

TOWN OF CONSTANTIA
MINUTES –TOWN BOARD – March 19, 2024
6:00 pm Constantia Town Hall

Present: Frank Tomaino - Supervisor
Ronald Chapman, Michael Donegan, Thomas Moran, Daniel Poné – Council Members
Clare Haynes – Town Clerk
Wayne Woolridge – Highway Superintendent
Wendy Lougnot – Representing the Town in Mr. Bader-Town Attorney’s absence
Erin Zehr – Park and Recreation Commissioner
Bill Buchan and John Mura – Sewer Advisory Board
Dustin Clark – Barton & Loguidice
Heidi Thompkins – Tug Hill Commission

CALL TO ORDER:

At 6:00 pm Mr. Tomaino called the town board meeting to order with the pledge of allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

WATER/WASTEWATER:

Constantia North Shore Sewer Project

- A. Design Progress
 - Design paused in early 2023 due to project affordability. Design currently at approximately 60% complete.
- B. Current Funding
 - Project Cost (last updated 2023) - \$62,950,000
 - Project Funding:
 - ✓ NYSEFC 2019 WIIA Grant - \$5M
 - ✓ NYSEFC Hardship Loan - \$25M
 - ✓ NYSDEC WQIP Grant - \$4.6M
 - ✓ USDA RD Grant - \$3.015M
 - ✓ USDA RD Loan - \$11M
 - ✓ US Congressional Grant - \$1.75M ***NEW***
 - Affordability gap remains. The current user cost with no additional grant > \$1,600/year.
 - Approximately \$23M in additional grant is needed to bring user cost back to below \$1,000/year.
- C. New Funding Opportunities
 - NBRC grant – Previously submitted Grant applications unsuccessful. Pre-application for 2024 round due 3/22 for up to \$3M
 - NYSEFC WIIA – Under new WIIA guidelines, project could be eligible for up to 25% of net project costs (project cost less any non-EFC grants) up to \$25M. Current grant would have to be “collapsed” in order to be eligible. Town would have to take out a Bond Anticipation Note (BAN) to pay-back the ~\$2.5M in project costs that have been covered by the current WIIA and reapply by June 14th.
 - NYSEFC Enhanced WIIA – Eligible communities can receive up to 50% of net project costs up to \$25M!

Eligibility for enhanced WIIA is <3,500 population, and either hardship criteria is met or user charge exceeds 1.5% of Median Household Income. Per 2019 Income Survey, the service area Median Household Income (MHI) is \$46,750. 1.5% of MHI is \$701.25.

- D. Next Steps
 - 3/19 – REGULAR BOARD MEETING:
 - ✓ Resolution authorizing to close current EFC financing, to return current WIIA grant funding and reapply for an enhanced WIIA grant for the town of Constantia sewer district no. 1
 - 4/2 – SUPERVISORS MEETING:
 - ✓ No action scheduled can be used if needed
 - 4/16 – REGULAR BOARD MEETING:
 - ✓ Schedule public hearing for May regular meeting to increase maximum amount to be expended
 - 5/7 – SUPERVISORS MEETING:
 - ✓ No action scheduled can be used if needed
 - 5/21 – REGULAR BOARD MEETING:
 - ✓ Hold Public Hearing
 - ✓ Pass District Formation Amendment subject to comptroller approval
 - ✓ Pass ersatz bond resolution with borrowing subject to comptroller approval, and by default secure grant (no approval will be given from OSC without WIIA grant secured)
 - 6/14 – IUP Listing and WIIA Grant Deadline:
 - ✓ B&L to submit WIIA grant application with revised report, formation and bond resolution documents

Sewer Project Summary: The Northshore Sewer Project has been awarded over \$50M in State and Federal grants and low interest loans to date. The estimated project cost however has escalated from \$39M in 2018 to over \$62M in 2023. The lack of funding has created a significant affordability gap that the Town has attempted to close with several grant applications over recent years to various state and federal funding agencies. NYS has significantly bolstered funding programs to account for inflation however in order to qualify for these bolstered programs, the Town will have to “collapse” the existing grant and loan funding. NYS has provided guidance on how to collapse the existing funding and apply under new grant thresholds in 2024! This is exciting news for the project and provides a very attainable path towards delivering the project affordably to the Sewer District residents.

