

# 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 18<sup>th</sup> day of November 2020, at the Town Hall in DeKalb Junction NY, there were present:

John Frary	Supervisor	Michael Livingston	Board Member
Ed Newcombe	Board Member	Connie Elen	Board Member
Wayne Holland	Highway Superintendent	Andrew Fenton	Board Member
Barbara Creazzo	Town Clerk/Collector	Charles Nash	Town Attorney

Members of the community present: Larry D Denesha, SLC Legislator

Supervisor Frary opened the meeting at 7:01 PM

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

Amendment: The total amount of the re-levy for sewer is \$9,227.00 and not the \$9,277.00 record in the body of these minutes. 11/25/2020 correction.

Andrew Fenton moved that the minutes of the Regular Meeting, of the Town Board, held on October 21, 2020, as submitted by the Town Clerk, be and hereby approved. Seconded by Michael Livingston and adopted unanimously.

Before the minutes were approved, Supervisor Frary wanted the members of the board to know that he was not moving forward with NYPA for the updating of the streetlights. Which will be discussed further in these minutes. Also, he has put the purchasing of a new Water/Sewer billing software program on hold, due to an increase in price.

With the sudden uptick of COVID cases, masks are to be worn and social distancing adhered too, to safeguard employees here at the town hall and at the town barn. Arrangements are being made to ensure everyone here at the hall can continue to function in their roles if they should need to remain at home for a time. Highway Superintendent Holland has been asked to speak with his crew regarding safety issues needed during this time.

## Actions

1. Post approved Standard Workday for Andre Fenton and mail original, along with copy of minutes to Albany. **Completed 10/26/2020**
2. Follow-up with Standard Workday regarding Constance Elen. **Completed**
3. Supervisor Frary to disburse check to Barrett for blacktop payment. **Completed 10/22/2020**
4. Supervisor Frary to follow up with IDA regarding Solar projects. **Completed 10/26/2020**
5. Supervisor Frary to sign contract to move forward with streetlight upgrade. **Completed.**
6. Supervisor Frary will follow up with architect regarding property next door.
7. Distribute new email addresses when received.
8. Purchase new water/sewer billing program.

## Public Forum:

Larry Denesha

-COVID had 19 new cases reported today, and 648 cases to date, with 118 cases active at this time. For the month of October, there were 84 cases and in just the last 8 days, 139 cases have been reported. Any County worker who can work from home, has been asked to do so, to keep exposure to a minimum.

-The 2021 Budget has passed unanimously. The tax rate will be \$8.19 per \$1,000 assessed value. This is a 1.15% decrease from last year, and this is the fifth year in a row there has been a decrease.

-Real Property held the annual tax auction solely online this year, due to COVID. There were 388 registered bidders, and there were 110 parcels to bid on. Last year there were 168 parcels up

for bid. Revenue from this year's auction was \$2.3 million, versus, \$1.4 million last year. Back taxes and fines were covered at \$1.2 million.

-There are two companion bills in Albany, the first is S2047 and the other is A6461. The two bills call for an amendment to the NYS Constitution, regarding the distribution of members of the Senate and Assembly. As it is now, there are 63 legislative districts in New York. These two bills would give each county their own senate and assembly member. It is believed this would provide areas away from New York City, an equal footing, as far as representation and voting power is concerned. The SLC Legislators passed a resolution of support for these two bills.

-SLC has received a grant for combatting the OPIOID crisis. Three healthcare systems in the county presented to the Legislators why they thought they should oversee the grant. St. Lawrence County Health Systems was chosen as the provider to receive the funding.

### **Financials:**

Andrew Fenton made the motion to accept the Court Clerk Audit as presented, seconded by Ed Newcombe.

Michael Livingston-yes, Ed Newcombe-yes, Constance Elen-yes, Andrew Fenton-yes, John Frary-yes

Michael Livingston made the motion to accept the Town Clerk Audit for the clerk's water and sewer accounts, seconded by Constance Elen.

