

TOWN OF COVERT, SENECA COUNTY
REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING
October 9th, 2023

The regular meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Covert was held Monday, October 9th, 2023 at 7:00 P.M. at the Town of Covert Municipal Building, 8469 South Main Street, Interlaken, New York.

Roll Call:	Supervisor Michael Reynolds	Present
	Councilwoman Deborah Nottke	Present
	Councilman Bill Bishop	Present
	Councilman Brayton Foster	Present
	Councilman Todd Wyckoff	Present

Others Present: Town Clerk Leslie Adams-Compton, Town Attorney Patrick Morrell, Deputy Clerk Brian Quan, and other interested citizens.

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

Approval of Minutes: Nottke moved, seconded by Foster, to approve the minutes from September 11, 2023 with minor edit. Aye - Wyckoff, Aye - Nottke, Aye - Bishop and Aye - Foster.

Presenter: Mark Benjamin of Seneca Meadows shared a self/colleague-authored resolution to support the extension of Seneca Meadows landfill operation through the year 2040. He spoke regarding "myths" perpetuated in New York Times article of September 17th and said he was there to answer questions.

Nottke asked for Benjamin to verify facts: Seneca Meadows receives 6000 tons of trash daily with 1% from Seneca County. Benjamin said that waste comes from New York state, part from Massachusetts and Canada.

Nottke asked if Seneca Meadows is owned by a company in Texas. Benjamin said it is owned by the parent company in Texas, but operated locally, owned by shareholders from all over the world.

Nottke asked if they are prepared for the potential change to NYS waste management laws regarding food waste to be composted.

Nottke asked whether the intent is for the landfill to rise 70' higher. Benjamin said 'yes', their intent is to fill in the existing horseshoe-shaped landfill.

Nottke asked who would be operating equipment on these hills. Benjamin said that the local workforce does the grading.

Nottke asked, when there are two other local landfills, why shouldn't they utilize these other local landfills. Benjamin said they are not owned/operated by the same company, but the other two are at capacity. They each take 2-3 tons per day. Seneca Meadows receives 6000 tons per day.

Foster questioned why the Town should even vote on this, will local government support make a difference, when the DEC issues the permit and makes the rules?

Benjamin said that local support is important to the facility and the people that work there. He said Seneca Meadows is the Top 5 employer in Seneca County, with 100 employees.

Wyckoff was concerned that with the increase in short-term rentals, Seneca County's tourism would decrease with more prisons and dumps. He asked whether the Town gets anything from the operation of Seneca Meadows. Seneca Falls benefits with lower taxes. Many people in the Town of Covert use Casella who use their own landfill.

Foster said that Seneca Falls' taxes will go up if Seneca Meadows closes.

Tony Del Plato, Interlaken Trustee, said they voted unanimously to support the closing of Seneca

**TOWN OF COVERT, SENECA COUNTY
REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING**

October 9th, 2023

Meadows. He pointed out issues such as odors, leaching, and chemicals showing up increasingly. He said that 5 trucks a day are travelling up Rte 96. He said that about 15/mo. are travelling up Main St. past the school. He said that NYS has a waste management program that can create hundreds of jobs. He said that local voices need to be heard. He said that (keeping Seneca Meadows going) doesn't benefit our lives.

Ben Guthrie said Seneca Meadows has said they need 15 more years to operate, but, he said that we will be looking at the pile for the next 500 years. He said that, as the Native Americans say, look at six generations out; we are responsible for them.

Highway Superintendent: MacCheyne reported that they paved a couple sections of Hickok, West Covert and Arden Rd, added material to shoulders on newly paved roads, did ditching on the lower end of E Bates Rd, oiled and stoned (chip-sealed) W Covert Rd (hope for 4-5 years) and cold patched all town roads. They cleaned up a fallen willow tree on Kelly's Corners Rd, helped the Village of Interlaken to mill and pave Mechanic St, they took the 2022 F-550 to Syracuse for rear springs, cleaned the ditch at the stone pile in Covert and did regular maintenance on all equipment.

MacCheyne said they continue to have issues with the Gradall, with no one who knows how to fix it.

He spoke with the DEC about crossover pipes on Rte 96 reporting that part of the pipe is missing.

Hilary Gifford said that some sections of recently paved upper Covert Rd are soft when she walks on it. MacCheyne said maybe it could be rolled.

Wyckoff brought up a concern for the Amish' steel wheels that tear up roads and shorten their life. He pointed out a recently paved and stone chipped road had been quickly deteriorating due to the buggies and steel wheels. MacCheyne said he had spoken with the Amish elders in the past and they have said they will abide by the law. Reynolds said that Seneca County will not impose a law. They said that they have rubber on wheels in Penn Yan, but there are lawsuits deterring progress toward regulating.

