

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES

MONDAY, JUNE 12, 2017

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

Also Attending: Town Attorney David Berger, Town Engineer Vern Myers, Town Comptroller Laura McKane, Deputy Town Comptroller Nick Angeline, Human Resource Director Nancy Olmstead, Town Clerk Emil Bielecki and 4 people from the general public.

Supervisor Schaffer **convened the Work Session at 6:00 PM.**

6:00 PM Museum Director Cheresse Wiesner-Rosales to discuss Community Garden Project

Museum Director Cheresse Wiesner-Rosales introduced the Amelia LoDolce, the Executive Director of the Volunteers Improving Neighborhood Environments (VINES) who presented the Board with a proposal for a Community Garden on FEMA properties on North Road in Castle Gardens. VINES is a locally based non-profit organization that has been operating for 10 years and has successfully built and managed 10 community gardens in Binghamton. It is looking to build an additional 10 community gardens in this community. The organization operates with all volunteers. The proposed Community Garden will provide garden plots for families and individuals to grow their own food for a small fee. Garden members will also volunteer to tend shared garden beds where food will be grown for donation. Raised and wheelchair accessible beds will also be available. All costs for the construction of the Castle Gardens Community Garden will be covered through grants, donations and sponsorships. The timeline is to have the garden site plan approved in the summer of 2017 after which time a community outreach will be done to inform and engage the residents. By the spring of 2018, the garden should be fully constructed and be ready for a grand opening.

Councilman Majewski asked if the volunteers will be asked to sign waivers and if any chemical fertilizers will be used. Amelia LoDolce replied that it will not be necessary for volunteers to sign waivers since VINES will provide liability insurance which will indemnify the Town. No chemical fertilizers will be used.

Councilwoman Agneshwar asked who will be qualified to get garden plots. Amelia LoDolce replied that priority will be given to applicants who live closest to the community garden.

Responding to a question concerning access to water for the community garden, Supervisor Schaffer stated that the infrastructure is already largely in place and a pump would need to be added. The cost to the Town would be minimal.

After a brief discussion, the Board expressed unanimous support for moving ahead with this project and asked that the community outreach component be completed prior to VINES entering into a lease agreement with the Town.

6:30 PM Town Comptroller Laura McKane to review the 2016 Annual Financial Report

Town Comptroller Laura McKane stated that the 2016 Annual Financial Report has been completed and filed. The Financial Report was sent to all of the Board members. It shows that the Town is in a good financial position. Her summary of the 2016 Financial Report and background comments is as follows:

Financial Update as of December 31, 2016

GENERAL FUND:

Cash - (Page 3) Unrestricted cash position is up about \$400,000 to \$1.466 million.

- Enough to pay roughly 1.5 months bills.

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES

MONDAY, JUNE 12, 2017

Appropriated Fund Balance - (Page 4) - \$260,965 of fund balance being used for 2017 capital purchases.

Unassigned Fund Balance - (Page 4) Unassigned Fund Balance increased \$180,000 to \$1.9 million.

- Represents 16.7% of 2017 budget appropriations. Our target per the Fund Balance Policy is not to exceed 15%.
- We will look to reduce fund balance by about \$190,000 when doing capital planning and the 2018 budget to meet the 15% target.

Revenue Results - (Pages 5 & 6) Received about \$215,000 more unreserved revenue than estimated:

- Building and Operating Permit revenues were \$59,000 over revenue estimates.
- Mortgage Tax was up \$80,000 from 2015 and \$136,000 more than budgeted.
- Sale of Equipment was \$29,000 more than budgeted.

Interfund revenues (A2801) and transfers (A5031) for 2015 were high due to closing the flood project.

Expenditures - (Pages 7 -10) Spent about \$216,000 less than the revised budget, for example:

- General Governmental Support - left \$50,000 unspent (2.5% of revised budget).
- Public Safety - \$63,000 unspent (1.8% of revised budget).
- Highway Admin and Street lighting - \$34,000 unspent (8.6% of revised budget), most from street lighting. (Opportunity for 2018 budget cut?)
- Culture and Recreation - \$24,000 unspent (2.3% of revised budget)
- Additions to reserves \$50,000.

HIGHWAY FUND:

Cash - (Page 24) Unrestricted cash position is up about \$73,000 to \$614,151

- Enough to pay roughly 1.25 months bills.

Appropriated Fund Balance - (Page 25) - \$480,000 of fund balance being used for 2017 capital purchases.

Unappropriated Fund Balance - (Page 25) reduced to \$756,850

- Represents 12.5% of 2017 budget appropriations which is good range.

