

TOWN OF PLATTEKILL
REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING

August 7, 2019

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
Councilman Matthews
Councilman DePew

MINUTES

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to dispense with the reading of the minutes from the July 17th, 2019 Regular Town Board Meeting.

Councilman Farrelly seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to accept the minutes from the July 17th, 2019 Regular Town Board Meeting.

Councilman Matthews seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

ADDITIONS

Supervisor Croce stated that he had two additions for the evening's agenda:

1.Change of Planning Board Engineer:

Supervisor Croce read a memo from the Planning Board Chairperson, Cindy Hilbert, explaining that the Planning Board had decided to change the engineering firm that they use for Planning Board Projects. Those projects currently before them and using Barton & Loguidice, will continue to use this company, but any new projects will be directed to the new engineers; McGoey, Hauser & Edsall from New Windsor, NY.

2.2020 Department Budget Requests:

Supervisor Croce wanted to let everyone know that Budget Season was almost upon us and he has e-mailed Budget Requests to all the departments. The requests are due back to him by Sept. 10th and then he will put together the Tentative Budget. He stated that Budget meetings, with all the departments, will start shortly after Sept. 25th. He asked the Town Board to keep these meetings in mind when setting their schedules for the coming months.

PUBLIC INPUT

Ms. Gina Coppola asked the Town Board if the website for the Master Plan update was up and running yet?

Supervisor Croce stated yes, it is and the next meeting would be on August 13th at the Modena Fire Dept. at 7:00 PM. They will be reviewing the surveys and they want to establish goals and objectives for the next phase. They will also use these goals and objectives to apply for another Grant in early fall.

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 Matthews seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

SECTION 1 - PRESENTATION – HEMPIRE STATE GROWERS COOPERATIVE:

Supervisor Croce introduced Amy and Gail Hepworth, who are local farmers, that recently formed the "Hempire State Growers Cooperative" uniting approximately 30 farmers in the area who will be growing Hemp.

Ms. Gail Hepworth explained that the Governor of New York State had just recently reclassified Industrial Hemp as a growable plant to help farmers stay in business. She explained that farming is under a real threat and many farmers are closing up their businesses because they cannot make a profit. Hopefully by being able to now grow Industrial Hemp, they will be able to sell product to this growing industry.

Ms. Hepworth showed a short video which included information about growing Industrial Hemp and how the Growers Cooperative will be marketing their product.

Ms. Hepworth went on to explain that the Industrial Hemp plant does look and smell like the Hemp plant that produces marijuana, but it is actually a different strain of the Hemp plant that does not contain THC which is the component that, when ingested, makes you high. Smoking this plant will not have that effect on anyone. She stated that the plant does produce CBD which is used for health reasons. She stated that being able to grow this plant should give an economic boost to the farming community as it will be another crop that can be rotated in with other crops such as the vegetables and fruits that are, and will still be, commonly grown in the area.

Ms. Hepworth went on to explain that the Hempire State Growers Cooperative has received a license from the State to grow this Hemp plant and there are 15 farmers now growing this plant this year. The State does monitor what is grown and leaves from the plant must be sent to the State for monitoring purposes; however the Cooperative will have its own monitoring and processing facility. This should cut down on costs for processing and the farmers will be able to keep more of the profits. She explained that the whole plant is used creating very little waste. Once the oil is removed from the plant, the plant itself can be used to make all kinds of items such as clothes, paper and many other items.

Ms. Hepworth stated that there are 5 Agra-Tourism Farms in the area and they are planning on using these farms to instruct people and teach them about farming Hemp. She stated that farming brings a community together and they are looking to be a part of this community.

Councilman Putnam suggested that the Cooperative should contact the local high schools to see if they can do a presentation for the students. This way they can learn about farming as well as that this plant is not the marijuana plant.

Ms. Hepworth stated that she had not thought to do this, but it might be a good idea to build awareness of what they are doing.

A gentleman who was also a farmer in the Cooperative stated that the good thing about this is that the State is behind the farmers in growing this product. They are advocating for farmers and letting companies know that since they are in New York State, they should be using Hemp grown in New York State.

The Town Board thanked them for coming in this evening and giving this presentation. It is helpful information in case we have anyone coming in and asking questions.

Ms. Amy Hepworth explained that she had an issue with trying to obtain an Ag Exemption and she did not want to have to take the Town to court. She stated that the Assessor's Dept. stated that they had not received her application for the exemption on time, when she had been in and out many times discussing the forms with them. She stated that she did not realize that the form had not been turned in until she received a letter saying so. Then she went to Grievance Day, but was denied again. She stated that her only other option is to sue the Town and she really did not want to do that.

Supervisor Croce stated that he understood what she was saying and would have to speak with the members of the Board of Review to see what their side of the story is. He stated that he knows that there are State regulations and rules that the Grievance Board and the Assessor's Office have to follow.