With this new plan, the Town will apply for financing throughout this year. Should the project be successful in the 2024 grant cycle, the Town could re-start design in 2025 and start construction as early as 2026. Announcements for funding recipients is expected around the end of 2024.

As a recap to the report, the newest grant received was the US Congressional Grant for \$1.75M. This is good news, but there is still an affordability gap. Mr. Tomaino and Mr. Clark were on a conference call with NYSEFC, their idea as explained above was to collapse this portion of the funding. NYSEFC is the major funding organization, they understand what this district is up against, without their support the Town would not want to go forward with this idea. By doing this, the District will be able to re-apply for the next round of grants, these grants offer significantly higher funding opportunities. Mr. Tomaino was happy that the EFC wanted to work with the Town.

With no more discussion the following was offered:

At a Regular Meeting of the Town of Constantia Town Board, Oswego County, New York, held at the Town Hall, located at 14 Frederick Street, Constantia, New York on March 19, 2024 at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting was called to order by the Supervisor, and upon roll being called, there were:

PRESENT:	Frank Tomaino	Supervisor
	Daniel Pone	Councilor
	Ron Chapman	Councilor
	Tom Moran	Councilor
	Michael Donegan II	Councilor

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING TO CLOSE CURRENT EFC FINANCING, TO
RETURN CURRENT WIIA GRANT FUNDING AND REAPPLY FOR AN
ENHANCED WIIA GRANT FOR THE TOWN OF
CONSTANTIA SEWER DISTRICT NO. 1
("Constantia Bernhards Bay Sewer District")**

Councilor Chapman moved and Councilor Moran seconded the following resolution:

WHEREAS, in 2019 the Town Board of the Town of Constantia previously adopted a Resolution and Order to Approve the Formation of the Town of Constantia Sewer District No. 1 Pursuant to Article 12-A of the Town Law; and

WHEREAS, the Resolution and Order determined that the establishment of the Sewer District, as set forth in said Map, Plan and Report, be approved and constructed at a cost not to exceed a total of Thirty Nine Million Fifteen Thousand and 00/100 (\$39,015,000.00) Dollars; and

WHEREAS, following the establishment of the Sewer District the Town of Constantia has undertaken additional steps to move the project forward including securing necessary grants and financing through the New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation (“NYSEFC”), the United States Department of Agriculture – Rural Development (“USDA-RD”) and other funding sources; and

WHEREAS, among other financial awards, in December 2019, the Town of Constantia received a WIIA grant through NYSEFC in the amount of \$5,000,000.00; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Constantia was able to draw on up to 50% of the above described WIIA grant in order to pay for the cost associated with the formation and design of the Sewer District; and

WHEREAS, since the time the Sewer District was formed and the WIIA grant was awarded, the estimated cost of construction of the improvements within the Sewer District has significantly increase due to unforeseen and unprecedented global events including the COVID-19 pandemic, supply chain disruptions and inflationary pressures; and

WHEREAS, the current estimated project cost is Sixty-Two Million Nine Hundred Fifty Thousand and 00/100 (\$62,950,000.00) Dollars; and

WHEREAS, as a result of the increase in the maximum estimated project cost the Town of Constantia has experienced a gap in the total project cost and the available grant funding and loan financing awarded to the project necessary to finalize the design, bid, and complete construction of the Sewer District improvements; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Constantia continues to seek additional public sources of funding and financing for the project; and

WHEREAS, one available source of funding for the project is a grant through NYSEFC known as “Enhanced WIIA” which would potentially allow for the project to receive a grant award equal to 50% of the net project cost (project cost minus non-NYSEFC grants); and

WHEREAS, in order to apply for the Enhanced WIIA grant it is necessary for the Town of Constantia to “collapse” the existing short-term financing with NYSEFC, return the WIIA grant that was awarded to the project in 2019 and reimburse the WIIA grant dollars which have been disbursed to the Town.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, ORDERED AND DETERMINED that in order to further advance the project it is necessary and in the best interest of the project for the Town to apply for the Enhanced WIIA program given the amount of financing and grants currently secured for the project and the additional funding needed to proceed with construction of the Sewer District; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, ORDERED AND DETERMINED that the Town of Constantia shall direct and take the steps necessary to “collapse” the existing short-term financing with NYSEFC, return the WIIA grant dollars that were awarded to the project in 2019 and reimburse the WIIA grant dollars which have been disbursed to the Town; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, ORDERED AND DETERMINED that the Town Supervisor of the Town of Constantia is hereby authorized to take any and all necessary steps to sign and execute all necessary documentation and take such other and further actions in order to effectuate the Town’s Enhanced WIIA grant application.

