

May 10, 2023
Town of Lyme
Regular Monthly Meeting 6:30 P.M.

Call to Order:

Supervisor Countryman called the regular monthly meeting to order at 6:34 p.m. opening the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Those present included Supervisor Countryman, Deputy Supervisor Bourquin, Councilmember Gosier, Councilmember Countryman, Councilmember Villa, Town Clerk Ariana Henderson, Highway Superintendent Patrick Weston, Dwight Goutremout, Cathy Stone, Cathy Ward, Bruce and Jennifer Kingsley, Bruce Gates, William Pfaff, Anne Marie De Graff, Michael Burt, Chris Robl, Tina Fahringer, Tammy Castor and Linda and Alex Wendall.

Privilege of the Floor

Catherine Ward: Catherine Ward asked if there were any updates regarding the proposed solar projects in our Town. Supervisor Countryman stated that a Use Variance for Solar has been resubmitted for the June ZBA meeting. They will have to go in front of the Jefferson County Planning Board for 239 M review first. Mrs. Ward also asked where the Board was at with the Zoning Law updates. Barton and Loguidice and still working on the Zoning Law. They have another meeting next week.

Mrs. Linda Wendall and Tammy Castor; New York Citizens Audit: Mrs. Wendall first thanked the Board for their service to the Town and then asked the Board if they received and reviewed the paperwork regarding the response to NYS Board of Elections "False Claims Explained" letter. The Board had read through the material. Mrs. Wendall stated specific discrepancies between County and State voter rolls. Supervisor Countryman responded that the information was taken into consideration and the Board agreed no action would be taken at this time. Mrs. Castor then read a statement that summarized why this issue was so important. Supervisor Countryman repeated the Board's stance that no action would be taken at this time. He stated that he is confident that the local level elections are accurate. He believes that it should be taken to a higher level.

Supervisor's Report

Resolution 2023-49: Councilmember Gosier made the motion to approve the April Supervisor's Monthly Financial report; Councilmember Farrell seconded the motion; all were in favor; motion carried.

Supervisor Countryman was contacted by the Town Accountant regarding a discrepancy in the amount of taxes collected. The County used the wrong figures when finalizing our Town Budget. There was \$100,000 in access funds collected that will be put in a liability account to give back to the taxpayers in the 2024 budget. Councilmember Villa stated that we should have what every tax parcel overpaid in writing from the County so we are informed.

Highway Superintendent's Report

Water Main Break: Pat Weston reported that there was a water main break on Old Town Springs Road on Sunday April 30, 2023. It affected District users 1 and 5. The water users had water restored around 1:00 p.m. that afternoon. The Highway Department worked hard to repair the break. DANC will be fully reimbursing the Town for the break because it was there line and before our meter pit.

Veteran's Memorial Park: The water and sewer is installed at Veteran's Park. Pat is waiting to hear where the grinder pump station will be located.

CHIPS: The Board discussed the CHIPS expenditure that Pat submitted for approval.

Resolution 2023-50: Councilmember Gosier made the motion to approve the CHIPS expenditure in the amount of \$334,701.00; seconded by Councilmember Villa; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

F-550 Truck: The F-550 truck will be here any day. The money should be transferred from the Machinery Reserve account into the Machinery Equipment account where the funds were taken from. Supervisor Countryman will make the transfer at the bank.

Clerk's Report

Monthly Receipts were as follow: Total Local Shares Remitted: \$5,866.35; Total State County & Local Revenues: \$5,889.35 Total Non – Local Revenues: \$23.00

Point Salubrious Water District #6: Clerk Henderson reported that a petition was submitted to the Town for the Point Salubrious proposed Water District. The Town then asked our Attorney to review the petition and provide me with an opinion on whether the petition was sufficient. The Attorney analyzed property information from Brownell Abstract to determine which property owners were able to sign the petition. They then reached out to Jefferson County Board of Elections to find that 1,112 residents voted in the last election. For the Petition to be valid, there needed to be 56 signatures. The petition had 63 signatures which 59 were valid. She analyzed the information the Attorney has provided the Town and agree that the petition is sufficient. The Town will now need to hold a special election on the creation of the proposed water district. As soon as we have more information regarding the petition, the Town will share this with our residents.

