

REGULAR MEETING - ATHENS TOWN BOARD – January 18, 2022

The regular meeting of the Athens Town Board was called to order on January 18, 2022 at 7:00 P.M. by Supervisor Michael N. Pirrone with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag, at the Village of Athens Volunteer Fire House at 39 Third Street.

The following people were present: Supervisor Pirrone; Councilmember Mary H. Brandow; Councilmember Michael Ragaini; Councilmember Anthony Paluch and Town Clerk Linda M. Stacey. (Councilmember /Shannon Spinner was absent.)

The following people were also present: Bookkeeper/Budget Officer Donald Pierro; Christian Ames; Lynn Brunner; M.K. Garvey; Paulette Miller-Travis; Paula Butler; Phyllis Dinkelacker; Robert Butler; Barb Trembacz; Theresa Cardinale; Fran McCusker; Robert Brunner; Jane Cole-Raftery; Mary A. Warshaul; Gail Lasher; Kathy & Andy Jackson and Patrick Doyle.

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

2021: **General Abstract #27**, vouchers #598 through #611 inclusive for **\$105,350.75**.

Highway Abstract #26, vouchers #195 through #200 inclusive for **\$11,151.83**.

2022: **General Abstract #2**, vouchers #5 through #14 inclusive for **\$9,991.92**.

Highway Abstract #2, vouchers #2 through #3 inclusive for **\$253.83**.

Trust & Custodian: Black Horse Farm: voucher 1 for **\$1,968.00**

Trust & Custodian: Gas Station; voucher 1 for **\$650.00**.

Bookkeeper/Budget Officer Donald Pierro reported that he had soft closed the books for 2021. He had met with the Auditors today and they went over everything. The Agreement with Auditors will go over the Tax Collection or Town Clerks books next.

Councilmember Mary H. Brandow made a motion seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini to **accept the Supervisor's Report as presented**. Ayes- 4(Pirrone; Brandow; Ragaini; Paluch) Noes-0 Absent-1 (Spinner) Abstentions-0

Councilmember Anthony Paluch made a motion seconded by Supervisor Michael N. Pirrone to **accept the Minutes of January 3, 2022 as read**. Ayes-4 (Pirrone; Brandow; Ragaini; Paluch) Noes-0 Absent-1(Spinner) Abstentions-0

Supervisor Michael N. Pirrone made a motion seconded by Councilmember Mary H. Brandow to **accept the Town Clerk's Report as presented**. Ayes-4(Pirrone; Brandow; Ragaini; Paluch) Noes-0 Absent-1(Spinner) Abstentions-0

On the motion of Supervisor Michael N. Pirrone seconded by Councilmember Mary H. Brandow the following **RESOLUTION #2022-18 authorizing the Town of Athens to pay the Village of Athens in full for delayed rent of \$71,815.50 was adopted**. Ayes-4 (Pirrone; Brandow; Ragaini; Paluch) Noes-o Absent-1(Spinner) Abstentions-0

On the motion of Supervisor Michael N. Pirrone seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini the following RESOLUTION#2022-19 authorizing the Town Board to execute the Town of Athens (Tenant) Lease with the Village of Athens (Landlord) for their fiscal year 2022 Lease. **This was not carried**: Ayes-2(Pirrone; Brandow) Noes-2(Ragaini; Paluch) Absent-1(Spinner)

On the motion of Councilmember Mary H. Brandow seconded by Councilmember Anthony Paluch the following **RESOLUTION #2022-20** to adhere to Governor Hochul’s Executive Order #11 pertaining to the granting of exemption on their Real Property Tax for Senior Citizens & the Disabled was adopted as follows:

WHEREAS, on December 26, 2021, Governor Kathy Hochul issued Executive Order No.11, declaring a State disaster emergency for the entire State of New York due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and

WHEREAS, this State disaster emergency has resulted in limited hours in municipal offices in the Town of Athens and rendered senior citizens and individuals with disabilities residing in the Town of Athens homebound. These factors combined have made it difficult, if not impossible, for many in these populations to file their real property tax exemption applications in person and many, further, lack the ability to file such applications online; and

WHEREAS, in recognition of the above problems caused by the pandemic, Governor Hochul issued Executive Order No. 11.1 on December 26, 2021, thereby extending Executive Order No. 11. This extension of the Governor’s Executive Order modifies subdivisions 7, 7-a and 8 of section 459-c of the Real Property Tax Law and subdivisions 5, 5-a, 5-b, 5-c and 6 of section 467 of the Real Property Tax Law, the effect of which permits the governing body of the assessing unit The Town Board of the Town of Athens to adopt a Resolution directing the Assessor to grant exemptions on the 2022 assessment roll to all property owners who received such exemptions on the 2021 assessment roll (senior citizens and individuals with disabilities with limited income) thereby dispensing with the need for such persons to file renewal applications to request such exemptions, and further dispensing with the requirement that assessors mail renewal applications to such persons; and

