

Town of DeKalb Board Meeting

At a regular meeting of the Town Board, of the Town of DeKalb, St. Lawrence County, New York, held on the 17th day of January 2024, at the Town Hall in DeKalb Junction NY, there were present:

Jordan Deleel	Supervisor	Michael Livingston	Council Member
Ed Newcombe	Council Member	Connie Elen	Council Member
Andrew Fenton	Council Member	Kelly Davis	Town Clerk
Wayne Holland	Highway Superintendent	Bill Chambers	Building & Codes

Members of the community present: Ginger Thomas, Nicole Wilson, Jeffrey Wilson, Larry Denesha, SLC Legislator

Supervisor Deleel opened the regular meeting at 7:01 PM.

Pledge of Allegiance was led by Supervisor Deleel, followed by a moment of silent prayer and/or reflection.

Michael Livingston moved that the minutes of the Regular Meeting, of the Town Board, held on December 20, 2023, as submitted by the Town Clerk, be and hereby approved. Seconded by Andrew Fenton and adopted unanimously.

Andrew Fenton moved that the minutes of the Organizational Meeting, of the Town Board, held on January 3, 2024, as submitted by the Town Clerk, be and hereby approved. Seconded by Ed Newcombe and adopted unanimously.

Michael Livingston moved that a budget amendment to the line item of Interest & Earnings which was incorrectly recorded be changed from \$18,000 to \$15,000 as per budget discussion previously held, be and hereby approved. Seconded by Ed Newcombe and adopted unanimously.

Constance Elen moved that the minutes of the Regular Meeting, of the Town Board, held on October 18, 2023, as submitted by the Town Clerk, be and hereby approved. Seconded by Ed Newcombe and adopted unanimously.

Actions

1. Post Standard Work Day Information for thirty (30) days and submit to Albany. **Completed 1/25/2024**
2. Inform SLC Real Property of Mr. Harry Moulton's appointment to the Board of Assessment Review. **Completed 1/25/2024**

Public Forum:

Larry D Denesha, SLC Legislator

-SLC held their organizational meeting on January 2, 2024.

-Recent wind storm and power outage: Mr. Denesha stated that emergency services and the town highway department went above and beyond during this major weather event. There were no major tragedies, house fires, major accidents etc. not only locally but in the county as a whole. Everyone pulled together in a time of crisis.

-Sales tax numbers are in, showing just over \$80 million which is up from the budget although the fourth quarter shows a decrease in sales tax collection.

Jeffrey Wilson

-Stated that he is concerned with the frequency of snow plows on the roads, lack of maintenance of the roads and lack of response from the highway department when called. He feels roads should be open for emergency calls and lack of plowing is a safety issue. Plows do not go through before the school bus goes down his road, his mailbox was clipped by the plow after he complained about the road, and the plows were blowing the airhorn as they go by his house. In the last snow storm at 1:00 pm the Maple Ridge Road to the Hitchcock Road had a 1 to 1 ½ foot

rim. Mr. Wilson then contacted Supervisor Deleel who in turn contacted highway department. Wayne reported that all routes had been plowed three times that day, the Hitchcock Road happens to be at the end of that route. Each route covers approximately 50 miles of road and in the best of circumstances needs three hours to complete. Supervisor Deleel responded that the highway department does the best job they can with the manpower and resources they have. There are only five drivers for plow trucks. He also stated that unanswered calls are common in the middle of a snow event as everyone is out plowing the roads and no one would be in the town barn to answer the phone. Supervisor Deleel said Mr. Wilson is always welcome to call him if he can't reach the town barn and hope everyone can move on from this to finish the last couple months of snow. Mr. Wilson stated that having one lane of road open would be a workable solution.

Supervisor Deleel:

Closing CBNA Account: This was an account that had been state mandated that would allow individuals who couldn't obtain a loan any other way to receive funds for home improvements/repairs at a low interest rate. Current balance is \$30,115.35. Discussion on closing the account, as it is obsolete now, and earmark it for other town projects. Constance Elen suggested that we need to check to make sure the town can reabsorb the funds and where we can use them, if there are any restrictions. Maybe we could use for the parks in DeKalb and Richville.

New Water Meters: Meeting on Monday with C2AE. They are getting together all the information about what the town wants in a new meter system and the costs associated with these features. Discussion followed on how we were going to install the new meters at homes, would we need to hire a part time person (part time vs rate pay), that we are looking for American made units, and a turn around time of weeks, not months.

CPA Update: Supervisor Deleel met with Nick Eells and asked for a list, in plain language, of the exact services that they provide to the town and what the cost is per service. He also checked with the following businesses:

Grey & Grey.....hasn't returned phone calls

PMVH.....doesn't do municipalities

Watertown.....doesn't write checks or do budgets

John Purcell....declined, too busy

Other options that haven't made contact with yet are Kim Fullers sister in law, retired; Amy J Moulton from Madrid; Bill Dashnaw.

The problem is that most accountants do not do municipalities. Any program we bought to do it in-house would be \$12,000 to \$18,000 to buy plus maintenance.

Constance Elen would like to see a different form of budget presentation, Supervisor Deleel wants to get someone who is going to stay with us so we don't have a lot of turnover. He found out that Eells does a lot of behind the scene stuff to streamline the process for us currently. E Newcombe asked about the new price quote we were given by Eells and it is comparable to what other similar towns are paying. Need to further research into what program, CPA, accountant, bookkeeper costs are/could be and get it on paper to compare/find any savings. Looking to get some concrete numbers for next meeting.

