

REGULAR MEETING – ATHENS TOWN BOARD – February 19, 2013

A regular meeting of the Athens Town Board was called to order at 7:00 pm with the Pledge of Allegiance lead by Supervisor Lee Palmateer, on February 19, 2013, at the Village of Athens Fire House.

The following people were present; Supervisor Palmateer; Councilman Robert F. Butler, Jr.; Councilwoman April Paluch; Councilwoman Phyllis Dinkelacker; Councilman Steven Van Hoesen; Highway Superintendent John J. Farrell and Town Clerk Linda M. Stacey.

These people were also present; Annie Stapleton; Assessor Laura Chase; Appraisal Consultant Robert Hilbert; Grant Writer Bill Roehr; Lynn Brunner; Chris and Carol Pfister; John Pulice; Michael Pirrone; Marsha Bartels; Madelyn Brandow; Herman Reinhold; Ronald Puhalski; Mary H. Brandow; and Marybeth Bianconi.

The following bills were audited by the Board and ordered paid:

General Abstract #4, vouchers #66 through # 92 inclusive for \$81,059.33.

Highway Abstract #3, vouchers #13 through #34 inclusive for \$25, 647.87.

Highway Superintendent John J. Farrell reported that they had serviced both 4 x 4 snow plows, (#5 & #8) the loader, the Ford tractor 515, & flail mower.

They had painted the grader and flail mower. Picked up trash on Schoharie Turnpike.

Worked on 4 snow events; moved snow in the Village one day.

Did Tree work on Schoharie Turnpike and Church Street. Checked roads for downed trees and drain pipes.

He has been working on the 2013 road agreement, which should be ready for the March 18, meeting. He has been looking into prices on used sweepers. Still working on the Sandy Plains Road Culvert Project.

Highway Superintendent Farrell suggested advertising the following surplus highway items on the internet, with the Boards permission: a 500 gallon Diesel fuel tank, a 500 gas tank with pump, 3-Realistic5-watt, 40 channel Walkie Talkies and 9 Motorola radios- various models.

Supervisor Lee Palmateer made a motion seconded by Councilwoman April Paluch *approving Highway Superintendent Farrell's suggestion to advertise the surplus highway items above on the internet*. Carried. Ayes-5 (Palmateer; Butler; Paluch; Dinkelacker; Van Hoesen) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

The Supervisor's Report was reviewed by the Board;

Supervisor Lee Palmateer made a motion to accept the Supervisor's Report as presented, seconded by Councilwoman Phyllis Dinkelacker, and carried; Ayes-5 (Palmateer; Butler; Paluch Dinkelacker; Van Hoesen) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Discussion followed on how the Culvert project is going to be paid for.

Assessor Laura Chase introduced Bob Hilbert, Lead Appraiser of Appraisal Consultants and then handed out paperwork that had been made up for those present to follow along with Mr. Hilbert's presentation on the Town-wide Revaluation Project and the Disclosure letters.

Mr. Hilbert explained that these meetings will be done by appointment only, so the documents can be pulled for that particular piece of property. He went over the disclosure notices, the process and the number of hearing you can have. A brief question and answer session followed.

Mary Beth Bianconi of Delaware Engineering spoke to the Board about extending the sewer system into the Leeds Hamlet District in Athens. She showed a number of pictures, and talked about funding.

Ms. Bianconi handed out a sheet entitled “*Athens/Coxsackie 2013 Local Government Efficiency Grant Program Fact Sheet*”, with information on it.

She spoke about the opportunity we have to obtain up to \$75,000 in grant funding from the 2013 Local Government Efficient Grant Program administered by the New York State Department of State Division of Local Government Services. This could be done with the Village of Athens, Town of Athens and Town of Coxsackie with cooperation from the Association of Property Owners of Sleepy Hollow Lake.(Village of Athens is Lead App.)

The scope of the study would include: evaluate water supply and wastewater collection and treatment infrastructure from functional, regulatory, operability, reliability, sustainability, and capacity, perspectives to a level of detailed needed to determine benefits and potential cost savings that could result from partial or full consolidation and/or extension of sewage treatment and /or potable water services. Conduct a technical and fiscal analysis, including but not limited to current operating and maintenance costs, existing debt, new or planned capital projects/debt, revenue, costs avoided/ deferred, operational control, and options for intermunicipal cooperative cooperative arrangements to the benefit of all parties. Provide an objective analysis of the benefits and drawbacks of various cooperative scenarios and make recommendations as appropriate.