The question of the adoption of the foregoing resolution was duly put to a vote and upon roll call, the vote was as follows:

Frank Tomaino	Supervisor	Yes
Daniel Pone	Councilor	Yes
Ron Chapman	Councilor	Yes
Tom Moran	Councilor	Yes
Michael Donegan II	Councilor	Yes

The foregoing resolution was thereupon declared duly adopted.

DATED: March 19, 2024

SEWER ADVISORY BOARD:

1. The sewer committee met twice: March 7 & 14, 2024. Next meeting April 4.
2. Communications strategy to inform residents being developed to foster local support and citizen engagement.
3. Lobbying effort commenced; letters issued to all NYS and Federal representatives.
4. O&M review underway. Discussions concerning value engineering for collection system ongoing.
5. Two O&M focused meetings with Village team and pump suppliers were productive.
6. Tug Hill Commission contacts recommended Northern Border Regional Commission grant applications. B&L pursuing preregistration for grant for town.
7. Mr. Mura and Mr. Buchan appeared at Town Board meeting 3-19-24 to update Board.

VOUCHERS:

Mr. Poné made the motion to accept the following vouchers as listed on Abstract #3 Dated March 20, 2024:

General:	82-121	\$510,005.29	Sewer:	4-5	\$ 3,755.00
Highway:	30-44	\$ 92,216.23	B-Bay Water:	2-4	\$43,114.64
Trust and Agency:	3	\$ 14,464.15	NS Water:	3	\$ 7,615.31

Seconded by Mr. Donegan.

Carried: Moran – Yes Chapman – Yes Poné – Yes Donegan – Yes Tomaino – Yes

SUPERVISOR:

Mr. Moran made the motion to approve the supervisor’s report dated February 29, 2024 seconded by Mr. Chapman.

Carried: Moran – Yes Chapman – Yes Poné – Yes Donegan – Yes Tomaino – Yes

MINUTES:

Mr. Donegan made the motion to approve the minutes of the February 20th special meeting, February 20th town board meeting and the March 5th supervisor’s meeting, seconded by Mr. Poné.

Carried: Moran – Yes Chapman – Yes Poné – Yes Donegan – Yes Tomaino – Yes

APPROVAL OF DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Mr. Chapman made the motion to accept the following reports as received for February, seconded by Mr. Moran.

- a. Justice Pelon and Justice Simpson
- b. Town Clerk/Tax Collector

Carried: Moran – Yes Chapman – Yes Poné – Yes Donegan – Yes Tomaino – Yes

PARK AND RECREATION:

Ms. Zehr reported:

- Setting up lifeguard courses
- Sending letters to past park employees for rehires
- Reached out to some food truck vendors for July fireworks show

Mr. Moran asked if Mrs. Zehr was aware that Mrs. Shineman had passed away, Mrs. Zehr is aware. Mrs. Zehr replied that she has worked with the new person in charge of our area. There are new grant opportunities open for \$2,500-\$7,500 Mrs. Zehr would like to apply for some handicap playground equipment. More news to follow.

HIGHWAY:

Mr. Woolridge reported:

- Letter from County approving the reduced tipping fees for dumpster days May 3-5th. Brand Trucking will be at the town hall, Bliss at the highway garage.
- Highway employee and Hometown Hero's ads were placed in both Queen Central and Citizen Outlet
- Mr. Randall Cottet and Mr. Michael Whitney have both expressed interest in returning for summer employment starting April 1st. Will start working 4 - 10's at the same time.
- Will start ditching soon
- All board members signed the Agreement to Spend Highway Funds and Mr. Tomaino signed the Mowing Agreement as required by the County.
- Materials were purchased to build new picnic tables for the park.
- Discussion on the purchase of a new mower for the park and a pull behind equipment trailer which will be pulled by a town truck.

With no further discussion, Mr. Chapman made the motion to authorize Mr. Woolridge to purchase a 2024 72" Ferris mower for no more than \$9,000 from White's Farm Equipment to be charged to A7110.2 Park Eq (Cap Improvement) and a 18' trailer for no more that \$10,000. charged to DB5130.2 Machinery Eq., seconded by Mr. Moran.