SECTION 2 – SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Supervisor Croce stated that when some of the Town Departments requested to use Social Media to reach Town residents for information purposes, we had a few questions as to how this was going to work. There were questions on how these "web pages" would be set up, what information was going to be available, how were we going to react to others adding comments and what if information was going to be requested from these sites?

Supervisor Croce stated that other Towns have adopted Social Media Policies and he was thinking that the Town of Plattekill should have a policy too; just in case something comes up, and it is inevitable that something will.

Councilman Matthews stated that he is also sure something will happen someday and he would like to see some policies from other Towns to see how they are handling the situation.

Supervisor Croce stated that at the next Supervisor's Meeting he will request that the Town's that have a policy send a copy to us for review.

The Town Clerk stated that she had received a copy of the Village of New Paltz's Social Media Policy in an e-mail and she would put a copy in the Town Board's mail boxes.

Councilman DePew also suggested that the Association of Towns may have a few templates.

Supervisor Croce stated that he would follow up on this and get some sample policies.

SECTION 3 – TOBAR ATHLETICS – SOCCER CAMP

Supervisor Croce stated that it was brought to his attention that there has been a person using the restrooms and the Pavilion at the Park for a Soccer Camp. The use came to light when it was raining and

our Camp Director was asked to allow this Soccer Camp to use half of the Pavilion. He stated that he went down to the Park and met Mr. Victor Tobar, Jr. who was running the Soccer Camp and explained to him that the Town should have been contacted and at the very least we needed an insurance form. He stated that he told him we have someone else who uses the field for a Soccer Camp and that person pays the Town for the week to use the field and facilities. He stated that he also told him that he could not run his Soccer Camp when the Town was running their Summer Camp.

Supervisor Croce stated that Mr. Tobar did provide the Town with an insurance form and he had already used the field for one week and wanted to use it for a second week in August. The question is whether we want to allow him to use the field and if so, do we charge him the same as E-Rock is paying?

Supervisor Croce stated that he had Mr. Tobar fill out a request to use the field which everyone has a copy of this evening. He stated that Mr. Tobar did ask the Soccer League if he could use the field and they told him yes, but he was not told that he had to come to the Town Board to get Town approval also. The Soccer League was giving him a key to use the facilities and store equipment in their portion of the Pavilion garage.

The Town Board was in agreement that Mr. Tobar should pay the same as the Town was charging E-Rock Soccer for the use of the field and the facilities. They also felt that Mr. Tobar should pay for the week that he already used the field in July and then additionally pay for the week in August plus the \$100.00 security deposit. If he did not want to pay the \$350.00 for the July week, then he could not use the field again in August. The total he would owe the Town was \$700.00 for the two weeks and then the \$100.00 security deposit.

SECTION 4 – MODENA FIRE & RESCUE LETTER

Supervisor Croce read a letter from the Modena Fire & Rescue stating that they have provided manpower to assist the Town with parking vehicles and providing adequate Fire and EMS coverage at the Red, White & Blue Celebration for many years and can no longer continue to assist with parking. Parking vehicles stretches the department to thin and compromises their primary functions. They will continue to provide coverage for medical emergencies or fire related emergencies at the event.

Supervisor Croce stated that he was very sad to hear this, but understands that volunteers are getting harder to come by and all the departments are feeling the same crunch. His feelings are that we need to remember this when it is budget time so we can put some funds in to pay for approximately 12 to 15 people.

Councilman DePew stated that he felt the Supervisor should respond to this letter with a letter of Thank You for all they have done in the past. He stated that maybe we could pay Modena FD or Clintondale FD or another organization in Town that could do this job or maybe the Town could make a donation to an organization for their help.

Supervisor Croce stated that there can be issues with the Town making a donation to an organization. He would have to look into that situation. He stated that he felt it would only be right to offer payment to the Modena or Clintondale Fire Dept. if that is what we decide to do. This will have to be discussed at budget time.

SECTION 5 – EXECUTIVE SESSION

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to enter into Executive Session at 8:37 PM to discuss Highway Personnel.

Councilman Matthews seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to close Executive Session and re-open the Regular Town Board Meeting at 9:08 PM.

Councilman Matthews seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

SECTION 6 – VOUCHERS

* Councilman DePew made a motion to pay the Voucher Detail Report dated 8/7/2019, which includes: the General Fund amount of \$57,265.63, the Highway Fund amount of \$20,927.76, the SA-Clintondale Light District amount of \$729.40, the SB-Modena Light District amount of \$1,384.18, the SD –Drainage District amount of \$5,938.00 and the Trust & Agency amount of \$1,437.50 for a total amount of \$87,682.47 recognizing that the Audit Committee has reviewed the claims and found them acceptable for payment.

Councilman Matthews seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.

SECTION 7 – ADJOURNMENT

* Supervisor Croce made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:09 PM.

Councilman Farrelly seconded.

On the vote: all ayes.