

VESTAL TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MINUTES

MONDAY, JUNE 23, 2014

In Attendance: Supervisor Schaffer, Board Members Fitzgerald, Majewski and Messina.

Also Attending: Town Attorney David Berger, Human Resource Officer Nancy Olmstead, Fire Chief Pat McPherson and Fire Department officers Doug Rose, John Paffie, David Harrington and Chuck Paffie, Town Clerk Emil Bielecki and several members of the community.

Supervisor Schaffer convened the meeting at 6:00 PM.

6:00 – Fire Chief Patrick McPherson – Discuss Station 4 Project

Fire Chief McPherson and several other Fire Department officers stressed the importance of moving ahead with the project to construct a new Fire Station 4. The Fire Department is asking Board approval to proceed with a public referendum to bond for the construction of a new Station 4 at an all-inclusive cost of approximately \$4.5 million. They would like the special election to be scheduled for late summer. Additional points highlighted by the Fire Department presenters include:

- The construction of the building is expensive because it must meet rigorous safety and building code standards.
- The building must accommodate immediate needs and anticipate future needs.
- Station 4 is the critical center of operations during major emergencies.
- Of the \$4.5 million total, about \$3.2 million is for the construction of the new building.
- It is estimated that for every year that we delay this project, it will cost us an additional \$500 thousand.
- The Foam District will contribute to some of the cost of construction of the new station.

Supervisor Schaffer stated that he has devoted a lot of time to studying this proposed project. He fully understands the need to build a new Station 4, but not as currently presented. The Town is seeing some serious revenue shortfalls this year and it will be difficult to take on this project without some reduction in cost. It is not responsible to ask for \$4.5 million without a detailed set of plans. There are many things in the conceptual design that are either excessive or are not necessary. The Fire Department has to determine what it truly needs, not what it wants. He will not vote to move this project forward at the \$4.5 million price tag.

Councilman Majewski stated that he has asked Hueber Breuer to provide him with a list of other similar building projects they have done but has received no response. He wants to look at other fire stations designed and constructed by this company to better understand our needs.

Fire Lieutenant Chuck Paffie responded that most of that information was provided in the report submitted to the Town by Hueber Breuer. In his opinion, the fire station built in the Town of East Syracuse is the most representative of the kind of station that Vestal is planning.

After additional discussion, all Board members agreed that it would be helpful to visit the East Syracuse fire station and asked the Fire Department to assist in scheduling a trip to the facility.

6:15 – Don Dettlinger, Fuel Master – New fuel pump monitors

Councilman Majewski noted that we continue to have issues with how we monitor fuel usage at the two Town operated fueling stations. We need to look at alternative solutions. Unfortunately, the scheduled presenter was unable to attend this meeting. This presentation will be rescheduled.

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6:30 – Danielle Alabisi, American Freight – Discuss putting trailers in parking lot

Danielle Alabisi, the manager of the American Freight store at 1000 Front Street is asking the Board to grant a Special Permit to allow storage trailers at the site so that additional product is readily available at peak sale times. The request is for 1 storage trailer from August 15 to September 15, and 8 to 10 trailers from January 15 to April 15. The trailers are needed so as to avoid safety issues that arise if there is excessive merchandise in the store. The trailers would be located in parking lot and be accessed during normal store hours.

Town Attorney Berger noted that the Town Code requires that the applicant submit detailed drawings as to the exact location of these trailers.

Councilman Majewski asked Ms. Alabisi to submit the detailed drawings to Code Officer Mark Dedrick and to Supervisor Schaffer.

UPCOMING PUBLIC HEARING

June 25 – Local Law C – Amending Chapter 18 Sewer and Sewage Disposal
June 25 – Local Law D – Amending Chapter 23-5 Article I “Fees” of the Town Code

COMMITTEES

7.1 PUBLIC WORKS

1. Request from Town Engineer Gary Campo to advertise on July 9, 2014 for replacement of storm pipe on Ross Hill Road, with the opening of the bids on July 21, 2014 at 2:00 pm.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

2. Request from Town Engineer Gary Campo to award Pavilion bid to Procon Contracting for \$82,500.00 (\$50,000 was budgeted in Capital Projects).

Supervisor Schaffer noted that the bid amount is substantially above what was allocated in the capital budget. He spoke with the Parks Superintendent who indicated to that he could get the project done within the \$50,000 budget, but that amount does not include the cost of the labor and no completion date is given. The Board has 3 choices: raise the capital budget amount to the bid price, have the Parks Department do the project or scrap the whole project for this year. If the project is started this year, it would have to be after the End of the Season Picnic on August 6th.

Councilman Majewski stated that he wants to discuss the project with the Town Engineer to explore other options. Perhaps the contractor can do the pad and Parks can finish the rest of the structure.

