

TOWN OF CONSTANTIA
MINUTES –TOWN BOARD MEETING– January 21, 2025
6:00 pm Constantia Town Hall

Present: Frank Tomaino - Supervisor
Ronald Chapman, Michael Donegan, Thomas Moran, Daniel Poné, – Council Members
Clare Haynes – Town Clerk
Wendy Loughnot – Representing the Town in Mr. Bader-Town Attorney’s absence
Roy Reehil – County Legislator
Bill Buchan, John Mura – Sewer Advisory Board
Erin Zehr – Park and Recreation Commission Chair
Heidi Tompkins – Tug Hill Commission

Absent: Wayne Woolridge - Highway Superintendent

CALL TO ORDER:

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

Mr. Tomaino would like to take this opportunity to present a plaque to recently retired Honorable Justice Stephen T. Pelon. Judge Pelon left the bench after 18 years of dedicated service to the town of Constantia.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None

WASTEWATER:

Mr. Tomaino spoke with Mr. Clark from Barton & Loguidice, he will not be coming to the meeting tonight due to inclement weather. Mr. Clark is requesting a special meeting to approve a resolution for a public hearing to be held on the PER (preliminary engineering report). The board agreed to hold a special meeting on February 4th at 9am. This will give the board members ample opportunity to review the PER.

SEWER ADVISORY BOARD:

The sewer committee met at 5pm today to continue moving forward. The committee was surprised to learn that the SOCRIS (Southern Oswego County Regional Interceptor Sewer) projected cost will be in the \$90M range. This is about the same as if the Town would build their own treatment plant. The committee still believes the SOCRIS concept is the way to go, as there should be greater grant possibilities and other municipalities along the way might be willing to join in the project which will in turn drive down the user cost. Mr. Buchan will be a guest speaker at the next NorCOG Meeting on January 23rd in West Monroe.

PARK AND RECREATION:

Mrs. Zehr discussed the possibility of applying for a grant for a splash pad at the David C. Webb Park at Taft Bay. There is a grant that is being offered but the Town would need to pay for the installation and receive the money back in stages. This grant is the best out there because it is 100% refundable. Mr. Tomaino does not believe the budget could handle that in 2025 this will need to be discussed for the 2026 budget.

TUG HILL COMMISSION:

Ms. Tompkin gave the following report:

- **Registration** for our 34th annual Tug Hill Local Government Conference (LGC) is now open, and flyers are in the mail. The full day of sessions will be on Tuesday, April 1, 2025, at Turning Stone Conference Center in Verona.
- **REMINDER:** The federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) published a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) related to its [emergency response standard](#) for fire brigades earlier this year. An informal public hearing was held November 12, 2024, through December 4, 2024 and OSHA is currently accepting post hearing comments. Post hearing comments can be submitted through January 17, 2025.
- The Association of Towns Annual Meeting and Training School has been scheduled for February 16-19th, 2025 at the New York Marriott Marquis in New York City.
- The NYS Department of State, Division of Local Government Services announced the 2024-25 round of Local Government Efficiency Grants. The Local Government Efficiency (LGE) Grant program is provided to municipalities as a funding opportunity to expand or develop new local service delivery initiatives that will reduce the cost of current or future municipal operations and incorporate enhanced technologies and processes to modernize the delivery of local services.
- NYS DEC has announced proposed changes to the regulations for Real Property Tax Law Section 480a, also known as the Forest Tax Law. The comprehensive overhaul of the 50-year-old regulations aims to lessen the administrative burdens on participating forest landowners while maintaining and improving sustainable timber management on enrolled lands. DEC is holding two virtual public comment hearings on the proposed changes on Jan. 21, 2025, at 2 and 6 p.m. and you can find the links to register for the public comment sessions on the [DEC’s 480a webpage](#). They are also accepting public comments through Jan. 27, 2025 and you can submit comments by writing to: NYSDEC Private Lands and Forest Utilization Section, Bureau of Forest Resource Management 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-7254 or by email

to bslmregs@dec.ny.gov. The current revisions are made only to the DEC’s regulations for the program and have no impact on the bill language, so no change is made to the program’s percentage of tax exemption, number of acres to enroll or municipal reimbursement for the program’s impacts.

