

## REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING

September 21, 2023

Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Parish Town Board held September 21<sup>st</sup> 2023 at 2938 E. Main Street, Parish, NY in the Village Gym. Supervisor Bernys called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

**Present:**

Gary Wood, Councilor  
Doug Houghton, Councilor-6:32 pm  
G. Richard Horning, Councilor  
Robin Eaton-Novak, Councilor  
Jim Bernys, Supervisor  
Kelly Reader-Petit, Town Clerk

**Also Present:** L.J. Harvey, Fire Chief; John Dunham, PL Brd; Paul Baxter, Tug Hill Rep., George Horning, Hwy Sup't; Bob Genant, Town Attorney; and Jack Rucynski.

**MEETING OPEN TO THE PUBLIC:**

Jack Rucynski was present and presented the following issues for the Board's consideration:

Mr. Rucynski requested that the Town of Parish amend Local Law #1 of 2022 to include paragraph D, exempting veterans disability payments from total earnings.

Even if passed, it would have little impact as the threshold is so low there would be few veterans who have been awarded any disability benefits they have received such as a result of their sacrifice to our nation.

**A.** Allows an applicant who will turn 65 by December 31<sup>st</sup> to qualify (otherwise owner must be 65 upon March 1<sup>st</sup>).

**B.** Allows an applicant who has been previously granted the exemption in the prior year to have until Grievance Day to file rather than Taxable Status Day (March 1).

**C.** Allows for unreimbursement medical expenses to be excluded as income for purposes of the exemption.

**D.** Allows for disability payments for veterans under Title 38 US Code to be excluded as income purposes for the exemptions.

Of the 16 municipalities that implemented these exemptions, 14 included paragraph D.

**Subject: Renaming Merrill Park:**

**1.** Dr. Merrill was a respected pillar of the Town of Parish and this request does not lose sight of his accomplishments and dedication to this community. In researching the reason, the park was named after him there is no record that can be found to ascertain why or when it was done.

**2.** It has been suggested that he donated the property which now is Merrill Park. The fact is, that the park property was bought and donated to the town by the Parish Jaycees, that is documented and recorded.

**3.** At some point, the property was turned over to the County of Oswego which later turned it back over to the town.

**4.** I am requesting that the Town Board consider renaming the park, either:

The Merrill Veterans Memorial Park or; The Town of Parish Veterans Memorial Park.

Mr Rucynski spoke in regards to a Military Banners Program:

Should the Town Board agree to pursue the military banners program, it is suggested that banners be placed on the fences at the park. This would be a fitting tribute to the many sacrifices made by the men and women of the community.

**MEETING CLOSED TO THE PUBLIC.**

### **SUPERVISOR'S COMMENTS:**

Supervisor Bernys reported that he attended a Budget Round Table Webinar given by A.O.T. Also, Supervisor Bernys has been busy working on the 2024 Budget.

Bookkeeper Skellington-Bice has been working with NYS Retirement System on upgrading us to the Enhanced Reporting System which is a requirement as of 12/31/23. She completed this upgrade this month. Along with her normal duties, Angie is assisting the court clerk with reviewing the past justice's court records.

Supervisor Bernys wanted to thank our Town Attorney, Bob Genant and his staff for all their hard work in the past couple of months.

Supervisor Bernys had an opportunity to see Bob work in person and he wanted to say that he was impressed. Supervisor Bernys thanked Bob again.

Supervisor Bernys stated he was proud to say that the town has won the case against the past supervisor and awaits for the payment of monies that are due back to the tax payers.

### **COUNCILOR'S COMMENTS:**

Councilor Wood wanted to thank the Town Attorney, Bob Genant, Clerk Reader-Petit, and the Board for their hard work on the court case.

### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

#### **Regular Meeting Minutes-8/17/23**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Eaton-Novak, seconded by Councilor Wood to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes as received. Roll taken...All in favor...Motion carried. Aye-(5) Nay: (0).

### **DEPARTMENT REPORTS:**

**CEO/ZEO Report:** Supervisor Bernys read a CEO/ZEO Report submitted by CEO/ZEO Hamacher.

**DCO Report:** Tabled.

**Fire Chief's Report:** Fire Chief Harvey gave the Fire Report for August, 2023. Fire Chief Harvey stated that FYI, that they are 22 calls behind their highest year for calls to date.

**Highway Report:** Hwy Sup't Horning reported that they have been finishing up work from washouts. The highway crew is also getting ready for winter weather.

Tug Hill Circuit Rider Report: Paul Baxter, Tug Hill Rep. reported that there is nothing new to report about the status of Wildlife Management Area payment legislation. There is also nothing new to report about salmon restoration for the Little Salmon River.

Results are now out from this Spring's Local Leader's Survey. Their "report card" as graded by the participants on how they are doing. The full report is available at

<https://tughill.org/strategic-plan/> .

Invitations went out recently for the Tug Hill Commission annual dinner on Thursday, October 19 at Tailwater in Altmar.