Michael Livingston-yes, Ed Newcombe-yes, Constance Elen-yes, Andrew Fenton-yes, John Frary-yes

### **Town Clerk Report:** Barbara Creazzo

A total of \$5178.65 was collected for the month of October. Of this amount, \$5138.15 went to the town's coffers. The breakdown of collection is as follows: NYS Ag & Markets received \$18 for the Animal Population Program, while the town retained \$67.50 from dog licenses, the town received \$5033.15 in building permits, NYS DOH received \$22.50 for a marriage license while the town received \$17.50, and the town received \$20 for copies made.

Water & Sewer Collections: water received \$5391.67 and sewer received \$49031.35. For the year, water collected \$39,923.10 and sewer collected \$41,669.25. Unpaid water and sewer for the year is \$10253.51 for water and \$9277.00 for sewer. If approved by the Board, these amounts will be submitted to Real Property to be levied on the 2021 Tax Bill.

Deputy, Wanda Law, worked a total of 8.5 hours for the month of October.

Michael Livingston motioned for the clerk to submit unpaid water accounts in the amount of \$10253.51 and unpaid sewer accounts in the amount of \$9277.00, to Real Property, to be included as part of the 2021 Tax Bill where appropriate.

Michael Livingston-yes, Ed Newcombe-yes, Constance Elen-yes, Andrew Fenton-yes, John Frary-yes

Clerk, Creazzo, presented to the Board, the Standard Workday and Reporting Resolution for Constance Elen. The Standard Workday has been calculated at 6 hours.

Andrew Fenton motioned to accept the Standard Workday and Reporting Resolution for Constance Elen at 6 hours, as presented by the clerk.

Michael Livingston-yes, Ed Newcombe-yes, Constance Elen-yes, Andrew Fenton-yes, John Frary-yes

Supervisor Frary distributed the Monthly and Year to date financial report for review. There were no questions regarding the report.

Supervisor Frary also distributed a chart showing what has been received by the town from Sales Tax this year, as well as, for the past two years. The town was fortunate enough to receive \$37,962.70 more than what had been budgeted in this year's budget.

### **Water & Sewer Reports:**

DANC, a total of 558,577 gallons of water were metered in the month of October, with an average daily flow of 18,019 gallons. A total of 2 gallons of sodium hypochlorite were used in

the treatment of the water produced. Daily, weekly, and monthly, inspections, and/or maintenances were completed as scheduled. Daily flow charts are included in the report. One random distribution sample was collected for bacteriological testing and the result was satisfactory.

Wastewater, a total of 734,000 gallons of wastewater were treated in the month of October, with an average daily flow of 23,677 gallons. There were no SPDES permit violations. Daily, weekly, and monthly, inspections, and/or maintenances were completed as scheduled. Daily flow charts are included in the report. Rotating the RBC in reverse an hour a day to allow the weight to decrease, which should lessen the normal wear of the RBC.

There were no additional hours charged for the month for either water or wastewater treatment.

The value for the water tower has been replaced, as it began to leak. This has occurred in the past.

Supervisor Frary shared with the board, a copy of the email received from Michael O'Neil, EFC/DEC, regarding the proposal for the wastewater plant modifications. There are 15 areas of the proposal that they are requesting more information for, before deciding on accepting the proposal. A copy of this email was also received by DANC.

Supervisor Frary also shared with the board, a copy of Amendment No. 2, which was received from Development Authority of the North Country Technical Services Agreement for Disinfection System Improvement Project. This amendment is to include "Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Inspection of approximately 16,850 linear feet of gravity sewer main, with inspection results to be summarized in picture, graphic, and tabular reports to be utilized to locate sources of inflow and infiltration, and whereas, this additional work will increase the Authority's level of effort, resulting in additional expenses of \$9,660, bringing the not to exceed amount of the contract to \$18,660". The purpose of this study is to see if and where surface water may be entering the wastewater system. During times of high-water volume (heavy rain, or continuous rainstorms, the system exceeds the amount of flow it can successfully handle without violating SPDES permits.

Michael Livingston motioned to accept Amendment NO. 2 as described above, seconded by Constance Elen.