This type of Grant would be a reimbursement grant of up to \$25,000; per municipal partner with a required 10% local match which cannot be funded by other grants of in-kind services.

Program Priorities: Among others, regional projects that reduce costs to tax payers and support Smart Growth principals. The Application MUST demonstrate cost savings, impact on fees/ taxes, high level of need, cooperation among governmental bodies, municipal benefits, and a cooperative work plan. The Due Date for this Application is March 13, 2013.

On the motion of Supervisor Lee Palmateer Seconded by Councilwoman Phyllis Dinkelacker the following **RESOLUTION #2013-16**, to APPLY for LOCAL GOVERNMENT EFFICIENCY GRANT as adopted as follows:

WHEREAS, New York State has appropriated finding through the Local Government Efficiency (LGE) Grant Program to assist local leaders with identifying best practices and implementing actions to reduce municipal expenses and increase efficiencies in local service delivery; and

WHEREAS, the Village of Athens owns and operates two wastewater collection and treatment systems serving two distinct service areas within the Village; and,

WHEREAS, the Village of Athens also owns and operates a water supply, treatment, storage and distribution system Serving properties within the ‘Village’ as well as several properties within the Town of Athens; and,

WHEREAS, the Association of Property Owners (APO) of Sleepy Hollow Lake owns and operates water and wastewater systems providing services to APO properties located in the Village and Town of Athens as well as properties located in the Town of Coxsackie; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Coxsackie has expressed interest in evaluating the provision of water service within the Town of Coxsackie in the vicinity of Sleepy Hollow Lake and the Village of Athens; and

WHEREAS, several properties within the Town of Athens are provided water service by the Village of Athens in an area of the Town designated Industrial Development; and

WHEREAS, water and sewer infrastructure within the three municipalities and the APO are located in close proximity one to the other, thus facilitating the potential for a cooperative approach to the provision of water and sewer services regionally; NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

1. The Town of Athens hereby supports as a Co-Applicant, submission of an application to the LGE program for the 2012-2013 program year by the Village of Athens, the Honorable Andrea Smallwood, Mayor of the Village of Athens, Lead Applicant.
2. The Honorable Lee Palmateer, Supervisor of the Town of Athens is hereby authorized to execute all financial and/or administrative processes relating to implementation of the program as a Co-Applicant.
3. The Town of Coxsackie, the Honorable Alexander Betke, Supervisor, is also a Co-Applicant for the 2012-2013 LGE grant opportunity.

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4. The APO of Sleepy Hollow Lake is a non-governmental cooperative partner in submission of the LGE application, the participation of which does not increase the amount of grant funds available nor does it obligate the APO to contribute a local cash match; however, the APO has agreed to lend cooperative support and technical assistance for the preparation of the applicant and in the conduct of the study if the LGE grant is awarded.
5. The project to be supported by LGE funds is identified as “Athens Coxsackie Regional Infrastructure Study” which will assess the existing provisions of water and sewer services in the towns of Athens and Coxsackie, Village of Athens and APO of Sleepy Hollow Lake, identify the future water supply and wastewater needs of the service areas, explore opportunities for regional delivery of water and sewer services on a cost benefit versus value basis, and provide a discussion regarding the path to implementation of regionalized water and sewer services with recommendations.
6. The LGE program provides \$25,000 for each local government involved in the project and requires a minimum 10% local cash match; therefore, the LGE application shall request \$75,000 and the local cash match is \$7,500.
7. The Lead Applicant and the Co-Applicants have agreed to divide the cash match equally; thus, the Town will provide \$2,500 towards the cash match if the LGE grant is awarded.
8. The Lead Applicant and Co-Applicants for the LGE application shall execute an Intermunicipal Agreement demonstrating an understanding of the scope of work, costs, and requirements of the LGE program as well other points of interest if the LGE grant is awarded. Such agreement shall be executed prior to initiating the study proposed for LGE funding.

