

Town of Covert, Seneca County
Organizational & Regular Town Board Meeting
09 January 2023

The organizational and regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Covert was held Monday, January 9th at 7 PM at the Town of Covert Municipal Building, 8469 South Main Street, Interlaken, New York.

Members Present: Supervisor Michael Reynolds, Councilwoman Deborah Nottke, Councilman Bill Bishop, Councilman Brayton Foster, Councilman Todd Wyckoff.

Others Present: Town Clerk Leslie Adams-Compton, Highway Superintendent Jeffrey MacCheyne, Town Attorney Patrick Morrell, Deputy Town Clerk Brian Quan, Code Enforcement Officer Roger Ward, and other interested citizens.

Call to order: Supervisor Reynolds called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. All rose for the pledge of allegiance.

Organizational Meeting

- 1) That for the year 2023 the Town Board sets 63 cents per mile reimbursement as mileage allowance for personal vehicles used by Town Officers while performing official duties other than attendance at Town Board Meetings or Town Court Proceedings.
- 2) To authorize that Community Bank, N.A., Ovid Branch, be designated the official bank of the Town of Covert and Town Justice Schmidt and the Supervisor be authorized to invest town monies consistent with the requirements of New York State and with appropriate consideration given to elements of safety, liquidity and yield.
- 3) To authorize Highway Superintendent MacCheyne to spend up to \$750.00 per purchase to acquire equipment, tools, and implements and \$1,000.00 for repairs during 2023 without prior approval of the Town Board.
- 4) To designate the Interlaken Review as the official newspaper of the Town of Covert for the year 2023.
- 5) To appoint Jamie Vangalio as Dog Control Officer at the budgeted salary and 63 cents per mile to Beverly Animal Shelter for the year 2023. A \$25.00 per day fee for each dog will be charged to the owner upon redemption of impounded dog from Beverly Animal Shelter.
- 6) To appoint Roger Ward as Code Enforcement Officer at the budgeted salary and 63 cents per mile for the year 2023.
- 7) To appoint John Hunt as cleaner to the Town of Covert Municipal Building, at the wage of \$18.00 per hour for the year 2023.

8) To allow Supervisor Reynolds to file his 2022 annual report with the Town Clerk by the same date and in the same matter as Annual Report is required to be filed with the State Comptroller. Such authorization is allowed by Town Law Section 29 (10a).

9) That the salaries of all elected and appointed officers shall be the amount indicated by the currently effective resolution or the amount budgeted in the 2023 budget. The Highway Superintendent shall set wages of hourly highway employees with concurrence by the Town Board, within the limits of the Highway Budget. Payment of salaries and wages shall be at times and dates that are legally permissible and mutually acceptable to the Supervisor and the recipients.

10) Review the Personnel Policy and Procedures Handbook.

Appointments by Elected Officials

Highway Superintendent MacCheyne appoints Glenn Boyes as Deputy Highway Superintendent for 2023.

Town Clerk Adams-Compton appoints Brian Quan as Deputy Town Clerk, Registrar of Vital Statistics, and Tax Collector. Wage shall be \$21.57 per hour.

Town Justice Schmidt appoints Lucille Smith as Clerk to the Town Justice. Wage shall be \$21.57 per hour.

Supervisor Reynolds makes the following appointments for 2023:

Bookkeeper and Secretary to the Supervisor – Nancy Swartwood

Budget Officer – Michael Reynolds

Deputy Supervisor – Deborah Nottke

Town Assessment Committee – Michael Reynolds and Brayton Foster

Historian for the Town – John Hunt

Highway Committee – Bill Bishop, Chairman and Brayton Foster

Courts, Ordinances & Law Enforcement – Brayton Foster, Chairman and Bill Bishop

Utilities & Insurance – Bill Bishop, Chairman and Deborah Nottke

Personnel – Deborah Nottke, Chairwoman and Todd Wyckoff

Buildings and Grounds – Bill Bishop, Chairman and Todd Wyckoff

Fire and Ambulance – Deborah Nottke, Chairwoman, Todd Wyckoff and Michael Reynolds

Planning and Land Management Ordinance – Brayton Foster, Chairman and Todd Wyckoff

Any appointments which may have been overlooked shall continue to be filled by the incumbent subject to review by the appropriate appointing authority.

Nottke motioned, Wyckoff seconded, to approve the organizational meeting and appointments; all approved.

Regular Town Board Meeting

Approval of Minutes: Nottke motioned, Bishop seconded, to approve the minutes from the year's end meeting, 21 December 2022; all approved.