Councilwoman Messina stated that she does not support increasing the budgeted amount for the project, but is interested in exploring other ways to get the project done within budget.

By consensus, the Board agreed to hold this item for further discussion at the next Work Session on July 7th.

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7.2 FINANCE

1. Warrants – 2014- 24, 2014-24B, 2014-24E, 2014-25, 2014-25E, 2014-25L, 2014-25P

Councilman Majewski noted that there were 2 purchases of hearing equipment in Parks for approximately the same amount and wondered whether there might have been an error. Councilwoman Messina stated that she would check into it.

OK - This item will be placed on the Agenda as a Receive and File item at the next Regular Meeting.

2. Request to pay \$625.00 Town Attorney David Berger for May 2014 billable hours.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

3. Request from Town Comptroller Laura McKane to discuss Key Bank Credit Cards used by the police department. Key Bank is now requiring a resolution for authorized officers of the card.

Resolve that the Town Board authorizes the Police Department to continue its credit card accounts with Key Bank and further agrees to the provisions outlined in the Officers Certification and designating Chief John Butler, Police Lieutenant Gerald Mullins and Lieutenant Edward Golluscio as authorized officers.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

Town Clerk Bielecki noted that the memo from Comptroller McKane also requested to change all the credit cards issued by Chase to the Chase Corporate Flex Card Program with rewards. Part of the reason for changing programs is to remove any personal liability and credit implications the might affect employees to a program that places sole responsibility with the Town. The present product was not available at the time the cards were first issued.

Councilwoman Messina wants to know if the Town has looked at plans offered through any other banks. She will review the matter with Comptroller McKane and report back to the Board.

4. Request to set advertising date of July 9, 2014 for Local Law “E” (Best Value Bidders) with a public hearing to be set on August 13, 2014.

Town Attorney Berger noted that the low bid is not always the best value bid. This law would allow the flexibility to also look at value when evaluating bid proposals.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

7.3 PERSONNEL

1. Request to reappoint Joyce Majewski to the Planning Board effective July 8, 2014. The term is to expire on July 7, 2019.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

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- 2.** Request from Park Superintendent Jim Bukowski to hire Dan Lamberti as a summer worker to start on June 26, 2014.

Supervisor Schaffer noted that this is the last of the summer employees to be hired. This position is being funded with the savings achieved by not filling the vacancy on the Town Board and will end when that money is spent.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

- 5.** Human Resource Officer to discuss amendments to the Employee Handbook.

Human Resource Officer Nancy Olmstead presented the Board with a number of changes that she is proposing to the Employee Handbook. The changes range from minor corrections to significant adjustments to comply with new state and federal regulations. Some of the other areas where changes are being proposed include the following: longevity bonuses, vacation carryovers, work requirements during emergencies, medical leave policies, overtime and bonuses for meeting goals in the wellness program. She is asking the Board to review the proposed changes and submit any comments or additions to her. Upon completion of the review process and agreement by consensus to the individual changes, the Board will be asked to approve the adoption of the Employee Handbook, as amended.

7.4 PLANNING & ZONING

1. Request from Jack McQuiston, Vestal Historical Society, to use library parking lot to hold a concert (Ridin' the Rails) on July 12, 2014, and to set up a tent on the grassy area between the museum and the library to provide weather protection. The tent would be put up on July 11 and taken down on July 14, 2014.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

7.5 PUBLIC SAFETY - no items were brought for consideration by the Board.

7.6 ADMINISTRATION

1. Request from Museum Director Virginia Wood to accept grant from Community Foundation for SCNY-Broome Library Fund for the amount of \$613.00.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

2. Request from Town Historian Margaret Hadsell to accept grant for the amount of \$2100.00 to purchase historical markers for Chugnut and the Rounds House.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

3. Request from Recreation Director Sue Jastran to hire Emily Kisloski as a lifeguard.

Councilwoman Fitzgerald noted that this person will work part-time to fill in for another lifeguard who will be taking approved time off.

OK-This item will be placed on the Agenda for a vote at the next Regular Meeting of the Town Board.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

1. Town of Vestal FOG Control Program (Fats, Oils and Grease)

The Town Attorney is continuing his review of the proposed program.

2. Kopernik Tower

Supervisor Schaffer stated that the Town has been in contact with the County's Emergency Services Director Bret Challis and there appears to be some progress. It appears that the County has the funding to proceed with the construction of a tower at the Kopernik Observatory site and the details are being worked out.

3. Gateway Sign Application

Applicant requested to provide the following: drawings to scale, elevation drawings and drawings showing a perspective view. Supervisor Schaffer noted that the applicant did provide some additional information but it is still inadequate for final Board review.

ADJOURNMENT

The Work Session was adjourned at 8:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Emil Bielecki, Town Clerk