

REGULAR MEETING --ATHENS TOWN BOARD – October 17, 2022

The regular meeting of the Athens Town Board was held on Monday October 17, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Village of Athens Volunteer Firehouse, 39 Third Street, Athens, NY, and called to order by Supervisor, Michael N. Pirrone with the Pledge of Allegiance.

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

These people were also present: Highway Superintendent John J, Farrell; Budget Officer Donald Pierro; Attorney George McHugh; Assessor Dawn DeRose; Code Enforcement Officer Albert Gasparini; Fran McCusker; Mike Campbell; MK Garvey; Village Trustee Gail Lasher; Paula Butler; Ellen& Merrill Roth; Robert Brunner; Susan Brady; Annika Vogt; Paulette Miller-Travis; Carol and Chris Pfister; John Wolham with the Dept. of Taxation and Finance; Christine Douglass, with the Dept. of Taxation& Office of Real Property Tax Services; Andrew Farbstein VP, Industrial & Utility Valuation/Consultant; Cory Farbstein and Allison Dooley.

Athens Systematic Review 2023

Mr. Farbstein explained that a systematic review is an update to assessments to reflect current market conditions.

All properties in Town will get new assessments, including residential, commercial, vacant, and utility.

This will be done in accordance with New York State laws and assessing practices, with equitable/fair assessing as the cornerstone.

The goal of the entire process is equitable assessing among all property owners. The longer assessments go without updates, the more INEQUITABLE the assessments become, creating a situation where certain property owners subsidize others. The last time this was done was for the 2013 roll. 10 years is a long time.

When assessments are made fair, everyone is put on equal footing.

Over time, different types of property increase or decrease in value differently.

Property types include residential, commercial, industrial/utility, and vacant land, and over the course of time, all values change at different rates.

Different types of housing styles, school districts and location can affect value over time. No one property type appreciates the same as another type.

The state uses their own calculations to determine “full market value” when a town or city does not do a systematic review for a long period of time. Only one equalization rate is given by the state, and it is meant to be an average. The equalization rate for the Town of Athens for 2022, was 81%.

Soon mailings will be arriving from the assessor’s office. Please make sure all information is correct and return to the assessor’s office.

Important information about the systematic review and any changes will be sent via mail.

Towards the end of January, preliminary values will be calculated and uploaded to the system, and soon after, likely the middle to the end of February, impact notices will be sent to all taxpayers.

These numbers will be preliminary. And will be subject to change based on continued data gathering, smoothing, and property owner challenges.

After the impact notices are received, property owners who disagree with their assessments will be able to file an informal petition with the assessor’s office.

The data for this assessment roll will be based on the condition and state of the property as of March 1st, 2023, also known as “taxable status date”.

On May 1st, 2023, the Town of Athens will release the tentative assessment roll.

For property owners who still disagree with their assessments, grievance day will be May 25,2023.

At 7:52 p. m. the regular meeting started.

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

For 10/3/2022-

General Abstract #18, vouchers #424 through #464 inclusive for **\$36,456.16**.

Highway Abstract #19, vouchers #132 through #151 inclusive for **\$8,172.69**.

Trust & Custodian- Gas Station/Conv.Store: Abstract #4, Voucher #4 for \$217.50.

Vouchers-10/17/2022

General Abstract # 19, vouchers #465 through # 486 inclusive for **\$15,276.60**.

Highway Abstract #20, vouchers #152 through #155 inclusive for **\$7,978.69**.

Ayes-3 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2(Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0

Councilmember Michael Ragaini made a motion to seconded by Councilmember Shannon Spinner to approve the minutes of **September 6, 2022**, as read. Ayes-3 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2(Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0

Town Highway Superintendent John J. Farrell reported that cleanup day will be 10/22/2022.

At the Town Highway Shop.

He checked on the speed limit for Howard Hall Road. Still waiting on NYS.

They serviced all snowplow, just have to put plow on.

3 days mowing side of village roads and at the lake.

Pug mill pave with Town of Coxsackie. (This is a black top method, done on Potic Mt. Rd., Coxsackie.)

Started tree work on road to be oil and stoned next year.

