

Town of Fowler July 8, 2024 Minutes of Regular Scheduled Board Meeting at 6PM.

The Town of Fowler Regular scheduled Town Board meeting was held on the above date with all board members present. Also present were Town Clerk Tami Gale, Town Justice Tim Knowlton, Highway Superintendent Randy Durham, Planning Board member John Walsh, Assessor Chair Kathy Besaw, Code Enforcement Officer Glen Besaw, Debbie Walsh, Richard Clement and Rachel Hunter, Editor of the Gouverneur Tribune Press.

Supervisor Newvine called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM then proceeded with the pledge of allegiance and led a moment of silence to honor our military men and women, all healthcare workers, and those who have passed since our last meeting: Dave Brown and Mark Rosenburger. Supervisor Newvine asked for well wishes for Court Clerk Irma Ashley, who has been ill.

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the June 10, 2024, regular scheduled board meeting. A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland, seconded by Councilperson Bishop. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Special meeting and Public Hearing held on June 17th, 2024. A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons, seconded by Councilperson Knight. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Discussion on Rescinding Resolution #14 of 2024 Enacting Local Law No. 3 of 2024 – Establishing Burning Regulations in the Town of Fowler

Supervisor Newvine reported that he has had time to take a good look at Local Law No. 3 of 2024 – Establishing Burning Regulations for the Town of Fowler, which was passed at the Special Meeting and Public Hearing held on June 17th and asked the board members their thoughts on rescinding the Local Law. He reported everything covered in the local law, was already covered in the New York State Law. Laurina Greenhill and Paul Lamson were correct, and he feels the Town of Fowler should not have a more restrictive Local Law. Supervisor Newvine stated they were looking for CEO Besaw to be able to go to and resolve burning complaints when the DEC could not make it, but now feels we should go another route.

Motion to Rescind Resolution #14 of 2024 Enacting Local Law No. 3 of 2024 – Establishing Burning Regulations in the Town of Fowler

After some discussion, a motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland seconded by Councilperson Simmons to rescind Resolution #14 of 2024 – rescinding Local Law No. 3 of 2024 Burning Regulations in the Town of Fowler. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Declaration of Surplus Equipment

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to declare fourteen items as surplus equipment and of no longer use to the Town:

- 1. Steel storage barrel in Tin Barn.**
- 2. Ceiling Furnace with Becket Burner in Tin Barn.**
- 3. (3) 12 x 14 Over Head Fiberglass Doors with hardware.**
- 4. Carol Propane Burner.**
- 5. Miller Pero 200LI Portable Welder.**
- 6. Truck Box Sanding System.**
- 7. New Holland Broom 72CO (Broken Shaft).**
- 8. Enoro551 BFS180H Sickle Bar Mower. (Broken Sickle Bar)**
- 9. Pressure washer. (Non-operational)**
- 10. Plastic Storage Tank. Approximately 100 Gal.**

11. Raft for a Beach or Camp.
12. Portable Grease Cart.
13. Nose piece for plowing with old grader.
14. Cracked Plastic water storage unit in Steel Cage.

A motion was made by Councilperson Knight seconded by Councilperson Bishop. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

It was discussed that the surplus equipment would be advertised with an invitation to BID and would be awarded at the August 12, 2024 regular scheduled board meeting.

Discussion on Maintenance Worker Wages

Supervisor Newvine reported that a few of the board members have worked on projects with maintenance worker Byron Woodward and feel that he is underpaid. Supervisor Newvine reported that Byron has done a lot of great work for the town including electrical and masonry work and stated he hadn't received a raise in pay since he began working for the Town. Supervisor Newvine stated Byron's wage is currently \$20.00 an hour, and asked the board to make a suggestion for an increase in his pay after confirming with Bookkeeper Finnie that they were able to do so. Councilperson Knight suggested an increase to \$25.00 an hour, which was the consensus of the board. After some discussion, a motion was made by Councilperson Bishop seconded by Councilperson Knight to approve the wage increase to \$25.00 an hour. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Town Department Reports

Justice Department

Town Justice Tim Knowlton reported:

- He has completed 4 of the required 12 hours of yearly justice training.
- Court has been slow but that can change at the blink of an eye.

