

September 14, 2022
Town of Lyme
Public Hearing Sole Appointed Assessor 6:15 P.M.
Public Hearing NY Restore Grant 6:20 P.M.
Regular Monthly Meeting 6:30 P.M.

Public Hearing for Sole Appointed Assessor:

Supervisor Countryman called the Sole Appointed Assessor Public Hearing to order at 6:17 P.M. There was no public comments.

Resolution 2022-123: Deputy Supervisor Bourquin made the motion to close the public hearing at 6:19 p.m.; Councilmember Gosier seconded the motion; all were in favor; motion carried.

Public Hearing for Restore NY Grant:

Supervisor Countryman called the Public Hearing for the NY Restore NY Grant to order at 6:20 P.M. He stated that this is a Grant Opportunity program that encourages community development and neighborhood growth through the elimination and redevelopment of blighted structures. Restore New York is open to municipalities to support projects that focus on demolishing, rehabilitating and restoring residential, commercial and mixed-use buildings. This hearing is to pass a resolution to support the developer Ruby Development in restoring the old Munger store on the corner of Morris Tract Road and 12E. Ed Valentine was present from Ruby Development to explain the plan for the blighted building. They will demolish the current building and rebuild a 4,000 square foot café/lunch diner open 6:00-3:00 p.m. They have spent several thousand getting rid of the contamination from the old gasoline pumps. When the pandemic hit all prices increased and put their plans on hold. They now look forward to completing their vision through this grant opportunity.

Resolution 2022-124: Councilmember Gosier made the motion to close the public hearing at 6:28 p.m.; Councilmember Deputy Supervisor Bourquin seconded the motion; all were in favor; motion carried.

Call to Order:

Supervisor Countryman called the regular monthly meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. opening the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Those present included Supervisor Countryman, Deputy Supervisor Bourquin, Councilmember Gosier, Councilmember Farrell, Councilmember Villa, Town Clerk Ariana Henderson, Legislator William Johnson, William Pfaff, Bruce and Jennifer Kingsley, Ed Valentine, Gary Bird, Bonnie Bird, Jodi Hunt, Mike Lewis, Souja Torpey, Margaret Stevens, Thomas Stevens, Rebecca Kron, Warren Johnson, McKenzie Lehman, Gregor Smith, Jacques Cerow, James and Sandy Branski, Richard and Jean Stevens.

Privilege of the Floor

Legislator William Johnson: Legislator Johnson stated that Jefferson County was given a 28 million dollar grant for the Watertown Airport. This is great news for the community.

CTEC Solar: Jodi Hunt, Mike Lewis and Souja Torpey were present to discuss a proposed project of approximately 10 acres on Old Town Springs Road. Mr. Lewis stated the company specializes in smaller solar projects 25 megawatts and under. This would be a smaller project to add to their portfolio. Ms. Hunt was from an environmental firm working with CTEC on many of the studies and research that needs to be completed before starting the project. The Solar panels will be put into the ground with a post similar to a fence post. There would be a small gravel road into the site. She insured the Board that everything would meet Town zoning and code requirements. The project would interconnect with National Grid at the road and would be able to support 150 to 200 homes with power. Residents will be able to sign up for the program and get a credit on your National Grid bill. It usually is around \$15.00 a billing cycle. Supervisor Countryman expressed his concern about the project being close to a residential area and also the river. He stated that he would like to see it screened properly. Ms. Hunt said later in the process there will be a visual screening analysis and they are open to discuss screening. Mr. Lewis said you won't be able to see the project from the road and they are 500 feet from the river as well. Life expectancy of the project is expected to be 25 to 40 years depending on the lease. Councilmember Villa asked how old of a company CTEC was and how many projects have been sold to another entity before construction even began. Mr. Lewis responded the company is a home grown privately owned company about 10 years old. He said almost all projects are sold at some point to other entities. They have been working on the project for about a year. Councilmember Villa stated the Board should have been notified much sooner than now about the project. This makes the Town look bad when residents find out before them and they are unable to answer questions regarding the project. Ms. Hunt said that they have to do their due diligence and studies before they come to the Board. There was further discussion regarding the project. CTEC will proceed with the Town Planning Board site plan process.

Supervisor's Report

Resolution 2022-125: Councilmember Gosier made the motion to approve the August Supervisor's Monthly Financial report; Councilmember Farrell seconded the motion; all were in favor; motion carried.

Highway Superintendent's Report

The Highway department is working on Veteran's Memorial Public Park with the contractors. The half-ton truck will hopefully be ready at the end of September.