Audit of the Bills (Abstracts #7 & 8)

Resolution 2023-51: Councilmember Villa made the motion to approve Abstract #7 in the amount of \$109,074.60; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Resolution 2023-52: Councilmember Gosier made the motion to approve Abstract #8 in the amount of \$189,360.74; seconded by Councilmember Farrell; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Approval of the Minutes

Resolution 2021-53: Councilmember Gosier made a motion to approve the April 12, 2023 Minutes; seconded by Councilmember Farrell; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Old Business:

Prepayments for Veterans Memorial Park:

Resolution 2023-54: Councilmember Gosier made a motion to submit the payment for Northern Pioneer for \$11,756.23 and the payment for Powis for \$131,896.33 to DASNY; seconded by Councilmember Villa; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Councilmember Villa stated that the Board is trying their best to have the Park open by Memorial Day Weekend. The construction company has been pushed back several times due to supply issues. There will be a Dock with a handicap Kayak launch. Supervisor Countryman stated that he took a tour of the park yesterday and it is obvious the park will not be ready by Memorial Day weekend.

Clerk Laptop:

The details of the Clerk's proposed laptop purchase was emailed to the Board in advance. Councilmember Villa questioned why the information didn't match the previous submitted information. He requested that IT Ben Rubacha send more information in his written quotes.

Resolution 2023-55: Councilmember Villa made a motion to purchase the Town Clerk a Laptop (Lenovo Thinkpad 14 and Lenovo Docking Station); seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Park Committee:

Supervisor Countryman said that there were three interested individuals that applied for the Park Committee. All three people have great leadership qualities. He would like to get the group together soon. If the park opens soon they will need policies in place. Councilmember Gosier said that someone on the athletic side needs to join considering they will also be making decisions for all recreation activities. She is willing to join the group to represent the Town Board. Deputy Supervisor Bourquin said that they won't be making the final decisions on things they will just be providing ideas to the Town Board.

New Business:

Zoning Law Updates:

Supervisor Countryman stated that Barton and Loguidice is working on the Solar Law and RV Law. They sent the update to Planning Board Chairman Schweitzer. Supervisor Countryman just received the information about two hours before the meeting and had not looked it over in time.

Independence Point Water:

Supervisor Countryman spoke with members of the 1997 Town Board. They have no recollection of the formation of Water District #1 extension. Rob Company who worked for Bernier and Carr at the time and did the study and he has no recollection of what happened. There were 4 to 5 residents from Independence Point that attended the Water Board meeting. Their concern is that they are now currently responsible for the water line that feeds their home, the main and the laterals. Supervisor Countryman spent two hours going over information about this subject with the Village Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Village Clerk. The Village is still flushing the hydrants after 26 years because they are worried about the integrity of the water for the Village users. They have a standard agreement ready for the residents. If they sign the agreement they will agree officially that if there is a break they are responsible. The Village is willing to help finance a water line break if something was to happen, like they did for other outside users. The residents of Hart Road are looking to be part of the Town's Water District #1. Councilmember Gosier asked if the Water Districts could be split into two areas of the Town. Gregor Smith (BCA) confirmed that it is possible. Councilmember Villa asked if for the 27 years that they have paid the Village if they have paid O&M fees on their water bill. The users are being charged O & M through the village currently. Supervisor Countryman stated that they have been paying a premium but it hasn't been identified as O&M. In 2016 the Village Attorney confirmed that the Village no longer had easements or right of ways to the properties on Hart Road. If we make them a part of Water District #1 we would need to get easements for the properties. This all came about when a resident wanted to tap into the Village lines. He said we want to find a solution but he is concerned about the liability of the line. Clerk Henderson stated that if the line breaks and Hart Road residents are absorbed into Water District #1, all of District #1 will have to pay for the repairs? Supervisor Countryman says he is waiting for more information from the Village Mayor. Mr. Wendall says that his water bill does state O&M. There was a question regarding water shut on and off. Pat Weston stated that he has never worked on Hart Road in his 20 years of Highway Superintendent.

Handbook Draft Copy:

The Board received a copy of the draft Employee Handbook. The Board agreed that it is a great start and will be great to have when it's complete.

Scoreboard Quote:

The Youth Commission is asking for approval for the purchase of a new scoreboard for the Morris Tract Ballfield. The current one is not being used and is not reliable. The money is in our budget.

Resolution 2023-56: Councilmember Villa made a motion to purchase a new Score Board for Morris Tract ballfield for no more than \$5,845.00; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Youth Commission Summer Recreation Director and Assistant:

At the last meeting the Youth Commission set up interviews with candidates for the new employees. They agreed on the director and are looking for 4 people to help. The summer

recreation assistant from last year is returning and the director is the gym teacher at Lyme Central. She is highly qualified to be the director. Councilmember Gosier stated that she the committee to make good choices.

