

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2015

In Attendance: Supervisor Schaffer and Board Members Fitzgerald, Majewski, Messina and Agneshwar.

Also Attending: Human Resource Officer Nancy Olmstead, Historic Preservation Commission Members: Margaret Hadsell, Janice Mangan, Nina Versaggi and Mary Lou Supa, Town Clerk Emil Bielecki and 5 members of the general public.

Supervisor Schaffer **convened the Work Session at 6:00 PM** and introduced Shoba Agneshwar as the incoming new member of the Town Board.

6:00 PM – Margaret Hadsell – Hardship Applications to Historic Preservation Commission.

Town Historian and member of the Vestal Historic Preservation Commission Margaret Hadsell distributed a manual which outlined the roles and responsibilities of the entities involved in historic preservation in the Town of Vestal. The Historic Commission recently received applications for Certificates of Appropriateness to demolish 12 buildings in the Rivercrest Historic District. The purpose of requesting this meeting with the Town Board is to stress the importance of following the regulations in the processing of these Certificate of Appropriateness requests. Failure to do so can have very negative consequences for the Town, including the possibility of being sued. In addition, the Town's status as a Certified Local Government (CLG) could be revoked which could negatively impact future applications for state and federal funding for all operations.

If the legal process is followed, the Historic Preservation Commission is likely to deny the applications for the Certificates of Appropriateness to demolish the 12 designated historic properties. If the applications are denied, the applicant can enter the hardship process as outlined in the Preservation Ordinance. The bar for a hardship case is high, but if that is denied by the Historic Preservation Commission, the applicant can appeal the case to the Town Board. Regardless of the eventual outcome, by following the process, the Town will protect itself from potential litigation and will help retain the CLG status.

Several Town Board Members asked for clarification of the current status of the Rivercrest Historic District and about the process of reviewing these demolition requests. Margaret Hadsell explained that the litigation involving Rivercrest has created a lot of confusion. The Rivercrest Historic District is on the State register and was never removed. The local designation of the Rivercrest Historic District was restored by the Historical Preservation Committee (after the Court decision) upon request of the local Rivercrest Historic Committee. The demolition requests will be officially acted upon by the Historical Preservation Committee at its next regular meeting on January 12, 2015.

Margaret Hadsell acknowledged that due to the fact that the Rivercrest properties had been allowed to deteriorate to a hopeless state of disrepair, there is little hope of preserving the Historic District as originally envisioned. However, she urged the Town Board to recognize the historical significance of the Chenango Canal Extension (towpath) that runs behind most of the Rivercrest structures and act accordingly to continue to preserve it as a landmark.

6:15 PM - Review the 2015 Organizational Appointments, Authorizations and Calendar of Board Meetings.

Human Resource Officer Nancy Olmstead and Supervisor Schaffer reviewed the list of organizational items that the Board will be asked to approve at the next Regular Meeting. These items establish many

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2015

of the basic rules and regulations by which the Town will operate in 2015 and includes the appointment of various Town officers as well as members of numerous town committees.

The Board engaged in some discussion concerning a section in the Procurement Policy dealing with written quotes for public works projects under \$4000. Comptroller McKane recommended that some threshold be established where no quotes are needed.

Councilman Majewski recommended a wage schedules from vendors doing business with the Town be placed on file so as to be readily available and applicable for all jobs throughout the year.

Councilwoman Agneshwar suggested that the Board speak with Comptroller McKane to get additional information about the proposed changes to the Procurement Policy.

COMMITTEES

7.1 PUBLIC WORKS

1. Request for a Vehicle Service Station Permit for 1214 Tracy Creek Road.

According to a memo from Town Engineer Gary Campo, this parcel is zoned RR and the applicant has applied to the ZBA for a use variance. The use variance would need to be granted before the applicant could apply for a vehicle service station permit to allow a body to operate. The ZBA will take up the variance request at its next meeting on January 22nd. If the variance is approved, the request to schedule a public hearing on the vehicle service station permit will be placed on the January 26th Work Session agenda. Mr. Campo suggested that if the Board has additional questions, it may want to request that the applicant attend a Work Session prior to scheduling the public hearing.

7.2 FINANCE

1. Warrants:

2014-51, 2014-51E, 2014-51L, 2014-52, 2014-52E, 2014-52EE, 2014-52P, 2015-01

OK – This item will be placed as a ‘Receive and File’ on the Agenda for the next Regular Meeting.

2. Request to pay \$400.00 for 2015 Membership Dues to the Upstate New York Towns Association.

Councilman Majewski questioned whether there is any value to continuing our membership in this organization. Supervisor Schaffer responded that there are many benefits to being a part of this association. They have more frequent meetings on topics that seem to be more relevant to our Town. The locations of the meetings are rotated throughout the state for convenience. The upstate association appears to be more progressive and less political than the larger statewide organization.

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

3. Request to pay \$4,976.36 to Greene, Hershendorfer & Sharpe for Hicks vs. Town of Vestal litigation expenses.

Councilman Majewski questioned the billing of 2.5 hours for travel between here and Syracuse and

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2015

noted that he would look at this a little more prior to the Regular Meeting.