Clerk's Report

Monthly Receipts were as follow: Total Local Shares Remitted: \$7,041.10; Total State County & Local Revenues: \$7,065.10 Total Non – Local Revenues: \$24.00

Audit of the Bills (Abstracts #17 & #18)

Resolution 2022-126: Councilmember Gosier made the motion to approve Abstract #17 in the amount of \$24,363.04; seconded by Councilmember Villa; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Resolution 2022-127: Councilmember Gosier made the motion to approve Abstract #18 in the amount of \$190,131.75; seconded by Councilmember Farrell; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Approval of the Minutes

Resolution 2022-128: Councilmember Gosier made a motion to approve August 10, 2022; seconded by Councilmember Farrell; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Committee Reports

Assessor's Report:

Small Claims Hearing

We had one person file for Small Claims Review. The hearing was held on Wednesday, September 7, 2022. We should have the Hearing Examiners decision in about 2-3 weeks.

Maintenance

Carol and I are continuing the maintenance work for the 2023 tax roll. We will be finishing the review of the properties that we have on Point Peninsula and Three Mile Bay and if time permits, after our maintenance is complete, we will continue our data review of another area.

There were no questions on the report.

Municipal Water Board Report:

Supervisor Countryman stated that the Water Board has had an informational Water meeting regarding the Water District #2 extension. They had a good turnout.

Planning Board:

There was no Planning Board Minutes.

Youth Commission:

There was nothing new to report. They will be starting Fall/Winter basketball for the first time since COVID began.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA):

There was no minutes.

ZEO/CEO Report:

There were no comments or questions on the ZEO/CEO report.

TMB Cemetery:

Councilmember Gosier reported that it has been a good season for mowing and maintenance. A tree fell and the highway department cleaned it up. The foundation work in the cemetery will be started October 1, 2022; it shouldn't take long.

Cape Vincent Ambulance:

Supervisor Countryman stated that the Cape Vincent Ambulance Board meeting went very well last night. They are in a good place financially. There is an ambulance crew in Cape and Chaumont now; they have had no failed calls. The number of calls in each Town are almost identical.

Dog Control:

The Town of Lyme, Brownville and Cape Vincent had a joint meeting. They looked at the salary of the dog control officer. They discussed changing the percentages of what each town pays toward the dog expenses based on the number of licensed dogs in each town. Councilmember Gosier explained to the public that a few years back local towns joined together to form a mutual agreement for dog control which has saved us thousands of dollars and the service has been fantastic.

Old Business:

Point Salubrious Water District:

Supervisor Countryman had a conversation with Town Attorney Russell and the SEQR is the first step in the process. The Board needs to declare lead agency. Bernier and Carr would then send letters to the involved agencies stating the Board was lead agency. They have 30 days to respond. Once the public hearing is held the Board can decide to have a full referendum or permissive referendum. There was discussion on the cost of the project and the comptroller limits. Supervisor Countryman read the SEQR form.

Warren Johnson stated that the cost of his fire protection on his insurance has gone up significantly. The lake level is extremely low and people are pumping water into their shore wells. This water district is needed.

Resolution 2022-129: Deputy Supervisor Bourquin made a motion to schedule a Public Hearing for the Point Salubrious Water District #6 for September 27, 2022 at 6:30 p.m. at the Chaumont Fire Hall; seconded by Councilmember Villa; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Resolution 2022-130: Councilmember Villa made a motion to accept Part 1 of the Long Part SEQR for the Point Salubrious Water District #6; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Resolution 2022-131: Deputy Supervisor Bourquin made a motion to declare the Town of Lyme Board the lead agency for the Point Salubrious Water District #6 formation; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Water District #2 Lance Development Extension:

Gregor Smith (BCA) stated that in 2015 the Lance Development Project went through all of the steps to have the Water District extended except the final order of the board. According to Town Attorney Russell because this was never complete the process needed to be started over again. The user costs and maps have been updated in the Water Study. The current Water District #2 included the parcels closest to the Road in the Lance Development. This action would extend the district to the parcels to the waterfront. The cost of the district is paid by the development. Therefore, there will be no cost to the current Water District #2 users. It will add EDUs to the district and help pay for the current debt on the water lines.