USDA is holding a forum on Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023 from 4:00 pm-6:00 pm.

The new snowplow truck has been delivered. Amendment of the 284 Agreement is needed. This process needs to be completed as additional funds were spent then originally approved.

### **OLD BUSINESS:**

**Merrill Park Playground Equipment-(Wood, Houghton):** Councilor Wood reported that the playground equipment is scheduled to be delivered around October 1, 2023.

Benches have not been installed yet. Councilor Houghton will install 2 benches. A storage container will be ordered to store the playground equipment. Prep work will be completed at the end of September. Caution tape and stakes will be placed on the playground site to keep the public off until the playground equipment can be installed.

The basketball back boards, nets and hoops are being stored in Supervisor Bernys's garage.

**Merrill Park Security Cameras: (Wood,Eaton-Novak):** Councilor Eaton-Novak reported that obtaining information for the security cameras has proven to be a bit of a challenge. Councilor Eaton-Novak stated that there were multiple ways to access the information on the cameras. The cameras can be purchased from Best Buy. It was suggested to purchase 3 cameras.

Councilor Eaton-Novak will obtain more information and will come prepared for the next meeting to address questions.

**ACCEPT Audit of Supervisor's Records from 2022:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Wood, seconded by Councilor Horning to accept the Supervisor's 2022 Audit performed by Laird Petrie, Councilor Eaton-Novak, and Councilor Wood. Roll taken...All in favor...Motion carried.

Aye-(5) Nay-(0).

**Update of Hazard Mitigation Local Plan:** Supervisor Bernys has not received an update of the Hazard Mitigation Local Plan.

**2024-Constable Employment Agreement:**

Supervisor Bernys informed the Board that nothing has been changed. The Constable rate is \$22.50 per hour and the only thing that will be changing is the date.

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Eaton-Novak, seconded by Councilor Wood to accept the Constable Agreement as presented. Roll taken...All in favor...Motion carried. Aye-(5) Nay-(0).

**OLD BUSINESS OFF THE FLOOR:**

Councilor Wood asked if there was any more information on the bank and the Historical Society?

Supervisor Bernys responded that the next meeting for discussion is on September 26<sup>th</sup>, 2023 at 1:00 pm.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Pathfinders Bank New Accounts with interest at 4.9%.:** Supervisor Bernys reported that the town's accounts continue to make money.

**Tug Hill Commission Annual Dinner-October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023 @ Tailwater Lodge.**

**2024 Budget News:** Supervisor Bernys reported that his goal is to have a 0% tax increase. Supervisor Bernys will file the Tentative Budget September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2023 with the clerk. Also, Supervisor Bernys commented that he believes over the previous 4 years the taxpayers were over taxed at higher rates that he would have.

**Standard Work Day (Reader-Petit):**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Wood, seconded by Supervisor Bernys to pass a Resolution that the Town of Parish hereby established the following workdays for these titles and report the officials to NYS and Local Retirement based on their record of activities-Town Clerk-7.5 Standard Work Day. Roll taken...All in favor...Motion carried. Aye-(5) Nay-(0).

**NEW BUSINESS Off the Floor:** None.

**Informational Items:** National Grid Smart Meter Upgrades.

**SUPERVISOR'S REPORT:** Supervisor's Bernys presented a Supervisor's Report for the Board to review for August, 2023.

**APPROVAL OF BILLS:**

**Transfer:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Houghton, seconded by Councilor Wood to approve the transfer as listed:

**From:** A1990.4-Contingency

**To:** A5989.4=Transportation other-\$463.30

Roll taken...All in favor...Motion carried. Aye-(5) Nay-(0).

**General Fund A Account:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Horning, seconded by Councilor Eaton-Novak to approve the claims to the General A Fund Account, those being claims #162-#189 for a total warrant of \$28,054.47. Roll taken...All in favor...Motion carried. Aye-(5) Nay-(0).

**Highway Fund DA Account:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Eaton-Novak, seconded by Councilor Houghton to approve the claims to the Highway Fund DA Account, those being claims #110-#114 for a total warrant of \$16,895.53. Roll taken...All in favor...Motion carried. Aye-(5) Nay-(0).

**Highway Fund DB Account:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Horning, seconded by Councilor Houghton to approve the claims to the Highway Fund DB Account, those being claims #103-#109 for \$16,895.53 for a total warrant of \$16,895.53. Roll taken...All in favor... Motion carried. Aye-(5) Nay-(0).

**Capital Project H Account:**

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Wood, seconded by Councilor Houghton to approve the claim to the Capital Project H Account for claim #115 for a total warrant of \$234,043.56. Roll taken...All in favor...Motion carried. Aye-(5) Nay-(0).

**Motion:** A motion was made by Councilor Eaton-Novak, seconded by Councilor Houghton to adjourn at 7:35 pm. Roll taken...All in favor...Motion carried. Aye-(5) Nay-(0).

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Reader-Petit  
Parish Town Clerk