

**April 10, 2024
Town of Lyme
Regular Monthly Meeting**

Call to Order:

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

Those present included Supervisor Millington, Deputy Supervisor Donovan, Councilmember Farrell, Councilmember Bourquin, Councilmember Gosier, Town Clerk Ariana Henderson, Highway Superintendent Pat Weston, Legislator William Johnson, Jennifer Kingsley, Bruce Kingsley, Ben Rubacha, Donnie Weston, Scott Aubertine, Greg Hoppel, Robin Grovesteen, Ken Kasek, Heather Lipczynski, Susan Locy, Robert Locy, Joseph Romanelli, Joseph Chernick, Josephine Johnston, Greg Hubbard, Robert Locy, Gene Taylor and Lainie Taylor.

Supervisor Millington read the Town Clerk Certification for the Highway Garage Vote:

TOWN CLERK CERTIFICATION

A petition requesting a referendum was submitted to the Town of Lyme regarding the Town's proposed highway garage. The petition was reviewed and was determined to be sufficient. The submission of a sufficient petition required the Town to hold a special election regarding whether \$5,260,681.00 ought to be expended in order to construct a new highway garage.

Efforts to hold a special election were coordinated with the Jefferson County Board of Elections, and the vote was held on April 9, 2024, from 12:00 PM until 8:00 PM. The proposition, which was not met with opposition by the Jefferson County Board of Elections, was as follows:

"Shall the Town spend a maximum of \$5,260,681.00, derived from a combination of grant funds, borrowings, and general funds, to construct a Highway Barn?"

For the entirety of the election, two (2) election inspectors, registered and endorsed by the Jefferson County Board of Elections, were present. Those same election inspectors counted the submitted ballots at the end of the eight (8) hour voting period.

I certify as the Town Clerk for the Town of Lyme that two hundred fifty (250) Town residents voted in the special election. Of those two hundred fifty (250) Town residents, ninety-six (96) voted against the proposition and one hundred fifty-four (154) voted in favor of the proposition. Thus, the proposition was approved, and the Town Board may take whatever steps are necessary to move forward with the Town Highway Barn project.

Supervisor Millington's statements:

If anyone in the audience has a question or comment regarding the particular agenda item in discussion by the town board, we request that you raise your hand and wait to be recognized by the Town Supervisor. It is open at the beginning and the end of the meeting. When the privilege of the floor is opened for open forum, we will gladly take questions and comments at this time. The Board is not obligated to address comments. We also request that attendees not discuss issues with each other during the meeting, it is disruptive to the meeting and other attendees.

I would like to thank everyone who came to Saturday's informational meeting and who participated in yesterday's vote. This is your town, and it runs best when everyone is involved and takes the time to find out what is going on. I ran on bringing the Town and its decisions back to the citizens.

The voters have approved the Town to move forward to build a new Highway Garage though bonding up to \$5.2 million. While this will be a significant cost to the taxpayers, it is now, thankfully, a decision that was made by the citizens and not just the Board. This originally should have been presented to citizens to vote on and not just approved by the Board during the winter off season. Thank you all for making your voices heard.

One thing that was apparent at Saturday's informational meeting was there are a lot of unknowns about the breakdowns of the costs and future costs and efficiencies of the new building. I have personally been asking for this information from our Engineer for the past few months and have not received the requested information.

Tonight, I am requesting that the Board come together to agree to hold Fourth Coast responsible for providing all cost and efficiency projection information to us as soon as possible and before we move forward. This information should have been available and distributed to the Board for review and to have had answers to your questions on Saturday.

Tonight, I am also asking the Board to civilly work together to review all aspects of the costs and building specs to find any savings we can for our taxpayers. As of right now, we do not have any grants towards this project, all expenses will be to the taxpayers. Without having any details from Fourth Coast we are blindly allowing them to spend taxpayer money. We as a Board need to be responsible to make the best choices for our taxpayers.