Resolution 2022-132: Deputy Supervisor Bourquin made a motion to accept Part 1 of the Long Form SEQR for the Lance Development Water District #2 extension; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Resolution 2022-133: Councilmember Farrell made a motion to declare the Town of Lyme Board lead agency for the Lance Development Water District #2 Extension; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Appoint Chair to Water Board:

Resolution 2022-134: Supervisor Countryman made a motion to appoint Kathy Dyer Chairwoman of the Water Board; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

New Business:

Kingsley Assessment Agreement:

Resolution 2022-135: Councilmember Gosier made a motion to accept the assessment agreement as written; seconded by Deputy Supervisor Bourquin; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Restore NY Grant:

Resolution 2022-136: Supervisor Countryman made a motion that the Town Board of the Town of Lyme is in full support of the RESTORE NY application for the project identified as Ruby Development, LLC, parcel # 61.51-1-36, to demolish a blighted building located at 12319 NYS Route 12E in the Village of Chaumont and to reconstruct thereon a 4000sf building to be operated as a family-style restaurant business. The proposed financing has been determined appropriate and the project found to be consistent with the local development plan, in that it will facilitate efficient use of existing and future public resources, promote both economic development and preservation of community resources, and create and sustain employment opportunities; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Town of Lyme Surplus Property:

Resolution 2022-137: Deputy Supervisor Bourquin made a motion to declare town real property parcel number 60.11-1-66.1 south of County Route 57 surplus and authorizes the sale of town

owned real property; seconded by Councilmember Farrell; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

The Parcel would be sold for assessed value of \$300.00. Supervisor Countryman said that we can send the information to Joe Russell. Deputy Supervisor Bourquin asked if we would inquire legal fees. There was discussion on including the legal costs incurred plus the cost of the property.

Sole Appointed Assessor:

Deputy Supervisor Bourquin reviewed the law Supervisor Countryman sent to the Town Board. He thought the law was going to be subject to permissive referendum. In the law is stated that it will NOT be subject to referendum. The assessors should be able to go to the residents of the Town and have them vote for them to keep their jobs. He stated that they have worked very hard this year with the circumstances that they incurred. Supervisor Countryman read the options written in the law. He said that it isn't about the people it is about the job. The reason to lean toward sole appointed assessor is that it would take out the popularity vote and a qualified individual can fill the position. He isn't saying the current assessors aren't qualified but the Town lost a very talented person. Councilmember Gosier said that our current assessors will have an opportunity to apply for the position. It is the responsible thing to do for our residents.

Councilmember Farrell asked if someone who didn't have the qualifications could meet them within a time frame. Supervisor Countryman said that the State has to approve who the Board approves and validate their qualifications. There was further discussion on the issue.

Resolution 2022-138: Councilmember Villa made the motion to for the Town of Lyme to move to a Sole Appointed Assessor; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; Gosier, Countryman, Farrell, Villa AYE; Bourquin NAY and the motion was carried.

Budget Work/Session Hearing Dates:

Resolution 2022-139: Councilmember Villa made a motion to advertise the Budget Work session dates as follows; October 6, 2022 at 3:00 p.m., October 12, 2022 at 1:00 p.m., October 19, 2022 and October 26, 2022 at 2:30 p.m. and the Budget Hearing for November 9, 2022 at 6:00 p.m.; seconded by Councilmember Farrell; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Phone Proposal:

Clerk Henderson sent a phone proposal to the Town Board by email. The quote was from Pier Sound and Data. The monthly charge was \$309.89 a month saving the Town approximately \$140.00 a month. Clerk Henderson mentioned the several reasons why the new phone system would be beneficial for the Town Office. Councilmember Villa questioned why we would get a new phone system before we build the new building. His other concern is having an automated voice attendant answer the phone. He believes it should be an actual person. Clerk Henderson said that she intended to still answer the phone unless the office is closed. Deputy Supervisor Bourquin stated that we would have to keep TDS for emergency phone calls. The new system uses the internet which wouldn't work in a power outage. The Transfer Site also does not have working internet. He called Craig Systems to fix the current system and get the bugs out. Their main concerns were the emergency phone lines. They want to hold off on a new phone system.

Server Upgrade:

Clerk Henderson forwarded an email from IT Technician Ben Rubacha regarding a severe upgrade for the Town. Councilmember Villa said that he is a supporter of having adequate equipment and technology we need to operate. He questioned whether the upgrade is needed immediately or if it can wait.

Water District #2 Lance Development:

Resolution 2022-140: Councilmember Villa made a motion to advertise the Water District #2 Extension for Lance Development October 6, 2022 at 2:30 p.m.; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Privilege of the Floor

There was no privilege of the floor.

Online Privilege of the Floor

There was no online privilege of the floor.

Executive Session

Resolution 2022-141: Councilmember Villa made the motion to enter Executive Session at 9:15 p.m.; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Return to Open Meeting

Resolution 2022-142: Councilmember Gosier made the motion to enter Open Meeting at 9:42 p.m.; seconded by Councilmember Farrell; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Adjournment

Resolution 2022-143: Councilmember Farrell a made the motion to adjourn; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried; meeting was adjourned at 9:43 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ariana Henderson

Ariana Henderson
Town Clerk