

**TOWN BOARD WORKSHOP MEETING  
JUNE 18, 2013**

A regularly scheduled Town Board Workshop Meeting was held on Tuesday, June 20<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 PM with the following persons in attendance:

<b>Absent:</b>	<b>Supervisor John Coutant Councilperson Gloria VanVliet Councilperson Wayne Freer Councilperson Donna McAuley Councilperson Kyle Barnett</b>
	<b>Administrative Recorder: Diane L. McCord, Town Clerk Deputy Clerk Holly Netter</b>
	<b>Highway Supt. Michael Cafaldo Water &amp; Sewer Superintendent Donald Kiernan</b>
<b>Guests:</b>	<b>Raquel Rabinovich – Artist Sarah Bachelier</b>

Supervisor John Coutant called the meeting to order at 7:35 PM.

**Public Comment:** None

**1. Raquel Rabinovich – Lighthouse Park**

Ms. Rabinovich is the artist who designed the rock sculpture at Lighthouse Park and she commented coming back to the Town Board was like coming back to her family. She requested, in a letter dated June 5<sup>th</sup>, she would like to increase the exposure to the piece she created and expand individual viewers' experiences of the stone installation at Lighthouse Park.

Recently, she had the privilege to meet a wonderful dancer Julie Ransom who lives in Saugerties and conversations have led to a collaborative dance performance that will interact with Emergences at Lighthouse Park. "Julie will dance, unfolding into the boundless space of the installation, as it merges with the water, the sky, the stones and the earth." Raquel proposed the event happen twice at the end of the summer.

Councilperson Barnett asked how long the event would take and it was estimated one half hour. The performance would be video- taped so it can be archived. The proposed date, after interacting with the Town Board, is Saturday, September 14<sup>th</sup> at 3:30 with the performance taking place at 4 PM. This will be announced at the Town Board Meeting in August and it will be placed on Channel 23. It was suggested the Daily Freeman, the Record and the Poughkeepsie Journal be contacted by Ms. Bachelier. Ms. Bachelier asked about the parking and she believed about twenty people would attend. There would be adequate parking on the property next door owned by Scenic Hudson.

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## **2a. Donald Kiernan - Composite Samples for Kingston**

In June we received a letter from the City of Kingston Waste Water Facility. When we take water samples they must now be composite samples taken over a twenty four hour period. We are increasing our sampling to three samples a week @ \$70 each. The samples may be able to be dropped off in Kingston. The samples will be sent to Smith Labs and the samples must be refrigerated.

We have black sludge coming from one of our pump stations but we have not narrowed this down yet. We do not believe it is coming from Dyno Nobel. It may be coming from one of the marinas, either Jeff's Yacht Haven or Rondout Marina.

Recently, we have replaced all the turbidity meters in the treatment plant. The City of Kingston would like all the turbidity meters for parts. They are willing to spend \$1,000. Councilperson Wayne Freer said we do not have to charge them because it is surplus equipment and will bring better understanding between Kingston and Port Ewen. They have helped us several times in the past. We should send a letter giving them the parts.

The question was asked about Don Kiernan's contract. When do we need to do renew the contract? Don Kiernan said in September and it is a two year agreement where Tim Keefe's contract is a one year agreement.

## **2b. Highway Supt. Mike Cafaldo**

Mike Cafaldo attended Highway School for a week in Ithaca. The big emphasis was on using straight salt on the roads. He would not have to sweep in the Connelly, Port Ewen area but it could not be used elsewhere. It would save on cleaning and everything going down to the sewer plant. We would have to use another 100 units of salt a year and that would be \$58 a ton. This is not a liquid salt. We are spraying calcium into our salt now. The question was asked, "would it violate our Storm Water Regulations"? New York State is using straight salt all the time. We will ask Tim Keefe about this. Oneida has the State Bid for the salt. Next year the classes may move from Ithaca.

There was discussion about Certified Marina and how they were affected by the heavy rain? There is a well house behind the garage and the Highway Dept. pumped it out only to find it was filling with ground water not the water coming off the hill behind the marina. There is a pipe with water, cable and telephone lines in it and a stick had caused a blockage. The marina will be asked to remove the pipe and the wires. The Highway Supt. placed detention ponds to hold the water and let it out a little at a time. This would be in place of installing baskets.

Another issue is the road above the marina. The road is just flat and if you look down the street and off into the woods going to the left, the Highway Supt. made a swale so the water will not go on Certified Marina's property.

There is a pipe that needs to be replaced on Plutarch Road.