Resolution 2023-57: Councilmember Gosier made a motion to accept the recommendations of the Youth Commission; seconded by Councilmember Farrell; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Accept Resignation:

Supervisor Countryman announced and accepted the recognition of a 9 year employee who has done great things for the Town. She has decided to resign.

Resolution 2023-58: Councilmember Gosier made a motion to accept the resignation with regrets of the nine year employee; seconded by Councilmember Villa; all were in favor and the motion was carried.

Committee Reports

Assessor's Report:

Supervisor Countryman stated that Marlene has done a great job training Sue and Carol. Susan Locy submitted the assessor report as follows:

2023 Tentative Roll Totals

2022	Assessment Total	442,354,603
2023	Assessment Total	448,761,224

Increase of: 6,406,621

These totals will change after Grievance Day for the Final Roll.

Grievance Day 2023

Grievance Day will be on Tuesday, May 23, 2023 from 12 Noon to 4:30 pm and from 6 pm to 8 pm. This will be extended if needed. As always, we urge property owners to call us or come in prior to Grievance Day to discuss any issues they may have. We are also encouraging property owners to call and set up an appointment if they want to file a grievance. An appointment will make the process run more smoothly and help ensure there is not a long wait.

Sitting With the Roll

As required by law, assessors must advertise and be available with the new assessment roll on specific times. We are scheduling appointments for those who call in, but anyone can just walk in. This year we will be available on the following dates:

Thursday, May 4 th	10 am – 2 pm
Monday, May 8 th	10 am – 2 pm
Thursday, May 15 th	10 am – 2 pm
Saturday, May 20 th	4pm – 8 pm (by appointment)

Training

Marlene Norfolk is in the process of training me on valuation and legal matters.

Municipal Water Board Report:

Supervisor Countryman attended the Water Board meeting. Brian Nutting from Development Authority of the North Country was present. He was very informative.

Planning Board:

There was no minutes submitted.

Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA):

Supervisor Countryman reported that the Solar Application for a property on Old Town Springs Road was re-submitted to the Town as discussed in privilege of the floor.

Youth Commission:

Youth commission was already discussed.

ZEO/CEO Report:

There were several complaints about a specific property. ZEO Richard Ingerson sent a letter to the tenant of the property. There have been other complaints about other properties as well that need to be addressed. There is a resident that has contacted Supervisor Countryman is will be providing him with a list of properties that need to be cleaned up. Councilmember Farrell asked how the Town would handle fining the property owner as it states in the letter the ZEO mailed. Supervisor Countryman said the Town can send the Highway Department in to clean the property and include it on the property owner's tax bill. There was further discussion on the process.

TMB Cemetery:

Councilmember Gosier met with three families about space for their family plots. The mowing crew cleaned up the brush in the cemetery and disposed of it themselves.

Cape Vincent Ambulance:

Supervisor Countryman reported that there were no dropped calls last month. They are still not in their new building. Councilmember Villa asked is there would be two manned ambulances this summer. Councilmember Gosier said that is correct. Supervisor Countryman said they spent \$10,000.00 in EMT courses. Will Lipczynski was honored last night with his EMT.

Privilege of the Floor

Catherine Ward: Mrs. Ward questioned the Chaumont River Corridor Waterfront Revitalization Strategy. She asked if the committee was still working on the plan. Councilmember Villa explained the Chaumont River Corridor Waterfront Revitalization strategy.

Jennifer Kingsley: Ms. Kingsley asked which employee resigned. Supervisor Countryman stated that it was Robin Grovesteen. She also asked what the amount of taxes that were taken in over the budget amount was. Supervisor Countryman responded \$100,000.00.

Bruce Gates: Mr. Gates was recently digging the foundation of his new home when he came across human bones. He has been in contact with Julia Gosier the Town Historian and is asking if he can move forward with construction. The State troopers stated the bones were at least 50 years old. Supervisor Countryman said that the Town will have find out what has to be done legally. The Town is not supposed to get involved if it was once a private cemetery. Councilmember Gosier said that she contacted Tim Able a professional archeologist. She will fill Mr. Gates in on the details after the meeting. Mr. Gates said there is no evidence in the deed or

abstract that it is considered a family plot. Mrs. Gosier would like to research the people that may be buried there and get more information to Mr. Gates.

Online Privilege of the Floor

There was no online privilege of the floor.

Adjournment

Resolution 2023-59: Councilmember Villa a made the motion to adjourn; seconded by Councilmember Gosier; all were in favor and the motion was carried; meeting was adjourned at 7:56 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ariana Henderson

Ariana Henderson
Town Clerk