Sweeper went to the Town of Greenville for 2 days.

Highway Superintendent Farrell reported that he only received 2 quotes back on the sealing of the shop floor.

1. J. Wase - \$63,731.00
2. Custom Masonry - \$16,988.00

Councilmember Michael Ragaini made a motion seconded by Councilmember Shannon Spinner for the Highway Superintendent **accept the quote of Custom Masonry of \$16,988.00 to seal the shop floor**. Ayes-3 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2 (Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0

Mr. Farrell advised the Board that that the Town had a surplus of old road sand, which he wanted to sell to Catskill. He wants to keep 1000± ton of sand for the Town of Athens. There will still be 3000± tons of sand remaining. He would like to sell it to the Town of Catskill at \$10 or \$11 a ton. Discussion followed.

Councilmember Shannon Spinner made a motion seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini **authorizing the Highway Superintendent to sell 3000± ton of old road sand from the Town of Athens to the Town of Catskill at the cost of \$11.00 per ton**. Ayes-3 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2(Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0

Mr. Farrell asked if a Letter of Intent should be written and sent to the company that he is getting the new 10-wheel dump truck delivered from in 2024? (Cost of \$214,467.30.)

Councilmember Shannon Spinner made a motion seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini that a **Letter of Intent be written and sent to the company holding the new 10-wheel dump truck which will be delivered in 2024.** Ayes-3 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2 (Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0

Councilmember Michael Ragaini made a motion seconded by Councilmember Shannon Spinner to **accept the Town Clerk's Report as it was presented.** Ayes-3 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2(Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0

Councilmember Michael Ragaini made a motion seconded by Councilmember Shannon Spinner to approve the Assessor's report. Ayes-3 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2(Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0

Code Enforcement Officer Albert Gasparini reported he had 5 building permits for September including a 408 Sq. Ft. Cabin as an accessory apartment. ((It had PB approval.)

He did 15 building inspections.

There were 3 Certificates of Compliance. A woodstove; a new front desk; and renovation of an existing desk.

There were 12 Certificates if Occupancy Search Requests.

Councilmember Michael Ragaini made a motion seconded by Supervisor Michael N. Pirrone **to approve the Code Enforcement Officer's Report.** Ayes-3 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2(Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0

Don Pierro, Bookkeeper to the Supervisor, gave the Supervisor's Report for September 2022. The 2022 spending plan is now 75 % recorded and closed.

The summary of Cash and a combining Balance Sheet are updated and attached to the rear of the monthly Statement of Activities Report.

150.19All Bank Statements and Cash Reconciliations were completed for the month ending September 2022 with no exceptions and hand delivered to the Outside CPA firm.

We received the second half of Federal A. R. P. A. Funds \$120,153.48 which was deposited and recorded in "Other Liabilities" until it is expended.

We have received approximately \$143,150.19 of Road/CHPS Grant reimbursement to date the remaining balance of \$161,000.00 should be received in two parts. One item of \$100,000.00 from Greene County ARPA and the balance in various NYS CHPS grant funds.

Councilmember Shannon Spinner made a motion seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini to **approve the Supervisor's Report as presented.** Ayes-3 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2 (Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0

Councilmember Shannon Spinner made a motion seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini **to send Local Law #1 for 2022, the Celebration Venue, along with the (Local Environmental Assessment Form) also known as SEQR, parts 1 & 2, and Greene County form 239 to the Greene Planning Department for Review. This is a Negative Declaration.** Ayes: 3 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2 (Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0

On the motion of Councilmember Shannon Spinner seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini the following **RESOLUTION #2022-35** to Authorize the Judicial Department to apply for a Grant to the Justice Court Assistance Program as follows:

WHEREAS the Town Board of the Town of Athens hereby determines that it is in the public interest and purpose to authorize the Town Justices to apply for the current period Justice Court Assistance Program for various equipment and furniture for the Town of Athens Court. One required component of the subject application is a Town Board Resolution authorizing said application pursuant to the rules and regulations of the NYS Comptrollers Office, division of the Office of Court Administration.