Thank you!!

Privilege of the Floor

Ben Rubacha (IT for the Town): Mr. Rubacha explained that the Town needs a new server. The current server is 8 years old and at the end of its life. Microsoft no longer supports the Operating System which opens the Town up to more hackers. He provided the Board with two options. The first quote is to replace the server with a new server, including licenses, hardware, and setup costs. The second quote is to rebuild your server in the Cloud. The Cloud offers a secure virtual environment for file storage and computer/user management. Please review these carefully as there are benefits to both methods. On-Premise, requires more management but does not have the recurring costs as Cloud services do, however Cloud services are generally more stable and require less management, however has ongoing licensing costs. The board discussed which option would be best.

Resolution 2024-60: Councilmember Farrell made the motion to proceed with Ben Rubacha purchasing a Lenovo ST50 Server with backup to the cloud solution for a total of \$5,750.00; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Greg Hoppel: Mr. Hoppel had several questions regarding the Highway Garage building. He asked if the numbers were examined by the Board and if a breakdown of the budget was given to them. Councilmember Gosier stated that the Board is not required to respond to questions and comments. She assured Mr. Hoppel that the numbers were scrutinized. There was further discussion on the Highway Garage.

Robin Grovesteen: Ms. Grovesteen was present to request \$1,000.00 for the Village of Chaumont Sesquicentennial celebration being held this summer. They are raising money on their own as well. The Chaumont Fire Department donated a portion of their chicken BBQ money and they have held several bake sales. Councilmember Gosier stated that they would like to support this event. The Board will think about it and decide at their meeting April 18th. Councilmember Farrell stated in the future it would be best to present this during budgetary discussions.

Charles Kingsley: He believes this building garage is a blessing in disguise. It is awakening a sleeping bear. He believes a lot of people in the community will now be aware of what's going on and how to fix it. He then spoke about the Governor and the grants that could make the building less expensive.

Jennifer Kingsley: Ms. Kingsley asked if the Highway Garage Bids were at prevailing wages. Councilmember Farrell answered yes. She then questioned why the Annual Audit line was zero for the 2024 budget. Councilmember Bourquin explained that we have a professional accountant (Bowers and Company), and an Annual Audit isn't necessary. Another question she had was why Supervisor Countryman didn't pay the County Chargeback in advance like it had been done in years prior. She stated that the printed tax rate on the January bills was different from the 2024 budget. It was handled differently than all the years prior. She stated that she was disappointed in the way the special election was handled. The ballot was not written the way it should have been. It should have been made public to the people. It did not go through the Board of Elections. All the decisions were made by the attorney and clerk. Councilmember Gosier said that the wording on the ballot was approved by the Board of Elections. Ms. Kingsley said that Michelle from the Board of Elections said she had nothing to do with the ballot. That was up to the Clerk and the Attorney. Councilmember Farrell said that if we were responsible for writing the ballot how was it be illegal? Ms. Kinglsey stated that the wording of the ballot should match the petition. Clerk Henderson stated that she did not write the ballot. The Town Attorney wrote the ballot. Councilmember Farrell read the ballot out loud "Shall the Town spend a maximum of \$5,260,681.00, derived from a combination of grant funds, borrowings, and general funds, to construct a Highway Barn?" He asked what the discrepancy was. She said that for future elections, it should be handled better. Absentee ballots are available if the Town sets up a proper registration. There was further discussion on the special election.

Clerk Henderson reiterated that she did not write the ballot. She then read an email from Michelle at the Board of Elections she received from the Town Attorney regarding the special election propositions. "I did read through the town law a few days ago but didn't see any specification regarding the wording of propositions. That aside, I think it looks great! It is very close to what we get from the state, the difference being it is easier to understand what you are voting on. It also read the same as the propositions we get from the towns that we would put on a general election ballot." Secondly, the ballot was uploaded to the Town website under Highway Garage vote.

