

REGULAR MEETING – ATHENS TOWN BOARD – November 6, 2014

The regular meeting of the Athens Town Board was called to order on November 6, 2014 at 7:00 pm by Supervisor Joseph B. Iraci with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence.

The following people were present: Supervisor Joseph B. Iraci; Councilman Robert F. Butler, Jr.; Councilwoman Mary H. Brandow; Councilman Michael Ragaini and Town Clerk Linda M. Stacey. (Councilwoman April Paluch and Highway Superintendent John J. Farrell were absent.)

These people were also present: Bookkeeper/ Budget Officer Michael Strenka; Acting Assessor Carol McBride; Ronald Puhalski and Melanie Lekocevic.

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

General Abstract #21, vouchers, #503 through #530 inclusive for \$30,293.15.

Highway Abstract #21, vouchers, #228 through #241 inclusive for \$21,622.94.

Supervisor Joseph Iraci read the Notice of Public Hearing on the Preliminary Budget for 2015 as it appeared in the Official Newspaper.

Supervisor informed the audience that the amount to be raised by taxes for 2015 is exactly the same as last year. As there is a decrease in the assessed value there will be an increase in the tax rate. The Village tax rate will increase 4 tenths of a penny per thousand and the Town tax rate will increase 1 and 4 tenths of a penny per thousand. The taxes on a home assessed at \$100,000 in the Village could go up by a total of 40¢. The taxes on a home assessed at \$100,000 in the Town could increase by a total of \$1.44.

Resident Ron Puhalski asked questions about medical insurance and buyouts. Discussion followed.

Supervisor Iraci read a letter submitted by Dawna Johnson, President of the Athens Cultural Center. The letter referred to funding for the Cultural Center; the Athens Street Festival and the Bicentennial Committee.

Mr. Puhalski asked how much is in the Budget for Bicentennial. (\$2,000.)

Supervisor Iraci reported that the Bicentennial Committee is planning events for February 2015. They are also planning fund raising events, as well as further activities to celebrate the 200th anniversary.

Councilman Michael Ragaini made a motion seconded by Councilman Robert F. Butler, Jr., *to close the public hearing on the preliminary budget for 2015*. Carried. Ayes-4(Iraci; Butler; Brandow; Ragaini) Noes-0 Absent-1(Paluch) Abstentions-0

Councilman Robert F. Butler, Jr. made a motion seconded by Councilwoman Mary H. Brandow *to approve the minutes of October 20, 2014 as read*. Carried. Ayes-4(Iraci; Butler; Brandow; Ragaini) Noes-0 Absent-1(Paluch) Abstentions-0

Councilman Michael Ragaini made a motion seconded by Supervisor Joseph B. Iraci to approve the Town Clerk's Report as presented. Carried. Ayes-4(Iraci; Butler; Brandow; Ragaini) Noes-0 Absent-1(Paluch) Abstentions-0

The Supervisor's monthly Financial Report was reviewed by the Board. Bookkeeper/Budget Officer Michael Strenka answered any questions. Councilman Robert F. Butler, Jr. made a motion seconded by Councilman Joseph B. Iraci *to approve the Supervisor's Report and was carried*. Ayes-4(Iraci; Butler; Brandow; Ragaini) Noes-0 Absent-1(Paluch) Abstentions-0

Supervisor Iraci reported that the Judge determined for West Point Partners that the process has been suspended. The Town of Cortland has purchased property that WPP were looking at downstate to construct the down river facilities.

Athens Gen: They want to create a separate lot upon which to build a warehouse. The US Gen Lawyers will recommend a process to treat the new lot and the PSC will rule on Article 10 Status. Athens Gen doesn't want to sub-divide. All agree that the Pilot Program is not to be disturbed.

Bicentennial Committee is working hard. Some members have been added to the committee and one has resigned.

An interview has been set next week for an accounting firm which is willing to do a more comprehensive accounting.

Supervisor Iraci announced that there had been no answers to the ad for planning board members.

Board Member Assignments:

Liaison to ZBA-	Supervisor Iraci
Liaison to Finance & Reserves-	Councilwoman Brandow
Negotiations-	Open
Liaison to Planning Board -	Open
Insurance-	Supervisor Iraci & Bookkeeper Strenka & a Board member

Acting Assessor Carol McBride reported that we have 6 (six) article 7 (certiorari's), pending court action.

The County/Town Roll from 2014 has been forwarded for processing of the County/Town Tax Bills for 2014.

All Renewal applications for various exemptions are being prepared for mailing that will need to be returned to the office by March 1, 2015.

Town Clerk Linda Stacey informed the Board of her impending back operation and the fact that she will be out of commission for several weeks.

Supervisor Iraci spoke about hiring part-time people who could be called upon when needed. They would be answerable to the Supervisor. Not eligible for health insurance. To be discussed more at the meeting of November 17th.

As there was no further business to come before the Board a motion to adjourn was made by Supervisor Joseph B. Iraci seconded by Councilwoman Mary H. Brandow and carried.
Ayes-4(Iraci; Butler; Brandow; Ragaini) Noes-0 Absent-1(Paluch) Abstentions-0
Meeting adjourned at 8:05 pm.