Committees: Nottke reported on meetings upcoming with NY Parks Commission; Three Falls LDC will meet on October 12th at 9 AM; there will be an informational meeting for the Public regarding the Camp Barton property on October 25th at 7 PM.

Supervisor: Reynolds said that FEMA/Booth Road bids were dismissed because they hadn't received a guarantee of the FEMA funding yet. MacCheyne said they would be cutting down some of the project, with the Highway department doing some of the work. The project would be re-bid in the future.

MacCheyne has the plans for the South Frontenac culvert project (by the phone co. building). He will order the pipe and the work will be bid out. The engineers estimate it to be a \$130,000 - \$150,000 job. \$100,000 is funded but they should get more from FEMA if the cost goes over.

Reynolds said he was researching companies for the Revaluation of Town of Covert properties. GAR Associates had done a revaluation in 2015. He has received a quote from GAR and will be receiving a proposal from an appraisal company that did a nice job for Seneca Falls, according to Morrell. Al Fiorille reviewed 3 pages of Appraisers; they found that many were not in business anymore. The revaluation will be done all on the computer, for the 2025 tax roll.

Reynolds completed the 2024 Tentative Budget but he said he wasn't happy with it.

**TOWN OF COVERT, SENECA COUNTY
REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING**

October 9th, 2023

Reynolds said that the County may be sharing some of the ARPA(American Rescue Plan) money with the municipalities, but it has not been voted on yet. It would be a one-time payment. He said that ARPA now has less restrictions on it than when it was first made available.

Attorney: Morrell said all three assessment challenges would be scheduled at the beginning of November. There is still a chance for the assessors to negotiate with one of the challenges.

Mayor Richardson shared that the Masonic Lodge would like to have a monthly after school movie or movie night for families in the area. The license fee is \$469 of which he appealed to the Town Board for the Town to pay half the fee to Motion Picture Licensing Corp.

Code Enforcement: Roger Ward said that he had lots of phone calls. He said that the solar farm people proposing a solar farm at Persoon's plan to come to the next month's Town Board meeting.

Petitioners: Dick Westbrook asked if the Town got a new trailer for the excavator. MacCheyne said it was the Town of Ulysses'. When asked about the beaver situation, MacCheyne said they removed a dam, a couple times, he applied for a DEC permit, he spoke with a resident about trapping. Wyckoff said he would be interested in trapping them and would speak with the resident.

Mayor Richardson announced the Parade/Halloween Party on October 28th at the Fire House and that he would be playing at the old Brews + Brats (Cedarwood)afterward.

Nottke announced the Electronics Recycling and Document Shredding at the Seneca County parking lot on October 28th.

Resolutions: Foster moved, seconded by Wyckoff, to schedule Budget Workshops for October 23rd and 30th at 5 PM. Aye-Foster, Aye-Nottke, Aye-Bishop, Aye-Wyckoff.

Nottke moved, seconded by Bishop, to schedule a Public Hearing for the Town of Covert 2024 Budget on November 13th at 7 PM. Aye-Wyckoff, Aye-Nottke, Aye-Bishop, Aye-Foster.

Nottke moved, seconded by Foster, to schedule a Public Hearing for a Tax Cap Override on November 13th at 7 PM. Aye-Wyckoff, Aye-Nottke, Aye-Bishop, Aye-Foster.

Nottke moved, seconded by Foster to pay one half (\$234.50) of the MPLC's movie licensing fee of \$469.00 for regular community movie showings. Aye-Wyckoff, Aye-Nottke, Aye-Bishop, Aye-Foster.

Nottke moved, seconded by Wyckoff, to approve the Supervisor's Income and Expenditure report for the month of September 2023. Aye-Wyckoff, Aye-Nottke, Aye-Bishop, Aye-Foster.

Foster moved, seconded by Nottke, to approve the Highway Superintendent's report for the month of September 2023. Aye-Wyckoff, Aye-Nottke, Aye-Bishop, Aye-Foster.

Nottke moved, seconded by Wyckoff, to approve Town Clerk report for the month of September 2023. Town Clerk received a total of \$3613.00; \$687.33 was remitted to the Supervisor. Aye-Wyckoff, Aye-Nottke, Aye-Bishop, Aye-Foster.

Nottke moved, seconded by Wyckoff, to approve the Code Enforcement report for the month of September 2023. Aye-Wyckoff, Aye-Nottke, Aye-Bishop, Aye-Foster.

**TOWN OF COVERT, SENECA COUNTY
REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING**

October 9th, 2023

Nottke moved, seconded by Wyckoff, that Highway Fund Vouchers #136 - 146 in the amount of \$65,121.71 and General Fund Vouchers #186 - 204 in the amount of \$11,793.29 be approved for payment. Aye-Wyckoff, Aye-Nottke, Aye-Bishop, Aye-Foster.

Nottke moved, seconded by Bishop, to adjourn the meeting at 8:08 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Leslie Adams-Compton, Town Clerk