

REGULAR MEETING

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Parish Town Board held March 17th, 2011 at the Village Gym. The meeting was called to order by Councilor Phillips at 7:05 pm.

Present: Stephen Stelmashuck, Supervisor-7:15 p.m.
Doug Jordan, Councilor
John Dunham, Councilor
Mary Lou Guindon, Councilor
Mary Ann Phillips, Councilor
Kelly Reader, Town Clerk

Also Present: Belden Dawley, Hwy Sup't; Denise Sigourney, Assessor; L.J. Harvey, Fire Chief, Lynn Wood, Gary Wood, Jack Rucynski, Ron Horning, Raymond Smith, Amber McAulsan, Jeff McAuslan, Krista Alsworth, Doug Houghton, Trustee; Eric Shaver, Rex Rowe, Diana Rowe, Kitty Horning, John Horning, David Fadden, Diane Spaziani, Mike Spaziani, Bernice Caruso, Joe LaForce, Dale Chapman, Mary Anne Pelkey, and Richard Palmer.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

February Regular Meeting: A motion was made by Councilor Jordan, seconded by Councilor Phillips to approve the Minutes of the February Regular Meeting as received. Roll taken...motion carried.

February Joint Meeting: A motion was made by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Jordan to approve the Minutes of the February Joint Minutes as received with the correction that under present should read Mary Ann Phillips, Councilor instead of Mary Anne Pelkey. Roll taken...motion carried.

SUPERVISOR'S REPORTS:

Supervisor's Financial Report: The Supervisor's Financial Report was received by the Board and filed with the Clerk.

April Calendar: Waived.

Revenue Reports: Regular Financial Reports and Justice Revenue Reports were received by the Board and filed with the Clerk.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Community Affairs, Parks, Preservation and Recreation Committee: Councilor Guindon stated that they are working on a Town Newsletter and the committee encourages letters of support be sent to bring New Visions Services to Parish.

Emergency Service and Public Safety Committee: Councilor Dunham stated that he met with the Director of McFee Ambulance and they worked out a plan to allow for the Ambulance Contract to run compatible with the Town's fiscal budget year, January-December.

Financial Affairs: Councilor Phillips reported that she met with the Auditor from the Comptroller's Office. The Auditor stated that it was law that the Town should receive copies of front and back of cancelled checks from the bank. Councilor Phillips met with the bank to request the copies of the checks as recommended by the Auditor. Also, she and Deputy Supervisor Swartz have been reconciling the checking accounts each month. Once we get cancelled checks they will only review them quarterly. We have not received a report from the Auditor at this time.

General Gov't Committee: No Report.

Infrastructure Policy and Public Facilities Committee: Councilor Jordan stated that he had no report at this time.

Task Force: The February Minutes were submitted for review.

Water Committee: No updated news.

REPORTS:

Legislator's Report: Supervisor Stelmashuck reviewed a report from Legislator Leemann on the County's Financial Report. The sales tax is above projection. The bad news for the county is that due to the state's cost shifting decisions, the county will be asked to absorb around 4 million dollars.

Highway Sup't Report: Hwy Sup't Dawley stated that the weather has been pretty mild which allows time for patching holes, putting signs up posting roads for weight limits, and repairing mailboxes. Hwy Sup't Dawley stated that he has also been monitoring flood areas.

Clerk's Report: Clerk Reader submitted the February Clerk's Report and the Dog License Report.

Assessor's Report: Assessor Sigourney stated that she is finishing up with appointments regarding the Impact Notices on Saturday. She will also be sitting with the roll in May. The Tentative Roll comes out on May 1st.

Discussion was held regarding the reval appointments. Many expressed concerns regarding availability when trying to contact the Assessor. The phone number that was given in the Impact Notices to discuss assessments no longer is in service. Assessor Sigourney stated her contact number is the Assessor's Office number which is 625-4669. Also, her office hours are Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Mr. Rucynski asked what the estimated valuation of the Town was before and after the reval.

Assessor Sigourney responded before that before the reval it was roughly 75 million and after the reval it was roughly 124 million.

Councilor Phillips suggested that anyone that did not get an appointment with the Assessor to write their name and phone number down and she asked Assessor Sigourney if she would contact them to set up an appointment.

Assessor Sigourney explained that the State has rules and regulations that she must follow but she does not necessarily agree with.

A website will also be available posting information giving dates and times regarding the reval status and the Grievance Process.

CEO Report: No report available at this time, tabled.

Dog Control Report: No report available at this time, tabled.

Fire Chief's Report: Fire Chief Harvey gave the Fire Report for February 2011. The calls year to date are up from last year.

Tug Hill Circuit Rider Report: Paul Baxter, Tug Hill Circuit Rider stated that the Tug Hill Government Conference is coming up on March 31st at JCC in Watertown. The registrations received reflect that the conference will be well attended. Also, the Town and Village of Parish will be well represented by the registrations received.

Paul had a draft resolution for the Town to consider requesting that the State DOT move the State Rt. 69 Road Project date up and begin construction sooner than scheduled.

The future of Tug Hill Commission still remains uncertain.

The State Budget is still being worked on and the budget is projected to be completed on time.

CORRESPONDENCE, COMMUNICATIONS, AND PETITIONS:

None.

OLD BUSINESS:

Audit by the Comptroller's Office: Supervisor Stelmashuck stated that he has not heard any news at this time regarding the audit analysis. A report should be received by the latest sometime around the 1st of May.

Supervisor's Report Continued:

Supervisor Stelmashuck reported that the Justice Court received a grant to help provide Town and Village Courts with the resources and equipment necessary to fulfill their critical role in the justice system. The total amount of the grant is \$12,675.00. The grant is divided between 3 item categories.