Michael Livingston-yes, Ed Newcombe-yes, Constance Elen-yes, Andrew Fenton-yes, John Frary-yes

There remains the possibility that some homeowners within the sewer system, continue to have their sump-pumps hooked into the sewer system. If this is the case, the Board wants to be able to work with the homeowner to seek another alternative.

As stated earlier in the minutes, Supervisor Frary did not sign the contract with El Dorado Utility Software by Creative Technologies, for a new billing program. When the contract was received for signing, the cost had increased just over a \$1,000. The explanation was the person who gave the initial quote is a technician, and the contract was written by a sales representative for the copy. The cost was \$2,955 and increased to \$3,972.50. Supervisor Frary also has concerns if Tom Manley, IT, and Barbara Creazzo, are the ones who compile the program data for the new software program, if something should go wrong in six (6) months or so, the company would not be willing to take any responsibility for any issues that may arise. After further consideration, Mr. Manley concurs with Frary's thoughts. While moving to another software program for the water and sewer billing is on hold at this time, it may remain the best option. If the fixes Mr. Manley believes he has made to the current program, do not improve the number of successful meter reads, going with El Dorado may need to occur. The water district cannot continue to operate with the number of meters that are not registering the readings.

**Highway Department Report:** Wayne Holland (October 21-November 18, 2020)

- Trucks are ready for plowing and sanding.
- Put shoulders on the Winter Road and Childs Road, where paving was completed.
- All dirt roads have had the final grading done for this year.
- Cold patching continues as needed.
- Continue to cut brush along roadsides as weather and time permits.
- Completing some ditching on the Sayer Road and Orebed Road.
- Fixing signs and replacing as needed.

-CPR training will be provided by James Blackburn, from Rensselaer Falls Fire Department, on November 25<sup>th</sup>. This is open to any town employee who is interested.

-Have purchased rubber edges for the wings of the plows. These will be used until the ground has frozen. They help to reduce the amount of turf disruption that can occur prior to the freezing of the ground.

-Received a rebate check of \$181, for the 1999 truck that was taken out of service. The truck was bartered for sand with Mackin Sand & Gravel. Mr. Holland believes the town got the best part of the barter.

-The garage has purchased a new power-washer.

-Henry J. van den Heever, Senior Risk Control Specialist, NYMIR, completed a recent inspection, his recommendations for the highway department is to ensure daily inspections of the vehicles be completed and documented, an inventory of road signs is to be completed, and the town needs to change to high intensity reflective signs. The inventory of road signs should be completed twice each year, with the inspection being completed both during the day and at night, to check for night visibility.

### **Dog Control**

Supervisor Frary has received notification from the State, that the Dog Control Officer, cannot be a contracted employee, but instead, must be an employee of the Town. This will alter how he is paid next year. Instead of his contracted salary and expenses being disbursed in one check, it will now need to be done in two. Also, the officer will need to complete all necessary paperwork, as an employee of the town.

**Code Enforcement Officer:** No report this month

**Assessor Report:** No report this month

### **Communications:**

-Supervisor Frary has received notice that the property of Lawrence Churchill, will be placed on the County's Tax Auction List.

-There has been no further movement with the LWTP.

-All proposed Solar Projects for De Kalb, have been passed through IDA, allowing for construction to begin.

-Tom Manley will be staying on as our IT person. Supervisor Frary would like to give each member of the board's personal contact information to Mr. Manley, so he can contact them. This will allow him to assist them with setting up their new town email. Constance Elen has suggested a policy be established that outlines the use of computers and email for the town. A policy will be established.

-The Town will have a zoom site established, as it appears meetings may need to go to this format, if COVID cases continue to rise as anticipated. As indicated previously in the minutes, arrangements are being made to allow the Supervisor and Clerk to work from home as needed. The Assessor, Code Officer and Justice Clerk, all have the capability to do so, and will continue as needed.