Highway:

MacCheyne reported of ditching and cutting shoulders on Arden Road, mowing difficult to reach places with the boom mower, plowing and sanding all roads, cold patching on some town roads.

Fallen tree limbs due to the high winds were picked up.

Sand and salt were mixed for winter use. R.O.C was hauled for summer road work. Two 10-wheelers were taken to the County highway department for NYS inspections.

The new 10-wheeler (#3) was serviced; regular maintenance was done on other equipment.

MacCheyne reported on the truck being repaired in Syracuse: they have all the parts on hand; the frame is being repaired, but the engine will not likely be complete until spring.

Town Clerk:

Quan reported the Interlaken Historical Society scheduled a program for Monday, 23 January at 7 PM.

Committees:

Wyckoff distributed a letter and boundary maps from Interlaken Volunteer Fire Department Chief James Borden which proposed changing the fire district border in coordination with Trumansburg Volunteer Fire Company in order to address confusion by dispatchers and firefighters as well as improve response times. Both Chief Borden and Trumansburg Fire Chief Matt Taylor agree the simplification is the best way to proceed.

Morrell spoke about the process to move forward which begins with coordinating with the Town of Ulysses and the Village of Trumansburg. Joint public hearings would need to be scheduled to explain the issue and give people affected an opportunity to support or oppose the change. Morrell added a change would only affect how the tax monies are distributed not change value of the affected properties.

Morrell will get a definite timeline on how these changes will proceed, noting the different fiscal calendar the villages use may determine timing.

Nottke advised a meeting sometime next month with the Parks Commission will involve a discussion about the sale of Camp Barton.

Supervisor:

Reynolds reminded the Town Board of the Audit of the Court's and Town Clerk's books on 16 February at 9 AM. The Supervisor's books, to be confirmed, will be scheduled for 17 February at 5 PM.

Minor changes (FAX number, court hours) were made to the Personnel Policy.

A public hearing for the proposed local law for Property Tax Exemption for Volunteer Firefighters and EMS workers will need to be scheduled. Qualifying for the exemption (ten percent of total assessed value) would require two years of active membership. Foster expressed interest in how many residences would be affected. Morrell spoke about how the proposed exemption would be a similar local law as the two other exemptions the Town law includes: Veterans and People with Disabilities and Limited Income. Morrell will get more details.

A meeting with two assessors, Al Fiorillo and Sandy Hagin, was promising: the two would like to team up to be the replacement when the Tompkins County Department of Assessment contract ends in June. Reynolds advised setting up computer and telephone infrastructure will need to be done.

Reynolds spoke of another candidate from Westchester County expressing interesting the position.

Attorney for the Town:

Morrell spoke about an assessment challenge he recently heard that was mistakenly directed to Tompkins County because of the Shared Services Agreement with Tompkins County Department of Assessment. He has not yet spoken with Director Franklin about the matter.

Morrell met with Seneca County Building Codes Enforcement about the ongoing issues on the lake properties. He noted the inspectors are and have been very involved with the situation; there are no changes to report.

Resolutions:

Nottke motioned, Foster seconded, to approve the Beverly Animal Shelter Agreement; all approved.

Foster motioned, Nottke seconded, to approve the revisions to the Personnel Policy; all approved.

Nottke motioned, Foster seconded, to approve the Interlaken Historical Society's use of the Town Hall on 23 January at 7 PM; all approved.

Nottke motioned, Wyckoff seconded, to schedule a Public Hearing on 13 February at 7 PM for the Property Tax Exemption for Volunteer Firefighters and EMS Workers; all approved.

Nottke motioned, Wyckoff seconded, to approve the Supervisor's Income and Expenditure Report for the month of December 2022; all approved.

Foster motioned, Bishop seconded, to approve the Highway Superintendent's Report for the month of December 2022; all approved.

Nottke motioned, Wyckoff seconded, to approve the Town Clerk's Report for the month of December 2022. The Town Clerk received a total of \$717; \$283.68 was remitted to the Supervisor; all approved.

Nottke motioned, Wyckoff seconded, that Highway Fund Vouchers #1-9, amounting to \$34,996.86, and General Fund Vouchers #1-23, amounting to \$138,697.11, be approved for payment; all approved.

Petitioners to the Board

Richard Westbrook and Barry Ford spoke about increases in assessed value of each of their property. Discussion about how values are determined and grieving the assessment with the Assessors followed.

Nottke motioned, Wyckoff seconded, to adjourn the meeting at 7:39 P.M; all approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Quan
Town of Covert Deputy Town Clerk