The Highway Supt. asked about the fund balance money. He was talking with Al Larkin and we have a whole in our bucket loader and the cost to replace it is \$97,000. The loader is twenty eight years old.

The Supt. wants to spend this money before we work on the 2014 budget. If we pay off the trucks we can get another truck. This was in the end of the year report for 2012. The Town Board will look into this.

### **3. Budget Discussion**

Councilperson Gloria VanVliet asked about the changes to our budget. We needed a generic template and the Deputy Clerk had one copied from the Town Clerk budget. Diane's budget is the only one which breaks down everything line by line. Holly Netter asked do you want me to do a template for every department? Councilperson Freer said the Highway Dept. and Water/Sewer Department break down their costs on a spread sheet. NYS tells you what the beginning numbers are. Everything has its own line number. When we need more lines it can be broken into ie. 60.001-0020. The contractual line is 50 and every contractual cost would be 50.01. The guidelines are same for all budgets in New York State. Someone needs to convey this information to the bookkeeper. The department heads do the breakdown. Councilperson Kyle Barnett suggested hiring a consultant to inform us of what is needed to break down the budget.

There was discussion about ordering the supplies. Many hours go into research to obtain the best and lowest prices for the items needed in the Town Hall. The Town Clerk should not have the responsibility of researching computers, printers, etc. The department heads should be responsible for this research.

The budget issue is something else. Something has to be done about the budget. Spread sheets are good but do we have the manpower and time to do this? NYS wants a collapsible budget and they do not want it so detailed. If we detail the budget then we will have to go back and collapse it. Councilperson Freer said we may just need new software. Each department head should be tracking their budget to know how much money they have left in contractual, personnel and equipment.

Supervisor Coutant asked what is the purpose of the detailed information? Councilperson Freer answered, so we can make a budget as to why they need as much money as they do. We need to know precisely where the money is going. The expenses need to be broken down. Supervisor Coutant does not believe it is necessary to micro-manage the budget.

Councilperson VanVliet remembered our accountant Brian Pickard saying there was not enough money in the Port Ewen Water budget and the rates had to be raised. Three months later we discover they did have enough money. Councilperson Freer believes there is a disconnect. We did not know what we had as of January 1st. This time of year we should know exactly what we have for next year. We cannot come up short. Councilperson Barnett would like to have a consultant. Perhaps help can be obtained from the Association of Towns. A sample of Diane's budget can be distributed to the department heads. Councilperson Wayne Freer will contact Harris products to see if there is a program available to detail our budget.

#### **4. Scenic Hudson – Burroughs/Black Creek Corridor**

The Town Board has been invited by Scenic Hudson to a walk/lunch sometime in June or July along with the Environmental Board and other Town leaders. This walk/lunch would be to make Esopus a destination in its own right, such as New Paltz and Gardiner to have publicly accessible water and land trail connecting the Walkway Over the Hudson, the Hudson Valley Rail Trail, Chodikey Lake, the Black Creek State Forest, Burroughs Sauctuary and the Black Creek Preserve to draw folks and their discretionary dollars into Esopus. Branding this corridor – perhaps as the John Burroughs/Black Creek Corridor and creating physical trail links could be some of the elements that would make it a popular destination. Scenic Hudson wants to help Esopus succeed. This letter was from Matt Shipkey, Senior Land Project Manager

#### **5. Assessor Reappointments**

Councilperson Kyle Barnett read the Assessor's monthly report dated June 16<sup>th</sup> into the record:

The Assessment Review Board met on the fourth Tuesday of May. It was a very quiet day. There were nine complaints plus 9 mail-ins. Parts of the Nine Mail-Ins were 87 condos in one.

The Assessor is responsible for producing a Fair & Equitable Tax Roll. The Assessor cannot take into consideration a person's ability or inability to pay taxes. The assessor is to assess property at Full Market Value. Sometimes there is a difference of opinion in what an assessment should be. Then it is the job of the Assessment Review Board to hear both sides, and make a decision. The Assessment Review Board cannot increase the assessment, only reduce. Then there is a Small Claims Assessment Review for people who are not satisfied with the Assessment Review Boards' decision. Corporations and property worth over \$500,000 can apply to the Supreme Court for a decision. These procedures are devised to keep politics out of the Assessment Process. The same goes for the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Review.

I have always tried to keep politics out of the Assessment Process. I am proud to say I have not had a Town Board member pressure me except for once in the Mid Nineteen Nineties.

I am proud of having received the State Award for the last eight years for efforts to provide property owners with Fair and Equitable Assessments.