At the beginning of this meeting, Supervisor Frary told the board that he did not sign the contract with NYPA, regarding the streetlight update. At the last meeting with the other towns involved, Dow Electric was present and presented a new option. They will do the contract for \$56,000, which is the same amount as NYPA. The advantages are, they are a local company, and they will meet with the Supervisor, to tour, and assess the current lights here in town. While NYPA had previously indicated they would do this, they now say they have completed their assessment via satellite, which they believe to be an adequate assessment. The total project is expected to be \$60,000, which includes the buy-back of lights from National Grid. Supervisor Frary has conversed with Accountant, Nick Eels, and Attorney, Charles Nash, regarding the feasibility for the town to borrow the \$60,000 from itself. Both agree this can be completed as a benefit to the taxpayers, as the town would receive interest accrued at 3%. This is more than can be earned by any lending institution. The money would be borrowed from General A Unexpended Fund Balance. The first payment would be due on December 31, 2021, and the annual installment of principal will be paid in the amount of \$6,000 plus interest. It is noted, the cost of the lights will increase by 20%, come January 2021. By agreeing to this promissory note, the lights can be ordered this year, at the 20% savings.

Constance Elen motioned to accept the promissory note of \$60,000 as presented at 3% interest rate. This loan will come from General A Unexpended Fund Balance. Seconded by Michael Livingston.

Michael Livingston-yes, Ed Newcombe-yes, Constance Elen-yes, Andrew Fenton-yes, John Frary-yes

Andrew Fenton motioned to modify from NYPA as the contracted entity for the construction of the new streetlighting system, to Dow Electric, as the contracted entity. This will negate the approval given last month, to go with NYPA. Seconded by Constance Elen.

Michael Livingston-yes, Ed Newcombe-yes, Constance Elen-yes, Andrew Fenton-yes, John Frary-yes

Upgrading of the phone system is waiting for TDS to do the switchover.

Have not heard back from the architect regarding the property next door.

There will not be a Christmas tree lighting this year. The tree and gazebo have had the lights placed and will be lit after Thanksgiving.

A discussion occurred regarding the new traffic pattern at the intersection of US Highway 11 and East De Kalb Road. While it is understood the need to improve safety at the intersection, it is now noted, entering the intersection from the Hermon section of the East De Kalb Road, has created a new safety concern. It is now difficult to see oncoming traffic from the south on US Highway 11. The through traffic has moved away from the center of the roadway, moving it closer to the outer portion of the road. This makes it less visible. Also, with the roadside having weeds along it, traffic can be on top of the intersection before it is clearly seen. Legislator Denesha suggested a letter of concern be filed with the State Of New York Department of Transportation.

After reviewing all bills presented, and signing all bills over \$500.00, a motion was made by Constance Elen and seconded by Ed Newcombe to approve payment of the bills as entered on Abstract #11-2020.

Michael Livingston-yes, Ed Newcombe-yes, Constance Elen-yes, Andrew Fenton-yes, John Frary-yes

A motion was made by Michael Livingston and seconded by Andrew Fenton, to adjourn.

Michael Livingston-yes, Ed Newcombe-yes, Constance Elen-yes, Andrew Fenton-yes, John Frary-yes

Meeting adjourned at 9:22 PM

Respectfully submitted by  
Barbara A. Creazzo  
Town Clerk

#### Actions

1. Clerk to submit unpaid water and bills to Real Property to be levied on the appropriate 2021 Tax Bills. **Completed 11/20/2020.**
2. Post the approved Standard Workday for Constance Elen for the required 30 days prior to submitting to NYS Retirement. **Completed 11/19/2020.**
3. Signing of Amendment NO.2 by Supervisor Frary and a Notary. **Completed.**
4. Continue to move forward with ensuring all office employees will have the capability to work from home if necessary due to COVID. **On-going.**
5. Update road sign inventory and replace signs with high intensity reflection signs as appropriate. **On-going.**
6. Adapt a Computer/Email Use Policy.
7. Complete zoom site application. **Completed.**
8. Sign contract with Dow Electric for the streetlighting upgrade.
9. Sign Promissory Note for \$60,000 loan to finance streetlighting upgrade. **Completed.**
10. Complete phone upgrade as soon as TDS is ready for the switchover.
11. Send letter of safety concern to the State, regarding the intersection of US Highway 11 and East De Kalb Road.
12. Provide Dog Control Officer with necessary paperwork as an employee of the town. To be done in January, after the Organizational meeting. **Completed.**