

REGULAR MEETING – ATHENS TOWN BOARD – September 6, 2022

The regular meeting of the Athens Town Board was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Supervisor Michael N. Pirrone with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag on September 6, 2022 at the Athens Community Center, 2 First St., Athens, NY 12015.

The following Town Board Members were present: Supervisor Pirrone; Councilmember Mary H. Brandow; Councilmember Michael Ragaini; Councilmember Anthony Paluch; Councilmember Shannon Spinner. Also present: Highway Superintendent John J. Farrell and Deputy Town Clerk Gail M. Stacey.

The following people were also present: Theresa Cardinale; Fran McCusker; Barbara Trembacz; Code Enforcement Officer Albert Gasparini; Financial/Budget Officer Don Pierro; Margaret and James Morabito; Karen Dudley; Melissa Beck/Grosso; Gabriele Corrado; Susan Brady; Paula Butler; James Lee; Michael Campbell; Jacqueline and Clinton Tefft; Kamie Garapolo; Lisa and Eric Holsopple; Cassandra and Chris Schaefer; Renee' Meryman; MK Garvey; Linda Ferrucci; Paul Urban; Paulette Miller; Robert Brunner. Attorney George McHugh was absent.

Due to the size of the audience, the exits were pointed out in case of an emergency.

Councilmember Shannon Spinner made a motion seconded by Councilmember Mary Brandow to approve the following vouchers that were audited by the Board:

General Abstract #17, vouchers #386 through #423 inclusive for **\$39,704.69**.

Highway Abstract #18, vouchers #125 through #131 inclusive for **\$17,430.95**.

Trust & Custodian Abstract #3, voucher #3 inclusive for **2,563.95**.

Ayes-5 (Pirrone;Brandow;Ragaini;Paluch;Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Councilmember Shannon Spinner made a motion seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini to *approve the minutes of August 15, 2022, as written.*

Ayes-5 (Pirrone;Brandow;Ragaini;Paluch;Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Superintendent John J Farrell reported that Clean Up Day would take place on October 22, 2022 at the Town Highway Garage between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. He is still waiting to hear from the Sheriff's Department regarding the medication take back. He is also still waiting to hear back from the NYSDOT on the speed limit change for Howard Hall Rd which had been submitted on November 3, 2021. The Roller bid closed at \$1,625.00 (surplus on auction site). Side of Town roads have been mowed, wing walls have been poured on a box culvert on Sandy Plains Rd., shoulders on Flats Rd. and Schoharie Turnpike, excavator tracks and John Deere 5085m 3-point hitch have been fixed, brush pile grinding cost for the Town and Village will be \$9,500.00. The Town is responsible for half the cost, \$4,750.00; no date has been set, maybe end of September. Salt prices will be \$10.00 more a ton this year, Superintendent Farrell will speak with Mr. Pierro to adjust the budget accordingly. He is also asking that the Town Board support a letter to be written to CSX regarding the tie ups at the crossings from Browns Crossing in Catskill to Coxsackie. There is a stretch between Schoharie Turnpike and Flats Rd that they can stop without tying up traffic. Superintendent Farrell will be at the first meeting in October in regard to a truck.

Councilmember Mary Brandow made a motion to approve the bid on the Roller seconded by Councilmember Shannon Spinner.

Ayes-5 (Pirrone;Brandow;Ragaini;Paluch;Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Councilmember Shannon Spinner made a motion seconded by Councilmember Mary Brandow to approve the brush grinding price.

Ayes-5 (Pirrone;Brandow;Ragaini;Paluch;Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Councilmember Michael Ragaini made a motion seconded by Councilmember Shannon Spinner to accept the *Town Clerk's Report for August 2022.*

Ayes-5 (Pirrone;Brandow;Ragaini;Paluch;Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Assessors written report showed that the file for the 2022 school taxes were sent to the Greene County Real Property Tax Services for processing and mailing of the tax bills. They processed:

6 Village deeds resulting with sales in the range of \$9,286 - \$628,050, 12 Town deeds resulting with sales in the range of \$8,086 - \$645,000. All deed, address, map revisions, etc. changes have been submitted to the Town/Village Code Enforcement Officers, School Tax Collectors, and Village/Town tax Collectors so that the records can be updated accordingly. Files are being updated with data/pictures received from the data collectors for the 2023 systematic analysis. The Assessors Clerk is still working on organizing all the normal files along with exemption files, keeping them up to date.