Carried: Moran – Yes Chapman – Yes Poné – Yes Donegan – Yes Tomaino – Yes

Mr. Woolridge would also like authorization to advertise on Auction's International the rubber tire tractor, the old roadside mower and the chipper. There might also be a few other little items, but these are the biggest. Mr. Donegan made the motion to authorize Mr. Woolridge to advertise to sell the mentioned equipment, seconded by Mr. Poné.

Carried: Moran – Yes Chapman – Yes Poné – Yes Donegan – Yes Tomaino – Yes

Mr. Chapman asked about leaf pickup, Mr. Woolridge responded they will do pickup if there is enough request..

A resident asked about the bridge on County Route 23 over Scriba Creek, how long it will be closed. Mr. Woolridge stated that by contract it must be done by October, but he expects it will be done before that.

TUG HILL COMMISSION:

Ms. Tompkins reported:

- Paul Baxter is at the SEQR meeting in Clay tonight pertaining to the Micron project, and he has requested that Heidi cover tonight's Constantia town board meeting.
- The deadline is approaching for the regular registration rate for the **2024 Tug Hill Local Government Conference**, scheduled for May 1 – 2 at Turning Stone Casino. **The regular rate applies to those registered online or postmarked by April 1, 2024.** Rates increase starting April 2. The form is available on the Tug Hill website at <https://tughill.org/local-government-conference-registration> , Descriptions in detail of program offerings are available at: <https://tughill.org/local-government-conference-presentations/>
- The **Route 49 corridor study proposal** has been adopted as an element of the Syracuse Metropolitan Transportation Council's 2024-25 workplan. The study is slated to begin in the first quarter of the state fiscal year 2024-2025, with a final document in the second quarter of state fiscal year 2025-2026. Tug Hill Times article with more details is attached.
- Planning is in progress for the next **North Shore Council of Governments meeting**, tentatively scheduled for this **Thursday, March 21**, at 7:00 p.m., at the West Monroe town hall. Agenda items include the conclusion of the North Shore economic study, and next steps/follow-up.
- The public forum for the **Oneida Lake 9E watershed plan** was held **Thursday, March 7** at the West Monroe town hall.
- We're coming up on the release date of the Tug Hill Commission's annual report, **Headwaters**, and I'd like to thank town clerk Clare Haynes for reviewing and updating town information so that this can reach everyone.

CORRESPONDENCE:

- a. After the February town board meeting at the request of a resident, Mr. Tomaino reached out to NYS for a crosswalk across State Route 49 in the area of Circle K. Mr. Tomaino received a letter notifying the Town NYS DOT will be out to inspect the area.
- b. Letter from NYS Courts the Justice Audit is due.

PLANNING BOARD:

December 20, 2023, January 23rd, and February 27th minutes received.

ZONING COMMISSION:

January 23rd and February 27th minutes received.

BOARD INITIATIVES AND COMMENT:

Dumpsters will be offered once again the first weekend from May 3rd to the 5th at both the highway garage and the town hall.

Due to the Presential Primary on April 2, 2024 the monthly supervisor's meeting will need to be cancelled. Mr. Tomaino will wait to reschedule if a meeting is needed.

Mr. Tomaino now has two bids for proposals for services at 1667 State Route 49, C2AE Architects sent in a bid for the first phase of the remodel for conceptual drawings: \$13,500. Mr. Tomaino met with Rod VanDerWater from RAV Architect, Mr. VanDerWater sent in a quote \$12,900. The major difference between both companies is that RAV once the first phase is completed will work on an hourly basis when needed. C2AE is requiring another agreement to be signed after phase one, they indicated the entire project will be around \$80,000. Mr. Tomaino has reached out to five other companies and with no response Mr. Tomaino would like to move forward. With no further discussion, Mr. Moran made the motion to authorize Supervisor Tomaino to sign the agreement with RAV for \$12,900.00, seconded by Mr. Chapman.

Carried: Moran – Yes Chapman – Yes Poné – Yes Donegan – Yes Tomaino – Yes

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

ADJOURN:

At 7:17pm Mr. Donegan made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Poné.

Carried: Moran – Yes Chapman – Yes Poné – Yes Donegan – Yes Tomaino – Yes