WHEREAS, Executive Order 11.1 further allows the governing body of said assessing unit, in any such Resolution, at its option, to include procedures by which its Town Assessor may require a renewal application to be filed if he or she has reason to believe that an owner who qualified for the exemption on the 2021 assessment roll may have since changed his or her primary residence, added another owner to the deed, transferred the property to a new owner or died; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to said Executive Order, the Town Board of the Town of Athens, wishes to adopt such Resolution directing the Town Assessor of the Town of Athens to grant exemptions on the 2022 assessment roll to all eligible senior citizens and individuals with disabilities with limited income, and granting the Town Assessor of the Town of Athens the authority to require renewal applications for due cause, as discussed above, utilizing procedures outlined below;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, pursuant to the authority granted by Executive Order No.11.1, issued by the Governor of the State of New York, that the Town Board of the Town of Athens hereby directs the Town Assessor of the Town of Athens to;

1 Grant exemptions on the 2022 assessment roll to all individuals who received the senior exemption on the 2021 assessment roll and all individuals who received the exemption on the 2021 assessment roll because they were recognized as a person with disabilities and limited income, thereby dispensing with the need for any such individuals to file renewal applications for such exemptions, except that;

2 The Town Assessor may, in his or her sole discretion, require a renewal application to be timely filed with his or her office if they has reason to believe that any such individual, who qualified for aforementioned exemption on the 2021 assessment roll, may have since changed their primary residence, added another owner to the deed for the relevant property transferred such property to a new owner or died. If the Town Assessor requires such renewal application be filed, he or she shall notify the owner of the subject property of such requirement by regular mail, with such notice shall containing instructions on how to file the renewal application. Said renewal application may be returned by mail or by making an appointment to drop same off at the Town Assessor’s Office, 2 First Street, Athens, N.Y. 112015.

This Resolution was adopted as follows; Ayes-4 (Pirrone; Brandow; Ragaini; Paluch) Nes-0 Absent-1 (Spinner)

Supervisor Michael N. Pirrone made motion seconded by Councilmember Anthony Paluch to appoint **Christian Ames to the Zoning Board of Appeals as a member**. Ayes-4 (Pirrone; Brandow; Ragaini; Paluch) Noes-0 Absent-1 (Spinner) Abstentions-0

Supervisor Pirrone Informed the Board that the Athens Comprehensive Plan Implementation Committee (IC) would like to make a formal recommendation to the Town Board to Co-Sponsor, with the Village of Athens, a “meet & greet” event between members of the Athens Business Community and representatives from the Greene County Chamber of Commerce, Greene County Tourism, NY State Economic Development Council and local and state officials.

The IC will assist with setting a date and planning the event.

A vote was taken

Councilmember Mary H. Brandow made a motion seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini to participate with the IC on the Comprehensive Plan. Ayes-3 (Pirrone; Brandow; Ragaini) Noes-1(Paluch) Absent1 (Spinner) Abstentions-0

Councilmember Anthony Paluch made a motion seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini to accept Supervisor Pirrone Committee List; as Follows;

Joint Landfill Committee:	Mary Brandow	Tony Paluch
Village/Town Committee	Shannon Spinner	M.N. Pirrone
Special Projects/Buildings	Michael Ragaini	Tony Paluch
EMS/ALS Ambulance	MN Pirrone	Phyllis Dinkelacker
Reserves	Mary Brandow	M.N. Pirrone
Insurance	Shannon Spinner	Don Pierro
Medical Insurance	M.N. Pirrone	Don Pierro
Planning	Michael Ragaini	Shannon Spinner
Zoning	Mary Brandow	Tony Paluch
Employee Handbook	Mary Brandow	Don Pierro
Employee Committee	Michael Ragaini	Shannon Spinner
Highway Committee	Tony Paluch	M.N/Pirrone
Code Enforcement	Michael Ragaini	M N Pirrone
Assessor	Mary Brandow	Shannon Spinner
Court	Tony Paluch	M N Pirrone
Fire Contracts	MN Pirrone	Don Pierro
Collective Bargaining	Michael Ragaini	MN Pirrone

This was passed as follows: Ayes-4 (Pirrone; Brandow; Ragaini; Paluch) Noes-0 Absent-1 (Spinner) Abstentions-0

Supervisor Pirrone informed the Board that the Code Enforcement officer asked for more help.

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Supervisor Pirrone spoke about having work meeting sessions 1 day a month...

He want to develop a procedure when seeking legal advice from our Attorney.

Patrick Doyle was there to bring the Board up to speed on Flint mine Solar.

As there was no further business to come before the meeting a **motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Michael Ragaini** seconded by Councilmember Mary H. Brandow.

Ayes-4 (Pirrone; Brandow; Ragaini; Paluch) Noes-0 Absent-1 (Spinner) Abstentions-0

Meeting adjourned at 7:31 P.M.