The foregoing Resolution was duly moved and seconded and brought to vote resulting as follows:

Ayes-5(Palmateer; Butler; Paluch; Dinkelacker; Van Hoesen) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Supervisor Palmateer made a motion seconded by Councilwoman April Paluch to approve and accept the Town Clerk’s January Report. This was carried. Ayes-5 (Palmateer; Butler; Paluch; Dinkelacker; Van Hoesen) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Councilwoman Phyllis Dinkelacker made a motion seconded by Supervisor Lee Palmateer to approve the minutes of February 4, 2013 as read and carried. Ayes-5 (Palmateer; Butler; Paluch; Dinkelacker; Van Hoesen) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Discussion followed regarding the Joint Petition of Fortis and CH Energy Group. At the last meeting it was suggested that we have a Resolution of the Town of Athens is in full Support of of the Position of “The Joint Task Force of the Town and Village of Athens” as filed and accepted by the Public Service Commission on June 25, 2012, as it relates to the Joint Petition of Fortis, Inc., et, al and CH Energy Group, Inc., et al for the Approval of the Acquisition of CH Energy Group, Inc., et al, by Fortis, Inc. et.al and related Transactions before the Public Service Commission-Case#12-M-01-192

On the motion of Supervisor Lee Palmateer seconded by Councilman Steven Van Hoesen the following RESOLUTION #2013-17 to have a Resolution of the Town of Athens is in full Support of the Position of “The Joint Task Force of the Town and Village of Athens” as filed and accepted by the Public Service Commission on June 25, 2012, as it relates to the Joint Petition of Fortis, Inc., et, al and CH Energy Group, Inc., et al for the Approval of the Acquisition of CH Energy Group, Inc., et al, by Fortis, Inc. et.al and related Transactions before the Public Service Commission-Case#12-M-01-192

WHEREAS, with regard to the above –mentioned Case #12-M-0192, the Town of Athens is in full support of the position of the “Joint Task Force of the Town and Village of Athens” as filed on June 25, 2012; and

WHEREAS, said Joint Task Force is petitioning the NYS Public Service Commission to set aside appropriate Funding within the public benefit fund which will would be for the necessity and public convenience of the people of Athens, Greene County, New York, to obtain significant relief in the establishment of a natural gas infrastructure within its borders; and

WHEREAS, the decision of the Administrative Law Judges is pending, as it appears there is a recent agreement between CH Energy Group, Inc. and Fortis, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, said Agreement between CH Energy Group, Inc. and Fortis, Inc. submitted on or about January 25, 2013 has neither addressed nor made any recommendation as to funding the public benefit as requested by the Joint Task Force; and

WHEREAS, Administrative Law Judge Jack has retired and has been replaced by Administrative Law Judge Epstein and the Joint Task Force wishes to reiterate its request.

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NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, that the Town of Athens is in full support of the position of “The Joint Task Force of the Town and the Village of Athens” as filed and accepted with the Public Service Commission on June 25, 2012, as per comments submitted by Gene Hatton on October 16, 2012; **and be it further**

RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Governor, Assemblyman Peter Lopez, State Senator Cecilia Tkaczyk and Greene County Administrator Sean Groden.

Upon the question of the adoption of this Resolution, the following Board members voted “aye” in favor of the Resolution:

Ayes-5 (Palmateer; Butler; Paluch; Dinkelacker; Van Hoesen) Noes=0 Absent-0
Abstentions-0

This Resolution was declared duly adopted on February 19, 2013.

It was announced that the April Cleanup Day is tentatively scheduled for the 13th or 27th.

Village Trustee Herman Reinhold came before the Board to speak about Volunteer Recognition Day. This event will be held on Flag Day, at the Riverfront Park. He asked the Town Board to think of some outstanding volunteers and submit their names. He hand out a flyer with winners names on for 2010, 2011, and 2012.

As there was no further business to come before the meeting a motion to adjourn was made by Councilwoman Phyllis Dinkelacker and seconded by Supervisor Lee Palmateer, and carried.

Ayes-5 (Palmateer; Butler; Paluch; Dinkelacker; Van Hoesen) Noes-0 Absent-0
Abstentions-0

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm