from the work done by the U.R.G.E.N.T. Task Force. These are proceeds obtained from asset forfeitures.

Supervisor Croce stated again that anyone wanting more information on this and any of the monthly reports should contact the Town Clerk's Office for a copy.

Supervisor Croce read a letter that was attached to the monthly report. It was a letter from the New Paltz School District thanking the PBA for setting up the Bruce Loertscher Scholarship for a student that was continuing their education in Government or Criminal Justice.

Supervisor Croce stated that he would send a copy of the letter to Mrs. Loertscher as she would appreciate knowing that the Board of Education unanimously approved the setup of the scholarship.

SECTION 6 – NEW TOWN HALL PHONE SYSTEM

Supervisor Croce explained that our phone system for the Town offices continues to give us problems and he has completed the process of obtaining three price quotes for a new system. He stated that he

received a price quote from Cross Point Connect Inc. for \$7,730.00, another from NEC for \$8,572.17 and a third quote from Sound Telephone for \$6,220.00.

Supervisor Croce continued to explain that each company gave a price quote on the same type of system and he also realized that offices such as the Town Historian, Recreation Director and Building Inspectors rarely use their phones for more than having a voice mail and being able to receive a call. So they do not need all the functions that other offices need and can use a phone that does not include all the other functions and or lines. This reduces the cost of those phone consoles and we are also getting a credit for the recent purchase of the phone card from Sound Telephone. There is also the issue of two cordless phones for the Highway Dept. that had to be figured in.

The Town Board discussed the different phone systems and price quotes.

Supervisor Croce stated that Sound Telephone has come in with the lowest price quote.

Councilwoman Delgado asked about the warrantee and whether this phone system would last for a while. Is the technology up to date?

Supervisor Croce stated yes, he has spoken to the Sound Telephone representative and these phones are tops in the current technology. They are the ones that provide us service on our current phone system and they will also provide us with training, installation and the removal of the old phone system with this price.

* Councilman Farrelly made a motion to purchase the new phone system from Sound Telephone at a cost of \$6,220.00.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

The Town Clerk asked when the new system would be installed?

Supervisor Croce stated that we should receive this new system very soon and explained that there were more problems today and he was not really sure why. We did just change our phone lines through Cornerstone, from copper to cable and that may be some of the problem; he was not sure. It does seem that we have had more problems with our interior system since this change. This new system is the most up-to-date model. The problems we had today were fixed by him giving up his private line to allow for the main line to roll over to it so that people would not receive a busy signal. And there are still issues with voice mail and other functions, but we are up and running for now.

Mr. Wager asked where the money would come from to pay for this expense?

Supervisor Croce stated that he felt the funding for this would come from the Capital Reserves as it is a "buildings" issue.

The Town Board decided to vote on this motion first and then make a second motion to authorize the funding.

On the vote: all ayes.

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to utilize funds from the Capital Reserve Fund, the same fund that was used to repair the roofs, to pay for the new phone system.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

Councilman DePew asked if the Supervisor knew what the balance was in the Capital Reserve Fund?

Supervisor Croce stated that he did not have the exact figure in front of him, but he does remember that when we chose to pay for the roof out of this fund, we were looking to spend around \$100,000.00

and it would not have depleted the Fund in half at that time. So there is still a good amount in this Fund.

On the vote: all ayes.

SECTION 7 – HEALTH CARE

Supervisor Croce stated that Councilman Farrelly and he have been reviewing the options available to them for continuing the Health Care Benefits for the Town employees. He stated that the costs are continuing to go higher and higher and at some point, the Town will have to decide what they are going to do to continue the same service.

Supervisor Croce stated that there doesn't seem to be too much that they can do about this situation as they have reviewed policies with CDPHP, MVP and Liberty (HCHP). He stated that the Town cannot offer the same policy as last year as this policy has been discontinued; which he believed was partly due to the Affordable Health Care Act. He stated that the closest plan to the current one is through CDPHP which is basically the same plan except for the cost. He stated that a single will now cost \$453.82 per month, an employee with spouse (our double) will cost \$907.64 per month, a new category, which is due to the Affordable Health Care Act, an employee with children will cost \$771.49 and the family package will cost \$1,293.39 per month, which gives us a total of \$17,540.17 per month in Health Care Benefits. There have been some changes. One change is that the vision policy was separate, but now is included in the CDPHP policy and we are using Delta Dental of New York and that actually adds a little better benefit to our employees.

Supervisor Croce stated that he would like to know from the Town Board how they would like to proceed.

Councilman Farrelly stated that he did not see that there were any options available at this time as the current policy is about to expire as of April first. So as long as we are going to continue to fund the current full time employees that are in the Town, we as a Town Board don't have much we can do. That is not to say that in the near future, we may have to look into doing what other employers are doing and have our employees pay for part of their Health benefits. This is something being done throughout the nation. This problem doesn't look like it is going to get any better.

Supervisor Croce stated that he agreed. This is something that we will have to look into for the future. We may have to look at policies where our employees will have to pay some of the co-pays when they go to the doctors, rather than not paying anything. It is hard for us to pick up almost a 30% increase, but this is an important benefit that we provide for our employees.

Councilman DePew stated that it is also important for everyone to know that you and Councilman Farrelly have worked on this issue very diligently and that this new policy doesn't diminish any of the coverage that we currently have.

Supervisor Croce stated yes, and in certain aspects, it is a little better. There is no reduction in Health Benefits. He stated that the Town employees will, as we do every year we change the policy, have a meeting with our representatives from our insurance carrier, to sign everyone up and answer any questions that the employees may have. Our employees are encouraged to attend and the Town Board is welcome to attend also. The meeting will be on Friday, March 28th at 1:00PM here at the Town Hall.

Councilman Farrelly stated that in the employee handbook it states that the Town has the authority to switch insurance companies provided that we give them comparable coverage.

Supervisor Croce stated no, he believes that wording is in the Union Contract. The employee handbook says that the Town Board will determine how much they will pay towards the insurance. Which leaves the door open to what you are saying and the coverage is staying the same as last year.

* Supervisor Croce made a motion that we contract with Marshall & Sterling- CDPHP to use the HDEPO 2700RX3-332-SUSF3057 Health Plan for the period of 4/1/2014 to 4/1/2015.

Councilman Farrelly seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

SECTION 8 – INTERVIEW DATES FOR BOARD OF ASSESSMENT REVIEW

The Town Board agreed on doing interviews for the Board of Assessment Review on Thursday evening, March 27, 2014 starting at 6:30 PM. There are three applicants at this time.

Councilman DePew stated that he would not be able to make it that evening, but the Town Board should meet without him.

Supervisor Croce stated that he would ask his clerk to call everyone and set up the interview times.

SECTION 9 – HIGHWAY TRAINING REQUEST

Supervisor Croce read the memo from the Highway Superintendent requesting that he attend the State Highway Training School in Ithaca, NY.

* Councilman DePew made a motion to authorize the Highway Superintendent, Robert Wager to attend the annual 2014 Highway School Training in Ithaca, NY from June 1st – June 4th, 2014 at a cost of \$144.00 per night for 3 nights and the reimbursement of meals, mileage and tolls.

Councilman Putnam seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

SECTION 10 – WALDEN PLAYBOY MOTORCYCLE CLUB, INC. REQUEST

Supervisor Croce read a letter from the Walden Playboy Motorcycle Club asking the Town's permission to allow the Motorcycle Club to use their property for an additional Sunday event on the weekend of October 25 & 26th, 2014. The proposed event would be used to earn a little more funding as it is always a challenge trying to cover yearly expenses. The October date is during the time of year when not much is going on in Town so there should be less of an impact on the community.

Supervisor Croce stated that the Motorcycle Club has requested this extra date in the past and it has been granted. We don't get many complaints from the area neighbors and they do try to coexist with them. They are always very generous with making donations to needed families during the fall and Christmas season. This past year they made another donation of food to the food pantry. He stated that he felt that this extra date should be granted.