Supervisor Newvine reported he had received an email from the Supervisor's Association in regard to court clerk pay, and reported the Town of Fowler is lucky to have Court Clerk Ashley, for the wage she is paid, reporting they are being paid big money in other places.

- Justice Knowlton reported that Court Clerk Ashley is invaluable.

It was discussed that the board will have to remember that at budget time.

Bookkeeper

Bookkeeper Barbara Finnie reported:

- She had provided Cash Balance Reports for Month ending May, 2024 and Cash Balance Reports for Month ending June, 2024 to the board for their review.
- A lot of the spending will be done this month as seen in this evening's purchase orders to be approved for payment.
- The Pavilion/Playground Fund has a balance of \$17,722.37, with spending and deposits coming in from Family Day.
- The SOS/HAP Fund has a balance of \$9,051.39.

Supervisor Newvine asked Bookkeeper Finnie to provide a full accounting of the ARPA funds so that they can have a plan in place by the end of the year.

Assessors

Assessor Chair Kathy Besaw reported:

- It has been quiet right now with nothing new to report.

Historian

Historian Karen Simmons reported:

- She is still trying to get names for the Korean Conflict Plaque.
- She has about 25 names presently and will be taking the information to Bradley's Military to have the new plaque made.
- She is working on 2 genealogies.

Animal Control

Councilperson Simmons reported for Dan Moyer who was not in attendance:

- One dog had been picked up on Emeryville Rd.
- The dog was found in the kennel deceased two days later. A stool sample was taken to the veterinarian with no official report received yet on its cause of death. It is believed the animal may have been hit by a car prior to being picked up by animal control.
- The animal was never claimed by its owner.

Beaver Control

Councilperson Simmons reported for Dan Moyer who was not in attendance:

- Beaver control has been completed on Stone Rd.
- Beaver control continues to be done on the Country Club Rd.

Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement Officer Glen Besaw reported:

- He has received 2 complaints. One complaint was unfounded. The other complaint was legitimate.
- He continues to investigate the law regarding people living in campers.
- There are a lot of nice new homes being built in the Town of Fowler.
- Two tickets were issued to the landowner on Stone Rd and two tickets were issued to the contractors doing the work on Stone Rd, which are now being handled through the court system.

Town Clerk

Town Clerk Tami Gale reported:

- DEC Gross sales for the month were \$1,115.00 with the Town of Fowler's Commission being \$27.75. She had licensed 28 dogs, handled 4 building permit applications, issued 2 Certified Marriage Transcripts, issued 1 Marriage License, issued 7 Death Certificates, collected \$70.00 in miscellaneous dog fees, sold 2 bicentennial books, and had collected \$2.00 for photo copies.
- Received her discharge of collector paperwork from the County stating she has fully settled the sums due for taxes with the County.
- She had received a scrap metal check for 2 separate scrap metal pickups, which was short by \$35.00 and is waiting for the corrected check to come in from Northstar Auto and Salvage LLC. One was for 2.88 tons of scrap at a total of \$335.60 and the second was for 2.10 tons of scrap at a total of \$242.00.

Highway Department

Highway Superintendent Randy Durham:

- He has hired Hunter Aldridge, as a non-CDL driver for summer help. He will start work on 7/17/2024. He does want to get his CDL license.
- He is unsure when the paving will begin.