Greg Hoppel: Mr. Hoppel thanked Ariana for sending him the wetland delineation report. She did a great job.

Supervisor's Report

Resolution 2024-61: Councilmember Donovan made the motion to approve the March Supervisor's Monthly Financial report; Councilmember Gosier seconded the motion; all were in favor; motion carried.

Councilmember Farrell questioned why the attorney fees were so high. We should be discussing the issues as a board before going to the Town attorney. Supervisor Millington stated that it was mostly charges from a Town Zoning issue.

Highway Superintendent's Report

John Deere Brush Hog Bids: The Town received one bid for the John Deere Brush Hog.

Resolution 2024-62: Councilmember Bourquin made the motion to accept the bid for the John Deere Brush Hog for \$1200.00 from Donald Perkins; Councilmember Gosier seconded the motion; all were in favor; motion carried.

Supervisor Millington read the email from McKenzie (BCA) "I received your voicemail yesterday regarding the Town of Lyme Veterans Park project. We met with the contractor onsite last month to discuss a schedule moving forward for the dock installation, and we were told that work at the park will be completed by Memorial Day weekend. I have reached out to the contractor for an update, and they are scheduled to pave the parking lot and fix portions of the walking path the week of May 13th. They had to check on something for their dock installation schedule, so I am waiting to hear back on that. I will make sure to send you any additional information I receive from them. To follow up on this morning's email, Powis is working on obtaining a barge to complete the dock installation and will have a schedule for that work once the barge is secured. They are hoping to complete that as soon as possible. They also mentioned that if asphalt plants open earlier, they may be able to pave prior to May 13th"

Patrick Weston said that they will begin forming the sidewalks at Veteran's Park next week. There was a discussion on automatic locks for the restroom doors. Supervisor Millington will get

a price on the automatic restroom doors. Pat suggested getting an agreement with Reg Schweitzer to use his driveway. Supervisor Millington agreed and stated he would get the agreement written.

Resolution 2024-63: Councilmember Gosier made the motion to advertise the special meeting April 18, 2024; Councilmember Donovan seconded the motion; all were in favor; motion carried.

Councilmember Farrell would like to do an evaluation of the Highway Equipment. He doesn't believe that we should wait until the equipment is inoperable. If we trade sooner the value of the equipment would be higher.

Councilmember Donovan asked if Pat had heard back about the speed limit signs for South Shore Road. He responded that he had not heard.

Clerk's Report

Monthly Receipts were as follow: Total Local Shares Remitted: \$1,735.25; Total State County & Local Revenues: \$1,751.25 Total Non – Local Revenues: \$16.00

Resolution 2024-64: Councilmember Gosier made the motion to accept the Town Clerk's Report for March; seconded by Councilmember Farrell; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Audit of the Bills (Abstracts #7 + 8)

Resolution 2024-65: Councilmember Bourquin made the motion to approve Abstract #7 in the amount of \$6,180.01; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Resolution 2024-66: Councilmember Gosier made the motion to approve Abstract #8 in the amount of \$226,002.11 seconded by Councilmember Donovan; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Approval of the Minutes

Resolution 2024-67: Councilmember Donovan made the motion to approve March Regular Meeting Minutes; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Old Business:

12K/5K Memorial Day Run:

Councilmember Gosier stated that Karen Fitzgerald worked with Adam and obtained special event insurance through the committee. The Town and Village will provide backup insurance plans. All they are asking for now is approval to use the park for their event location.

Resolution 2024-68: Councilmember Gosier made the motion to approve the 12K/5K to use Veteran’s Park as their event location on Memorial Day Weekend; seconded by Councilmember Farrell; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

There was a discussion on how the Town would move the docks in and out of the water at Veteran’s Park. Pat Weston responded that the local Marinas will hopefully help with the installation, they have the appropriate equipment.

Town Sever Upgrade:

This was discussed in privilege of the floor.

Veteran’s park Committee:

Supervisor Millington reported that the committee will be meeting in May.