In accordance with the State Law, the Final Roll will be run July 1, 2013.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel P. Terpening  
Sole Assessor

Councilperson Gloria VanVliet said we should not be involved in the assessment process. At a recent Planning Board Meeting derogatory comments were made about the Assessor. Supervisor Coutant said

there should be no connection between the Planning Board and the Assessor. Councilperson Kyle Barnett said until things are completed by the Planning Board there should be no communication. The Planning Board approves the project and then the Assessor decides on the market value. All vacant property must be coded. The Planning Board cannot code or decide the property is non buildable. There was further discussion on the assessments and how the process works, however, everything is up to the Assessor.

**Appointment of Assessor continues:**

NYS Dept. of Taxation and Finance Office of Real Property Tax Services has informed us our Assessor's term expires September 30, 2013. This is a six-year appointment which will begin Oct. 1, 2013 and end Sept. 30, 2019. The Town Board appoints the assessor to the six-year term.

JoAnna Mignone was appointed in Jan. of 2008 to be the Deputy Assessor. She has been trained and given a salary increase and according to Councilperson Gloria VanVliet she should be our first preference. If you would like applications from others it is up to you. JoAnna has taken the courses and the Councilperson believes you should consider her. Councilperson Wayne Freer said when we embarked on this we wanted to keep the continuity. Councilperson Kyle Barnett was not familiar with JoAnna's work but based upon Councilperson Gloria VanVliet's suggest if everyone is satisfied with JoAnna ,I do not see why we should not appoint her.

Supervisor Coutant stated early last year when Dan Terpening said he would be retiring other people applied for the position. We may come up with a second person for the job. Supervisor Coutant thinks we should advertise and interview the candidates. Councilperson Barnett thinks JoAnna should appear before the Town Board. The Supervisor did not want to go out on the street and say we did not interview for Assessor or Deputy and that is what we talked about doing at the time. Councilperson VanVliet said she did not comment at that time. Councilperson Freer said it was good to see what is out there and it should be a town resident and we could utilize that for the full time and Deputy position. The applicants must have the minimum qualifications. Supervisor Coutant wants to look at the candidates and select a good person for that position. Councilperson VanVliet mentioned we have no job description for this position. An applicant would have to have the same qualifications.

Councilperson Barnett voted to advertise for the position.

**6. City of Kingston – Sewer Treatment Plant (previously discussed with Don Kiernan 2a).**

**7. Port Ewen Housing “The Meadows” – Drainage District**

Port Ewen Housing will require a drainage district and the question arose who would be responsible for this drainage district? Port Ewen Housing will pay to establish the district but they expect the town to provide the maintenance. They need an association to hire someone to do the maintenance. Councilperson Freer said we did not want to take over any new drainage systems. Supervisor Coutant said we will establish the drainage district, however, we are not willing to maintain it.

## **8. Proposed Re-Zoning – Esopus Farms**

A confidential letter has been sent to us by Attorney Paul Kellar in regard to the proposed re-zoning. The Town Board will review this correspondence.

## **9. Hazard Mitigation Plan – Office of Emergency Management**

A letter has been received from Arthur R. Snyder Ulster County Emergency Communications/Emergency Management stating:

- You must have your own FEMA-approved hazard mitigation plan, or be a partner with Ulster County in the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard mitigation plan, municipalities that did not participate before will be able to join us.
- Preference is being given to counties affected by either Irene, Lee or Sandy (we are three for three).
- Risk reduction, enhancing resilience, backup power and early warning systems are being stressed along with traditional mitigation activities.
- Projects are reimbursed at 75% of total cost
- Private individuals and businesses may NOT apply
- Letters of intent are due at NYS OEM by July 5<sup>th</sup>

The Supervisor does not want to put together a mitigation plan and is upset with the situation. Holly Netter, Deputy Clerk, has taken the first class providing NIMS information. She is in Stage One of her training. Until we have a plan in writing they will not give us any money. They will specifically train Town Board's, Supervisors, etc. The fire districts have a plan in place. Councilperson Freer said you cannot count on the county plan to be the town plan. A NIMS class will be hosted in the Town of Esopus for level one and two. Councilperson Freer can also provide the training.

## **10. Applicant for ZBA – Dick Wenzel**

Dick Wenzel served on the ZBA previously and he is interested in the position.

**A Motion to adjourn was made by Councilperson Kyle Barnett and seconded by Councilperson Wayne Freer at 10:02 PM. All Town Board Members present voted in favor. Motion Carried.**

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Diane L. McCord  
Town Clerk, CMC, RMC**