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

4. Request to pay \$1650.00 for 2015 Membership Dues to the NYS Association of Towns.

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

5. Discuss the NYS Association of Towns 2015 Training School and Annual Meeting on February 15-18, 2015.

Supervisor Schaffer noted that he is not going to the conference this year but stressed the importance of sending various town officials to obtain additional training. He stated that he would be contacting those individuals eligible to attend to establish a head count so that the Board can approve the necessary expenditures.

6. Request to pay \$1625.00 to Town Attorney David Berger for December 2014 billable hours.

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

7. Request authorization for Town Supervisor to sign a Contract Renewal with Broome County for Office of Aging lease of space for Vestal Senior Center for the term of January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015.

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

8. Request authorization for Town Supervisor to sign Contract Renewal with Broome County for the STOP DWI Overtime Patrol for the term of January 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015, in the total amount of \$12,000.00.

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

7.3 **PERSONNEL**

1. Request authorization for Town Comptroller Laura McKane to hire H. Vincent Griggs III as a provisional Sr. Account Clerk to work in the Business Office effective December 29, 2014 on a part-time basis and effective January 26, 2015 on a full-time basis at a rate of \$13.95 per hour. Upon permanent appointment, Mr. Griggs's rate of pay will increase to \$16.40 per hour. This position is non-union. Such appointment is conditioned on satisfactory results of background check and pre-employment drug test.

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

2. Request authorization for Code Officer Mark Dedrick to hire Steven Cortright as a provisional Municipal Fire Code Inspector to work in the Code Department effective January 12, 2015 on a full-time basis at the CSEA rate of \$16.40 per hour. Such appointment is conditioned on satisfactory results of the background check and pre-employment drug test.

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES

MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2015

Human Resource Office Nancy Olmstead noted that the applicant has passed the necessary background check and drug test. If hired, this employee would still have to take the Civil Service exam for the position. This test has not been scheduled yet.

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

3. Request authorization for Museum Director Ramona Kacyvenski to hire Jacob McDaniel as a Clerk Part Time to work an average of 8 hours per week in the Museum, effective immediately, at a rate of \$9.32 per hour. This position is non-union.

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

4. Request for re-appointment of Gerald Prudhomme to the Library Board of Trustees effective January 1, 2015. This term is to expire December 31, 2019.

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** - no items were brought for consideration by the Board

7.5 **PUBLIC SAFETY**

1. Request from Police Chief John Butler to accept a donation from BAE in the amount of \$4,000.00 to pay for the summer Vestal High School Youth Academy run by members of the Vestal Police Department.

Councilman Majewski asked that a thank you letter from the Board be sent to BAE for their donation.

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

2. Request from Fire Chief David Harrington to authorize Assistant Chiefs John Paffie and Assistant Fire Chief Douglas Rose to sign vouchers for the 2015 fiscal year.

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

3. Request from Fire Chief David Harrington for the Board of Fire Commissioners to authorize the Fire District Office to invoice the Town of Evans for \$311 in fuel costs with a letter of intent to donate those costs to the Evans Center Fire Department through the Town of Evans.

Supervisor Schaffer noted that FEMA was also involved in this situation and there is some confusion as to what can be donated. Councilman Majewski stated that he would try to get additional information about this item and report back to the Board.

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

4. Request for the Board of Fire Commissioners to approve the certification list for the Town of Vestal Fire District Length of Service Awards Program (LOSAP).

Councilman Majewski explained that LOSAP is a modest retirement plan for the volunteer fire fighters

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES
MONDAY, JANUARY 5, 2015

and it serves as an incentive in recruiting new members.

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

ADMINISTRATION - no items were brought for consideration by the Board.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Kopernik Tower

Update on 1/5/15: Supervisor Schaffer spoke with County Emergency Services Director Brett Chellis and a meeting will be scheduled soon to update the Town on the project.

NEW BUSINESS

1. To meet a time deadline, Supervisor Schaffer asked that the following item be placed on the agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board:

Authorization for Museum Director Ramona Kacyvenski to submit a grant application to the Chenango Arts Council for \$5,000 for the Vestal Museum Summer Bluegrass Series.

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

2. Councilman Majewski noted that as part of an overall effort to reduce paper and improve communication, the Town should consider acquiring tablet computers for each Board member. Supervisor Schaffer agreed that this is worth looking into and will ask the IT Department for some recommendations.

SUPERVISOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Winter Parking Reminder – Parking of vehicles is prohibited on all Town and County roads in Vestal between the hours of 2:00 AM TO 6:00 AM from December 1st through March 31st.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

On a motion of Councilman Majewski, seconded by Councilwoman Fitzgerald, the following was

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Agneshwar, Fitzgerald, Majewski, Messina, Schaffer
Nays 0

Resolved the Board enter into Executive Session for the following purpose:

- To discuss contract negotiations with the Police Supervisors bargaining unit.
- To discuss a specific personnel issue in the IT Department.

The time was 7:29 PM.

On a motion of Councilwoman Agneshwar, seconded by Councilwoman Messina, the following was

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Agneshwar, Fitzgerald, Messina, Majewski, Schaffer
Nays 0

Resolved the Board leave Executive Session and **adjourn the Work Session. The time was 8:10 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,
Emil Bielecki, Town Clerk