New Business:

GIS Hosting agreement:

The hosting agreement was tabled.

Barnes Bay Cemetery:

Councilmember Gosier explained the best option for the Barnes Bay Cemetery would be to buy limestone blocks and place bronze plaques on them with the individuals names. This will cost \$6,850.00. Pat told her that the blocks are available, and they let you choose which block you would like. There is \$7,000.00 in the budget. The alternative is \$60,000 to dig 4-foot holes for each stone and there are no maps of the cemetery. This is a very large savings.

Resolution 2024-69: Councilmember Bourquin made the motion to purchase limestone blocks with bronze plaques for the Barnes Bay Cemetery; seconded by Councilmember Farrell; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Special Meeting:

Councilmember Gosier explained that the Town Board needs to hold a special meeting with Fourth Coast and Attorney James Burrows to work out the details of the Highway Garage. There is no money being spent and it will not be an open meeting. It will be strictly executive session because the Attorney will be giving legal advice to the Town Board.

Resolution 2024-70: Councilmember Bourquin made the motion to schedule a special executive session meeting April 16th at 3:00 P.M.; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Mowing Bids:

The following bids were received by Clerk Henderson.

Ball Fields and Abandon Cemeteries Bids

JW Northeast Enterprises LLC- \$17,900.00
Denicola's Lawn Care- \$24,000.00
Roberts Lawncare- \$20,840.00
Vargas Lawn Care- \$22,200.00

Resolution 2022-71: Councilmember Bourquin made the motion to accept JW Northeast Enterprises LLC, bid for \$17,900.00 to mow and trim the Ball Fields and Abandon Cemeteries; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

RFQ Wastewater and Water:

Resolution 2024-72: Councilmember Bourquin made the motion to hire Barton and Loguidice as the engineer for the Route 12E West Water project; seconded by Councilmember Farrell; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Revised Solar Law:

The revised Solar Law will be discussed at the meeting on April 18, 2024 which will give the Board more time to review the revised Solar Law.

Committee Reports

Town Board Report:

There was no report.

Assessor's Report:

There was no report.

Municipal Water Board Report:

There was no report.

Planning Board:

The meeting was cancelled in March.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA):

The meeting was canceled.

Youth Commission:

Resolution 2024-73: Councilmember Gosier made the motion to accept the March Youth Commission Report; seconded by Councilmember Farrell; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

ZEO/CEO Report:

There were no questions on the report. The renewal letter for seasonal mobile permits were mailed and are being returned.

TMB Cemetery:

Councilmember Gosier reported that Mark has started mowing the cemetery.

Cape Vincent Ambulance:

There was no report.

Closing Privilege of the Floor

Jennifer Kingsley: Ms. Kingsley asked who was on the Veteran’s Park Committee. Clerk Henderson responded Mary Clark, Hartley Bonisteel, Steve Hunt, and Boo Harris.

Greg Hoppel: Mr. Hoppel continued to ask more questions about the Highway Garage building.

Heather Lipczynski: Ms. Lipczynski asked why Councilmember Gosier didn’t have a Town email. She stated that there was some miscommunication about the information session and said they did the best they could for the Town Board.

Susan Locy: Ms. Locy said in the future the summer residents should be considered for the vote. They are a very large part of the community. She thought it was strange that tenants could vote, and you didn’t have to be a registered voter. Councilmember Gosier responded that the vote was held based on the 90-105 days from the day the Clerk accepted the petition. They had no control over when to hold the vote. Councilmember Farrell said that the largest tax base is seasonal residents. He understands her concerns. Unfortunately, it was not up to the Town.

Online Privilege of the Floor

There was no privilege of the floor.

Adjournment

Resolution 2024-74: Councilmember Bourquin a made the motion to adjourn at 9:06 p.m.; seconded by Councilmember Donovan; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ariana Henderson

Ariana Henderson
Town Clerk