Revenue Results - generally on target, SAM grant of \$56,000 not received

Expenditures - Spend \$200,000 less than anticipated

- \$110,000 in labor lines unspent
- \$62,000 in fuel budget unspent

SEWER FUND:

Cash - (Page 64) Unrestricted cash position is up about \$555,655 to \$1,163,235

Reserved cash is up \$930,000 to \$1,142,497 (\$800,000 through a year-end transfer).

Appropriated Fund Balance - \$500,000 being used for 2017 capital items and about \$30,000 for other.

Unappropriated Fund Balance - (Page 65 revised) is up \$37,000 to \$1,317,242

- Represents 30.7% of 2017 budget appropriations

Revenue Results - Budget estimates were generally on target but:

- Received unexpected refunds from the Bing-JC plant of \$826,609

Expenditures - Spend \$652,000 less than anticipated

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES

MONDAY, JUNE 12, 2017

- \$434,000 less for treatment
- \$138,000 less for Sewer maintenance and repairs

WATER FUND:

Cash - (Page 71) -Unrestricted cash position is down about \$474,665 to \$709,871
Reserved cash is up \$850,000 to \$1,142,497 (\$800,000 through a year-end transfer)

Appropriated Fund Balance - (Page 72) - \$175,081 used for operations to balance 2017 budget

Unappropriated Fund Balance - (Page 72) down roughly \$585,000 to \$1,209,845

- Represents 35% of 2017 budget appropriations

Revenue Results -unreserved revenue of about \$40,000 more than anticipated mostly from SUNY

Expenditures - Spend \$429,000 less than anticipated.

- \$148,600 for administration was not spent.
- \$42,000 for purification was not spent
- \$135,000 for engineering for additional well field was not spent.
- \$75,000 unspent for other transmission and distribution budget lines
- \$19,000 for health and workers camp insurance unspent.

FIRE DISTRICT FUND:

Cash - (Page59) Unrestricted cash position is down about \$88,000

Unappropriated Fund Balance - (Page60) is \$276,620

- Represents 23% of 2017 budget appropriations which is in a good and upper range.

Revenue Results -revenue estimates were on target, planned a \$79K reduction in fund balance.

Expenditures - Spend \$57,000 less in non-reserve expenditures than anticipated

- \$26,500 for vehicle maintenance unspent
- \$14,000 for buildings and grounds unspent

Councilwoman Agneshwar asked about the status of the SAM grant. Town Comptroller McKane replied that we are waiting for an updated quote on the fencing for the Arnold Park and the Dave Leonard fields.

COMMITTEES

7.1 PUBLIC WORKS (FITZGERALD/Majewski)

1. Request from Joseph Eaton to donate a bench and plant a tree in honor of Sara Snyder to be placed on the new section of the Vestal Rail Trail.

Councilwoman Fitzgerald stated that the Parks Department has no problem with this request.

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

2. Request from Water/Wastewater Superintendent Scott Groats to advertise for bids for the following projects on June 21, 2017 with opening on July 11, 2017:

- Water Chemicals (2:00 PM)

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES

MONDAY, JUNE 12, 2017

- Pipebursting (2:10 PM)
- Third Ave Sanitary Sewer Replacement (2:20 PM)

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

3. Request to award two storm drainage rehabilitation projects to be paid for through the Consolidated Highway Improvement Program (CHIPS):

- 2261 Kathleen Drive to Allis Development Corporation in the amount of \$5,200.00.
- 4025 Drexel Drive to Allis Development Corporation in the amount of \$13,000.00.

Councilwoman Agneshwar asked why there was such a large discrepancy between the low bidder and the next bidder. Town Engineer Vern Myers did not offer a direct reason but speculated that the low bidder is experienced in handling this kind of work and being a small contractor, probably has lower overhead costs.

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

7.2 **FINANCE** (AGNESHWAR/Fitzgerald)

1. Warrants: 2017- 21, 2017-21E, 2017-22, 2017-22E, 2017-23, 2017-23E

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

2. Request to retroactively approve spending \$6,880.00 for purchase and installation of fencing at Harold Moore Park.

Town Attorney Dave Berger noted that this fence installation constituted an emergency and the expenditure was waived from following the Town’s Procurement Policy.

Supervisor Schaffer stated that the funds to pay for the fence should come out of the Contingency Account. Comptroller McKane suggested that there may be adequate funds in the Parks ‘miscellaneous site improvements’ budget line to cover this expense. Supervisor Schaffer asked the Comptroller to discuss this with the Parks Superintendent 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.