Power Pole at Pavilion: Contractor came back with an additional \$10,000 expense to put a power supply in the ground as they ran into bedrock. They did not investigate an alternative route, simply abandoned the job and put in the change order which Supervisor Deleel refused. ARPA funds are depleted, and the town's budget did not allow for any other changes at the pavilion. There was also no exploration done to find another viable route by the contractor. Power supply could also be put above ground using the poles already in place at a significantly lower cost.

A motion was made by Constance Elen and seconded by Andrew Fenton, to accept the added indemnification clause on the Gouverneur Rescue Contract for 2024. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes, Jordan Deleel yes.

Financials:

Michael Livingston made the motion to accept the Town Clerk Audit for the Clerk's general account, seconded by Constance Elen. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes, Jordan Deleel yes.

Clerk Report: Kelly Davis presenting for outgoing clerk Creazzo

-A total of \$798.20 was collected for the month of December with the town retaining \$759.70. Year-end total collections were \$18,876.85 with the town retaining \$11,008.54.

After reviewing all bills presented, and signing all bills over \$500.00, a motion was made by Constance Elen and seconded by Andrew Fenton to approve payment of the bills as entered on Abstract #1-2024. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes, Jordan Deleel yes.

Ed Newcombe made the motion to accept the Town Justice report, seconded by Andrew Fenton. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes, Jordan Deleel yes.

Supervisor Deleel informed the town board that he will be distributing the abstract of bills for their review of the bills that are being paid going forward.

DANC sent the annual hydrant and valve inspection report for the town. The results showed that of the 110 hydrants and valves, ninety-six were found to be in satisfactory condition with no repairs needed. Two hydrants need to be replaced, one hydrant needs a riser, one valve box needs resetting, three valve boxes need replacing, one valve was unable to be inspected due to a car blocking it and six valves were unable to be located.

Sewer Update: Many, many emails going back and forth with the state and DEC. Most requests are very unreasonable. Trying to make some headway but still in conversation.

Water Update: We are still waiting to hear if we are receiving a grant to be able to do the meter upgrade.

Highway Report: Wayne Holland reports

-they are working on repairing trucks. Plowing is hard on the equipment.

-The skid steer has arrived.

-could be some worker shortages as one employee is having knee surgery in March and will be out 4 months, a second employee is taking a couple weeks for the birth of new baby. Wayne is looking at the possibility of hiring a temporary worker to help cover these time frames. This person would need a CDL. This new hire could also be rolled into the water meter installation project if they had the right skills (knowing the job had some longevity with it would make it more enticing to prospective candidates) Discussion held on where the funds would come from. Supervisor Deleel will come back with specifics at the next meeting.

Supervisor Deleel spoke with Danny Moyer about his contract and reviewed the budget line items. Discussion led to having Mr. Mayer come in and explain his fees so that they're better understood. Contract approval tabled until next meeting.

Code Enforcement: Bill Chambers

Yearly review provided.

-53 permits issued resulting in \$8,047.75 in revenue. 10 new homes built in 2023.

-3 permits issued this year resulting in \$75.00 in revenue.

-Mr. Chambers will be gone for a week in March for training.

-Family Dollar inspection went well.

-As of June 6th, 2024 the program he uses will no longer exist. He is looking at the options out there and hoping to find something at March training.

-The state requires form 1203 to be filed; it reports everything that happened in the municipality. No one can find the form to fill out. Once it's located, Mr. Chambers will file it.

Secondary Shelter:

The town barn is classified as a secondary shelter because of the generator it has. The state would use it as shelter in case of a major storm. The fire department is currently an emergency shelter now.

Veteran's Banners:

The school is ready for the next step and would like to meet with committee members at school on a Friday at 1:20pm so that the students involved can be present. Committee consists of Constance Elen, Andrew Fenton, Darcy Waugh, Kayna Fenlong, Janice Brabaw.

250 Year Celebration: Darcy Waugh is working with the county on the town's behalf. We need to think about what we can do, how we can get the locals involved, maybe have a block party near the pavilion. More to come...

Jeff Matott & the well:

Test results are back. Since the well has already been relined and the state is recommending that it be shocked but this won't do any good if it's leaking. Relining is a temporary fix. Drilling a new well seems like the best solution. Where would a new well be drilled, and would it become contaminated too? The current well is 180 feet deep. After discussion with Attorney Nash, general consensus is to offer a one time payment (\$10,000) to Mr. Matott with his agreement to release the town from any further obligation on the matter. Supervisor Deleel and Andrew Fenton will have a discussion with Mr. Matott to see if he will accept the offer.

New Election Laws:

If you were elected in 2023 you will serve your full term with the next election occurring in 2025 and 2026 verses 2025 and 2027.

Grants:

Janice Brabaw proposed that the board would allow her to write and apply for grants in the town's name as her organization, the DRC, is too new to apply directly for themselves. The funds would come to the town to then be dispersed to the DRC. Many questions and concerns were shared as to who would be liable or left holding is something happened at a DRC event that "town" funds were used for, who would be blamed if things went wrong, or an event was cancelled? Would the town need to have oversight of the event? The board came to the conclusion that if the town wants to apply for a grant they would do it themselves with a legitimate grant writer. Constance Elen will become the liaison between the DRC and the board.

Mike Livingston made a motion, seconded by Ed Newcombe, to accept the **Hold Harmless Policy** as requested by the St Lawrence County Highway. Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes, Jordan Deleel yes.

A motion by Andrew Fenton to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ed Newcombe. Vote: Vote: Michael Livingston yes, Ed Newcombe yes, Constance Elen yes, Andrew Fenton yes, Jordan Deleel yes.

Meeting adjourned at 9:12 PM

Respectfully submitted by,

Kelly Davis, Town Clerk