- **Quick Reference Cards-** Tug Hill staff receive dozens of technical assistance requests each month, and the requests often follow similar themes. Many years ago, staff developed two double-sided quick reference cards based on commonly asked questions: executive session guidelines and notification of meeting guidelines; and area variance criteria and use variance criteria. Staff recently worked on developing five additional quick reference cards, pictured below and available from your circuit riders! We hope these will help local officials as they serve their communities. As always, please consult with your municipal attorney for additional information and for situation-specific advice. Heidi and Paul will be handing out this month.
 - Quorum/Abstention and Recusal
 - Motions/Resolutions
 - Public Meetings/Public Hearings
 - Town and Village Site Plan Review and Special Use Application Checklist/County Review Criteria
 - Permissive Referendum/Mandatory Referendum
- **SRCG Business:**
 - SRCG Meeting – January 22nd, 2025 at 2:00pm at the Altmar-Albion Municipal building (15 Bridge St. Altmar, NY 13302).
 - IMA, Bylaws & Budget – In progress, to be discussed/adopted at the next meeting
 - Representatives – Please let Heidi know at Heidi@TugHill.org if there are changes to SRCG Representatives

VOUCHERS:

Mr. Poné made the motion to accept the following vouchers as listed on Abstract #1 Dated January 21, 2025:

| | | | | | |
|------------------|------|-------------|----------|-----|-------------|
| ▪ General | 1-35 | \$25,978.15 | Sewer | 1-2 | \$ 5,099.00 |
| ▪ Highway | 1-11 | \$11,381.03 | NS Water | 1 | \$17,919.47 |
| ▪ Trust & Agency | 1 | \$17,154.18 | BB Water | 1 | \$ 7,762.44 |

Seconded by Mr. Moran.

Carried: Ayes: Chapman, Donegan, Moran, Poné, Tomaino

SUPERVISOR:

Mr. Moran read the following into the minutes:

Referring to general fund budget transfer sheet #4 for December 2024, the following accounts are over budget:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| A5182.4 Street Lighting CE | \$1,504.27 |
| A9030.81 Emp Ben Soc Sec | \$1,506.16 |
| A9030.82 Emp Ben Medicare | \$ 352.24 |
| A9060.8 Emp Ben Medical Insurance | <u>\$2,218.76</u> |
| Total Over Budget: | \$5,581.43 |

I therefore make a motion to address this over budget condition by transferring \$5,581.43 from Contingency Account A1990.4 to the aforementioned accounts, leaving a balance of \$8,369.16 in Contingency.

Continuing my motion and referring to highway fund budget transfer sheet #2 for December 2024, accounts over budget are:

| | |
|----------------------------|------------------|
| DB9030.81 Emp Ben Soc Sec | \$2,280.28 |
| DB9030.82 Emp Ben Medicare | <u>\$ 429.39</u> |
| Total Over Budget: | \$2,709.67 |

I move that we address this deficiency by transferring \$2,709.67 from account DB9950.9 Cap Reserve to the above accounts, leaving \$65,374.78 in Cap Reserve. Motion seconded by Mr. Chapman.

Carried: Ayes: Chapman, Donegan, Moran, Poné, Tomaino

Mr. Moran commented on the amount of sales tax that was sent down from the County to the Town. \$296,000 for 2024. This is a considerable amount. Mr. Moran then made the motion to approve the supervisor’s report dated December 31, 2024, seconded by Mr. Donegan.

Carried: Ayes: Chapman, Donegan, Moran, Poné, Tomaino

MINUTES:

Mr. Moran made the motion to approve the minutes of the December 17th town board and the January 2nd organizational meeting, seconded by Mr. Poné.

Carried: Ayes: Chapman, Donegan, Moran, Poné, Tomaino

APPROVAL OF DEPARTMENT REPORTS:

Mr. Donegan made the motion to accept the following reports as received:

Justice Pelon, Justice Simpson, Town Clerk, Tax Warrant, Tax Collector, Code Enforcement
seconded by Mr. Poné.

Carried: Ayes: Chapman, Donegan, Moran, Poné, Tomaino

BOARD MINUTES RECEIVED:

Board of Appeals – minutes December 18th

COUNTY LEGISLATOR:

Mr. Reehil added to Mr. Moran’s comment about sales tax, he believes that now when ordering online consumers are required to pay sales tax, this has significantly helped.

Discussion on equalization rate as mentioned at last month’s meeting, Mr. Tomaino did have a conversation with Mr. Wheeler, Assessor today. Mr. Wheeler compared two bills, one from West Monroe and one from Constantia, the Constantia resident pays approximately \$100 less than West Monroe. It is not a perfect system, but it is very costly to do a re-validation. Mr. Wheeler is a wealth of knowledge and Mr. Tomaino encouraged Mr. Reehil or anyone that has questions to call him directly.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

North Shore Vintage Snowmobile Club will be at the warming shack on Cook Road this Saturday, everyone is invited to attend.

The Cleveland Historical Society will be having a spaghetti supper also on Saturday starting at 4pm.

ADJOURN:

At 6:38 pm Mr. Donegan made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Poné.

Carried: Ayes: Chapman, Donegan, Moran, Poné, Tomaino

Respectfully submitted:

Clare Haynes
Town Clerk