Code Enforcement Officer Albert Gasparini reported that for the month of August he had 5 building permits, 14 building inspections, 1 certificate of occupancy (83 Whitney Point), 9 certificate of occupancy search requests, 1 short term rental certificate (171 Forest Hills Ave), 1 certificate of compliance (shed). **Building Inquiries:** new hose, garage, solar system for a house, woodstove. **Fire/911 Calls:** 1 at Shop and Save warehouse in Coxsackie. It was a malfunction of the fire suppression system on 8/15/22. **FOIL Request:** Synbium Data Company would like digital or scanned building permits for all parcels (3011 per Greene County) in the jurisdiction. They were informed via email that letters for certificate of occupancy, pre-date letters, and building violations are \$100.00 for residential and \$150.00 for commercial. There has been no return response.

Financial/Budget Officer Don Pierro reviewed the financial report for August with the Board. 66.67% of the year has been completed. Highway Superintendent John J Farrell has applied for grant reimbursement from Greene County ARPA and other NY State grant programs for different projects. The expected reimbursement date is by October 31, 2022. The True-Up from Athens Gen has been received in the amount of \$52,580.59 for their fiscal year 2021-2022. He will be working with the Superintendent regarding salt, sheds, concrete floors, etc. A resolution for the Highway Reserve Account.

Greene County will hold three community workshops to let the public know what is in place for the Hazard Mitigation Plan: August 29 at 7:00 p.m. at the Windham Water Treatment Facility on South St., September 13 at 6:30 p.m. at the Senior Center on Academy St. in Catskill, and September 14 at 6:30 p.m. at the Emergency Services Office on Volunteer Dr. in Cairo.

Correspondence: Ellen Roth has submitted a letter of interest to serve on the Athens Community Foundation Advisory Board and Renee' Meryman has resigned her position as ZBA Secretary. The Town will be looking to fill that position.

The 2nd Meeting of September has been cancelled by Supervisor Pirrone due to scheduling conflicts/out of town.

Public Hearing Scheduled for October 17, 2022. The Town Board and Andrews Farbstein, VP of Industrial & Utility to explain the process of the Systematic Analysis Review that is underway. Questions from the public will follow.

Patrick Doyle of Flint Mine Solar gave a status report. Whitbeck Benedict & Smith submitted documents to the NYS Siting Board requesting to modify certain project components which will not have any impact on the environment. There will be 50 acres less covered by solar panels. New design will have half fixed tilt and the other half trackers (following the sun). The cost has yet to be determined.

Councilmember Michael Ragaini made a motion seconded by Councilmember Shannon Spinner to authorize Whitbeck Benedict & Smith to direct Tighe & Bond Engineer, Brandee Nelson, PE & Vice President to review modifications from Flint Mine Solar to the NYS Siting Board.

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

With no further Town business to come before the Board, the floor was opened to the public to hear their concerns.

Gail Lasher asked the Town Board if they would be attending the Joint Meeting of the Village and Town. All members said they would attend except Councilmember Paluch. When asked why, he stated that he would be out of town.

Several Residents of the Potic Mountain Rd. area addressed the Board regarding some information they had received on the Free Point Solar Project. They were led to believe that the town had issued Utility Permits which is not the case. This matter is still with the ZBA. Jim Morabito requested that a head count be taken and put on the record of how many residents were present in opposition of the project. Supervisor Pirrone counted 16 + or -. The residents may file a grievance, depending on what the Article 78 decision is.

Discussion ensued on the topic of the Athens Municipal Building. There are no new numbers on renovating existing building. This matter is still tabled. Eminent Domain proceedings are still tabled. Building Committee is looking for alternative property. Councilmember Michael Ragaini discussed numbers for new versus old costs from 2019. Public requests new costs for existing building. Gail Lasher stated that the Village is working on the mold issue in the gym. Consensus says that Town and Village should stay together in the same building. When asked about grants, it was stated that the engineers could look into it.

With nothing further to come before the Board, a motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Mary Brandow seconded Councilmember Shannon Spinner.
Ayes-5 (Pirrone;Brandow;Ragaini;Paluch;Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Meeting Adjourned at 8:35 p.m.