* Councilman Farrelly made a motion to grant the Walden Playboy Club their request of an extra Sunday for the proposed event to be held on Oct. 25th & 26th, 2014.

Councilman DePew seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

SECTION 11 – UCRRA INFORMATION

Supervisor Croce stated that at the last Supervisor’s Association meeting, the Director of the UCRRA was present to discuss some of the issues that he is currently dealing with. He stated that in the beginning, the UCRRA had municipalities sign on to contracts that were near 20 years. These contracts are up and the UCRRA is looking to see if municipalities will sign on for another 3 to 5 years. Currently we are in a contract that was good for a year and a half. The problem is that most of the Town Transfer Stations are barely making any money on their facilities and we do not know if the tipping fees will go up again. Some of the Towns have closed their facilities so that they are only open a few days a week to try to cut expenses.

Supervisor Croce stated that there are a lot of options being offered to the Towns and he just wanted to let the Town Board know what this situation is all about. Some options would be that we could have shared services with two or more Towns, we could close down the facility or a Town could extend their contract with the UCRRA for the additional 3 to 5 years. Another option would be for two or more Towns to merge and have the UCRRA take over the operation of the Transfer Station which would then be operated by employees of the UCRRA and the facility would be open to all Ulster County residents. These are all options that are on the table.

Supervisor Croce stated that he would not like to see us close our Transfer Station. This is one service that we do provide. If we were to have the UCRRA take over the operation of our facility, again they could raise the fees and this would also impact our residents.

Supervisor Croce stated that another issue that the UCRRA has to figure out is how to deal with their funding to keep the UCRRA running. Originally, they were having funding problems and the County Legislature signed into law that any garbage that was generated in Ulster County would have to be taken to the UCRRA facility in Kingston. This “flow control” has helped them to meet their financial obligations and they are now self-reliant. However, the State is saying that they should have a reserve fund and he will have to earmark some of the funds to that reserve fund. His other problem is that his trucks are all getting very old and are costing a lot of money to keep on the road. He has to figure out how to fund the purchase of new trucks to continue service to all the Towns. So he has a lot on his plate to begin to plan for the future and the Towns have to try to plan what is most beneficial for their residents.

Supervisor Croce finished by saying that Mr. Rose, the Director of the UCRRA, will be attending Supervisor’s Meetings in the future to propose more options and ideas and to see what he can do to work out affordable agreements with the Towns. He stated that he would keep the Town Board informed as new information becomes available.

SECTION 12 TRANSFERS

Supervisor Croce explained that he has a General “A” Fund transfer of funds that is being requested by the Highway Superintendent. He read the memo.

Highway Superintendent Wager explained that the transfer was necessary to complete a mandate by the State that all speed signs are to be changed to the high intensity prismatic signs. He stated that

most of the "Stop" signs have already been changed and they have been working on changing the rest of them. He explained that the Town road signs are actually owned by the Town/Town Board and that is why the funding for the signs comes out of the General Fund Account. The Highway Dept. owns the Town roadway.

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to transfer \$1,800.00 from the General Fund Budget Line Item#A1620.4 Buildings & Grounds Contractual to General Fund Budget Line Item #A3310.4 Traffic Control Contractual. This transfer is necessary to complete the State compliance to have all speed limit signs changed to high intensity prismatic signs throughout the Town. A copy of this complete transfer is attached to these minutes.

Councilman DePew seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

SECTION 13 - VOUCHERS

* Councilman DePew made a motion to pay the Voucher Detail Report dated 3/19/2014, which includes: the General Fund amount of \$74,473.89, the Highway Fund amount of \$39,009.86, the Clintondale Light District amount of \$1,029.35, the Modena Light District amount of \$1,703.32 and the Trust & Agency amount of \$5,589.35 for a total amount of \$121,805.77 recognizing that the Audit Committee has reviewed the claims and found them acceptable for payment.

Councilwoman Delgado seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

SECTION 14 – ADJOURNMENT

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:17 PM.

Councilman Farrelly seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.