The Village will be making improvements on the stairs to the second floor. During the renovation period entrance will be through the back stairwell until the project is completed. Also, the ceiling will be replaced in the meeting room.

New Visions: Councilor Guindon reported that over 500 residents have expressed interest in the New Visions Service, but we still have not heard from Mr. Branca.

2010 Audit by Frank J. Basile: Discussion was held regarding contracting with Frank J. Basile Accounting Firm to conduct a 2010 Audit for the Town of Parish. The state strongly recommends that a yearly audit be conducted on Town Official's books. The total amount paid to Frank J. Basile for auditing services provided over the past two years is \$70,224.80. More discussion regarding authorizing funds for the 2010 Audit will be held at the workshop on March 24th, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

Possible Town Credit Card: Councilor Phillips will work on a possible Town Credit Card Policy for the Town to consider.

NEW BUSINESS:

Workshop Reminder: March 24th, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.

Dean Smith Allure Visual Ensemble Request: Tabled.

Association of Towns Report: Councilor Phillips stated that it was a good conference and well worth attending.

Discussion was held regarding options for Self Health Insurance for the Town of Parish.

All resolutions passed.

Supervisor Stelmashuck thanked Councilor Phillips for attending the conference on behalf of the Town.

Resolution on the Reconstruction on State Rt. 69 Road Project: The Village has passed the resolution at their Regular Meeting on March 16th, 2011.

A motion was made by Supervisor Stelmashuck, seconded by Councilor Phillips to pass a resolution requesting the DOT to move the St. Rt. 69 Road Project date up. Roll taken...

Councilor Guindon: Aye Councilor Dunham: Aye Supervisor Stelmashuck: Aye

Councilor Phillips: Aye Councilor Jordan: Aye

motion carried.

Proper Procedures for Calling Extra Ordinary Board Meeting and Going into Executive Session: Review and discussion will be at the workshop on March 24, 2011.

OTHER:

Supervisor Stelmashuck stated that he would like to congratulate Mayor Heagle and Trustees Lewis and Allardice for their recent re-election.

Elementary Re-use Grant Status: Supervisor Stelmashuck stated that Fairweather Consulting was selected by the Selection Committee. An overall timeline and discussion of the scope of the project was presented by Mr. Fairweather at the March Joint Meeting.

Approval for Agreement to Spend Town Highway Funds: A motion was made by Councilor Phillips, seconded by Councilor Jordan to approve to sign the agreement with the County to spend \$95,000 for General Highway Repairs in the Town of Parish. Roll taken...motion carried.

Highway Contract: Discussion was held regarding officially approving the Highway Contract. Councilor Phillips stated that there are still typing errors in the contract. More discussion will be held in Executive Session.

MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:

John Rucynski read a letter regarding Assessors and tax rates. The Town of Parish's tax rates are currently the highest in the county. Mr. Rucynski asked what is going to happen in the future if taxes keep going up and what are we getting for our taxes. Mr. Rucynski stated that he would like to know what the town's tax rate will be for 2012 as soon as possible.

Mary Anne Pelkey spoke in regards to statements that the Board had made on the advantages of a Sole Assessor versus Elected Assessors. Also, the need for a reval. Ms. Pelkey stated that she hopes the Board's statements are factual and the decisions that were made help the taxpayers and doesn't hurt them.

Dick Palmer stated that there should be more opportunities for education on the reval process. The Senior Citizens are scared that they won't be able to pay their taxes. Mr. Palmer feels that the Assessor should be available to answer questions on the reval and exemptions as he does not feel that it was the Town Clerk's Job to take care of assessing issues.

Mary Anne Pelkey asked why the town needs a credit card.

Councilor Phillips responded that she does not feel that it's fair to use personal credit cards and then wait for reimbursement.

Mary Anne Pelkey stated that she thought the Town should be careful when considering a Town Credit Card.

Credit Card Fees and policies were discussed.

Fire Chief Harvey stated that they were going to have the Fire Station open to provide an opportunity for the public to see what is required to become a volunteer on April 9-10, 10 am to 2 pm.

Also, the Fire Company will hold Rural Water Supply Training at the end of April.

MEETING CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC.

APPROVAL OF BILLS:

General Fund: A motion was made by Supervisor Stelmashuck, seconded by Councilor Phillips to approve the claims to the General Fund, those being claims #86 to #128 for a total warrant of \$13,131.25.

Discussion: Discussion was held on paying tax on phone bills. Broadview will be contacted to see if tax is being charged. Also, National Grid will be contacted to see if tax is being charged. Food allowance amounts were discussed when attending training or conferences out side the Town. There should be consistency and any policy or decision made should be documented in the Employee Handbook.

Justice Rent: Discussion was held on paying justice rent for office space as it was not budgeted for and the clerks received raises.

It was the consensus of the Board to continue to pay rent until additional office space can be provided for the justices.

Roll taken... Councilor Phillips-abstained, motion carried.

Highway Fund: A motion was made by Supervisor Stelmashuck, seconded by Councilor Jordan to approve the claims to the Highway Fund, those being claims #32 to #57 excluding #38 for a total warrant of \$18,270.65. Roll taken...motion carried.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

A motion was made by Supervisor Stelmashuck, seconded by Councilor Phillips to take a 3 minute recess and enter into Executive Session at 9:12 p.m. to discuss employment history of a particular employee, possible litigation, and the Highway Contract. Roll taken...motion carried. Attorney Genant was invited to attend.

A motion was made by Councilor Jordan, seconded by Councilor Dunham to adjourn from Executive Session at 9:51 p.m. Roll taken...motion carried.

A motion was made by Councilor Jordan, seconded by Councilor Dunham to adjourn at 9:52 p.m. Roll taken...motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Reader
Parish Town Clerk