WHEREAS, to meet such compliance with the Office of Court Administration, the Town Board of the Town of Athens authorizes the Town of Athens Court to apply for a JCAP Grant in the 2022-2023 grant cycle up to \$1,750.85 (approximately) as follows:

Item 1: One Justice Chair for the Courtroom (\$400.99), One Clerk Chair for the Courtroom (\$140.25), one copier for the Courtroom (\$249.99), Five Blinds for Court Office (\$619.45) with related supplies and warranty agreements (\$340.17) and

WHEREAS, related financial requirements shall be authorized by the Town Board with such funding to be committed within the framework of the 2023 Town of Athens Budget and be confirmed by the Budget Officer at a public meeting of the Town Board to be determined, and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED that the Town Board of the Town of Athens hereby authorizes the Town of Athens Court to apply for a JCAP Grant in the 2022-2023 NYS grant cycle up to \$1,750.85 (approximately) as follows:

Item 1: One Justice Chair for the Courtroom (\$400.99), One Clerk Chair for the Courtroom (\$140.25), One copier for the Courtroom (\$249.99), Five Blinds for Court Office (\$619.45), with related supplies and warranty agreements (\$340.17)

And it is further RESOLVED that the foregoing resolution shall become effective this 3rd day of October in the year 2022.

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

On the Motion of Councilmember Michael Ragaini seconded by Councilmember Shannon Spinner the following **RESOLUTION #2022-36** to increase budgeted Expenditures and to reduce Contingency was adopted as follows:

WHEREAS the Town Board of the Town of Athens hereby determines that it is in the public interest and purpose to transfer Contingency funds to General Funds A and to Town Outside B to replenish certain expenditures (A) Fund 1420.4 Other Legal Expenditures \$2,096.02 & A Fund 1610.43 Lease- Village of Athens \$3,378.47 & (A) 5010.4 License & Fees \$447.00 & 5010.4 R & M \$245.00 Totaling (A) Fund Contingency 1990.49; \$6,166.49; (B) Fund 3620.4 DP- Server Parts- Software \$390.00 & (B) 7510.4 Dues & Subs \$186.00 & (B) 8010.4 Attorney's fees \$2,924.00 totaling (B) Fund \$3,500.00 and

WHEREAS, in order to achieve such appropriate Transfer of Funds the Town Board shall authorize said Budget Transfer at a public meeting of the Town Board, and

WHEREAS, the current funds are duly held at the National Bank of Coxsackie, Athens, New York, and said funds are currently un-restricted funds and available to be transferred after the October 17th meeting and,

WHEREAS the amount of un-restricted funds for this Transfer total (A) Fund \$6,166.49 and (B) Fund \$3,500.00 and

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT

RESOLVED that the foregoing Budget Transfer shall become effective this 17th day of October in the year 2022.

Ayes:3(Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2 (Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0

Councilmember Michael Ragaini made a motion seconded by Councilmember Shannon Spinner that the Town submit an application to the Athens Community Fund on behalf of the Cultural Center, for the Victorian Stroll. Ayes-3 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2(Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0

Councilmember Michael Ragaini made a motion seconded by Councilmember Shannon Spinner That the consensus of the Board is to pass the local law on November 8th, to override the tax levy. Ayes:3(Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2 (Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0

Supervisor Pirrone announced that Rick Rabideau, an Athens resident, will come before the for a presentation.

Supervisor Pirrone made the following appointments:

Zoning Board of Appeals Secretary- Annmarie Krause
To the Athens Com. Fund Advisory Board. Ellen Roth
Marya Warsaw
Betsy Pine
Jason Borgen

Resident Michael Campbell checked to see if there was any progress with Quarry Road.

Supervisor Michael N. Pirrone made a motion seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini to go into **Executive Session to discuss the employment history of a particular person**. Ayes-3 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2(Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0 Time: 8:42 pm.

Councilmember Shannon Spinner made a motion seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini to come out of Executive Session and reconvene the regular meeting. Ayes-3 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2(Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0 Time 8:51 pm.

As there was no further business to come before the meeting, a motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Michael Ragaini seconded by Councilmember Shannon Spinner. Ayes-3 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-2(Brandow; Paluch) Abstentions-0

The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 P. M.