- Reported he has a rough estimate to fix the furnace in the Town Barn for the amount of \$700.00. He estimated it would cost about \$20,000 to put a new one in.
- The motor that pushes the fuel oil has now burned up and needs to be replaced also. Supervisor Newwine asked Hwy. Superintendent Durham to get a price on replacing the motor.
- It was discussed that an energy audit should be conducted before a furnace replacement, and then an invitation for bids could be put out on what is recommended.
- It was discussed that some ARPA Funds could be used to help pay for a new furnace in the highway department.
- Reported he didn't know what we were going to do about the summer help as Bill Finnie hasn't been to work in a month due to a medical issue. He reported he is still on the books and he has about 10 applications for people who are looking for summer work. Supervisor Newwine told Hwy. Superintendent Durham to hire who you have to hire.
- Reported the highway crew had a problem when they were cutting shoulders on the Doane Rd, and the police were called.

Councilmembers

Councilperson Karen Simmons:

- Reported in the month of June, the HAP Program was visited 26 times.
- The HAP Program is closed until July 25th because of preparations for Family Day.
- Thanked John and Debbie Walsh, and Mike Tersmette for food donations.
- The next delivery for the SOS Program will be in September.
- The Presbyterian Church in Gouverneur helps with the delivery by taking in donations for what the theme of the SOS Delivery will be and are currently taking in donations for breakfast items for the next delivery.
- There was a meeting at Kilkarney Court on June 25th. The generator purchase, discussed at a previous meeting was decided on for \$28,500.
- The Town of Fowler is using \$20,000 from ARPA Funds to assist in the purchase.
- Thanked the Town of Fowler on behalf of the board of Kilkarney Court for assisting with the purchase.
- There is a Family Day meeting this Thursday at 3:00.

Councilperson Leo Knight Jr.:

- Reported there is still one spot left for anyone with the Town of Fowler to tour the underground of Empire State Mines.

Councilperson Lynn Bishop:

- Thanked Hwy. Superintendent Durham for mowing the pin yard.
- Complimented Hwy. Superintendent Durham for keeping the area nice and clean in the barn.
- Reported the cemeteries looked good for the 4th of July and complimented the mowing crew.
- Suggested the propane tanks be removed from the surplus equipment list and be returned to the company that provided them, for liability concerns.

Councilperson Cleveland:

- He believes the spring ride toys at the playground are finally right after being taken apart and re configured.
- The new basketball court has been staked out in the playground area.
- Two hoops will be installed.

Supervisor Ricky W. Newvine:

- Reported the Town Hall had some vandalism, with kids trying to knock over the port a potty, and stringing toilet paper through the parking lot. The Sheriff’s Department spoke to the vandals that were caught on camera.
- Thanked St. Lawrence County Youth Bureau for volunteering their time to help out on Family Day.

Public Comment

- Richard Clement reported there were reflective posts missing on the Byrns Rd.
- Maintenance Worker Byron Woodward reported that the Town Hall has a spider issue. It was discussed that a new pressure washer may be needed for multiple maintenance projects. Tim Knowlton volunteered to bring special detergent and to help to try to remove the spider feces from the siding on the Town Hall before Family Day.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:37 PM Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to enter executive session to discuss the highway department union contract. A motion was made by Councilperson Cleveland seconded by Councilperson Bishop. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

At 6:43 PM Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to exit executive session. A motion was made by Councilperson Knight seconded by Councilperson Cleveland. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

Supervisor Newvine reported they discussed another offer that they would make as a proposal and thought this one maybe will work, as there is just a small sticking point. Supervisor Newvine reported that negotiations are confidential and that is all that he can disclose at this time.

Supervisor Newvine asked for a motion to audit the bills. A motion was made by Councilperson Simmons seconded by Councilperson Bishop to audit the bills. All in Favor. MOTION CARRIED.

The bills audited for the General and Highway Fund were #229 to # 280 with a total of \$191,170.31.

The next regularly scheduled board meeting will be held on August 12th, 2024, at 6:00PM.

With no further business, on a motion of Councilperson Bishop, seconded by Councilperson Cleveland, the July 8th, 2024, Regular Town Board meeting was adjourned at 6:45PM. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Tami Gale; Town Clerk