3. Request from Town Comptroller Laura McKane to put the \$4,440 proceeds from the sale of the Fire District 2000 Ford Excursion vehicle to the Fire District Capital Reserve Fund.

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 Town Attorney David Berger \$787.50 for May 2017 billable hours.

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

7.3 **PERSONNEL** (FITZGERALD/Agneshwar)

1. Request from Recreation Planner Sue Jastran to hire Lifeguards/Swim Instructors, Playground Instructors and Tennis Instructors as indicated in a memo to the Town Board dated May 31, 2017.

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES

MONDAY, JUNE 12, 2017

Councilwoman Fitzgerald stated that Nick Golluscio has declined to take the Playground Instructor position and has been removed from the list of hires.

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

2. Request to authorize Parks Superintendent Jim Bukowski to hire Austin Beck as a Summer Laborer effective June 13, 2017 at the rate of \$9.70 per hour.

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

3. Request to grant an unpaid internship in the Town of Vestal Code Department for the summer of 2017 to John Miller, a student at Binghamton University.

It was noted that this intern will work on a special project creating an inventory and information on vacant and abandoned property in the Town.

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

4. Discuss request from Town Justices Michael Sherwood and Joseph Meagher to hire a part-time clerk.

Supervisor Schaffer asked that this item be moved into Executive Session because the discussion will also address the performance of an existing employee.

7.4 PLANNING & ZONING (MESSINA/Fitzgerald)

7.5 PUBLIC SAFETY (MAJEWSKI/Messina)

1. Request from Fire Chief David Harrington to approve Station 1's Membership and Auxiliaries to hold a Phil's Chicken BBQ Fundraiser at the Tractor Supply parking lot on June 17, 2017. The requested coverage time is from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM and a sign in sheet will be used to track personnel at this event.

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 approve Robert Warner as the Department at Large Representative to the LOSAP Committee, effective June 5, 2017.

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

3. Request from Police Chief John Butler to apply for the Community Oriented Policing Services Grant.

In his memo to the Town Board, Police Chief Butler noted that the grant would pay 75% of the salary and benefits for a newly hired police officer over a 3 year period up to a total of \$125,000. The Town would be fully responsible for any amount over the \$125,000 for the 3 year period as well as the entire cost of the salary and benefits in the 4th year.

This request is strictly to authorize the Police Chief to apply for the grant and does not obligate the Town to accept the grant if awarded.

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES

MONDAY, JUNE 12, 2017

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

7.6 ADMINISTRATION (MESSINA/Majewski)

1. Request from Town Historian Margaret Hadsell to accept a grant from the William G. Pomeroy Foundation in the amount of \$2120.00.

In a memo to the Town Board, Town Historian Margaret Hadsell states that the grant will cover the cost and delivery of two historical markers for Clark’s Tannery and Choconut Mill.

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Gateway Signs – Discuss ranking sheets for submitted gateway sign applications.

Town Attorney Berger collected the ranking forms submitted by the Board members and stated that he would compile the results for review and discussion at the next Work Session.

Several Board members expressed concern about the lack of clarity in the definition of a gateway sign. The previously approved gateway sign treated each panel as a separate sign. However, by definition, a standard two sided sign in Vestal is considered a single sign. A sign company representative in the audience noted that the panels on electronic signs need to be placed at an angle rather than back to back so as to improve visibility, but the two panels use a common base and should be considered as one sign. Supervisor Schaffer acknowledged that this issue has to be resolved before we proceed with approving additional gateway signs.

2. Employee Handbook updates.

Human Resource Director Nancy Olmstead stated that the work on the Handbook updates is ongoing.

NEW BUSINESS

- 1. Town Engineer Vern Myers informed the Board that he has received an application request to rezone the property at 2500 Vestal Parkway E from Residential Office (RO) to General Shopping (C-1). After a brief discussion, the Board agreed to invite the applicant to make a presentation at the next Work Session on Monday, June 26th.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

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

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Agneshwar, Fitzgerald, Majewski, Schaffer
Nays 0 Absent 1 Messina

Resolved the Board enter into Executive Session to discuss the following: Vestal Library Lease Agreement; negotiations with PBA, VPSA, CSEA and Operating Engineers; Planning Board applicants; Mooney litigation; Code Department personnel; request for part-time clerk for Town Court.

The time was 7:18 PM.

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

ADOPTED Ayes 5 Agneshwar, Fitzgerald, Majewski, Schaffer
Nays 0 Absent 1 Messina

Resolved the Board leave the Executive Session and **adjourn the meeting. The time was 8:36 PM.**

Respectfully submitted,
Emil Bielecki, Town Clerk