

Town of Chatham
488 State Route 295
Chatham, New York

SPECIAL TOWN BOARD MEETING

Thursday, May 19, 2016 at 6:00 PM
to interview for the CEO/BI position

To be held in EXECUTIVE SESSION under Public Officers Law §105 (1) (f) to discuss matters leading to the appointment, employment, promotion, demotion, discipline, suspension, dismissal or removal of a particular person or corporation Town of Chatham

PRESENT: Supervisor Maria Lull, Councilman Bob Balcom, Councilwoman Landra Haber, Councilman John Wapner

ABSENT: Councilman Henry Swartz

CALL TO ORDER: Lull called the meeting to order at 6PM and led the pledge to the flag.

Motion was made by Supervisor Lull seconded by Councilman Wapner and carried to enter **EXECUTIVE SESSION at 6:00PM:** For the purpose of interviewing CEO/BI.

Motion was made by Councilman Wapner, seconded by Councilman Balcom to leave executive session at 6:49 PM. Motion carried.

REGULAR TOWN BOARD MEETING

May 19, 2016, 7:00 PM

PRESENT: Supervisor Maria Lull, Councilman Bob Balcom, Councilwoman Landra Haber, Councilman John Wapner, Town Clerk Beth Anne Rippel, Budget Officer Tammy Shaw, Highway Superintendent Joe Rickert, Assessor Clerk Julia Horst, Mike Bucci of PKB&H Town Accounting Firm, members of the public

ABSENT: Councilman Henry Swartz

CALL TO ORDER: Lull called the meeting to order at 7PM and led the pledge to the flag.

CORRESPONDENCE

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Lull read her regular statement.

Jim Temple asked everyone in attendance how many wanted to the Comprehensive Plan successfully implemented and how many wanted it to fail. [Everyone wanted it implemented successfully.] Temple referenced a paper article dated May 4 where Supervisor Lull was quoted saying that the Town tap water should be clean and that water as a public resource should be protected, and asked if the whole Board agreed with Lull. [There was no answer.] Temple stated that most Town residents have well water that primarily comes from water under the surface of the ground, which is not sufficiently addressed by the Comprehensive Plan. He recommended that the Town of Chatham implement a ground water protection plan similar to that passed in the Town of Germantown since implementing a Comprehensive Plan without protecting the water is risky. Temple concluded that if the Board did not believe him, they should consult the Town Engineer.

PRESENTATION by Town Accounting firm, Mike Bucci of Patterson, Koskey, Bucci & Howe

Lull thanked the Firm for their work and explained that they worked alongside Tammy Shaw to gather information in order to complete an audit for 2014 and 2015, which was not done by the previous accountants.

Mike Bucci thanked the Board and explained the overall project of cleaning up the Town's finances, primarily by clarifying that everything is up to date but there were some things to address. He offered five comments for the Fiscal Year of 2015 with specific recommendations:

1) In regards to the Town's four major bank accounts, Bucci recommended that funds no longer be commingled anymore because it is difficult for the Board and the public to evaluate the funds in that manner. He proposed that an account be maintained for each of the Town's seven different funds so that the activities and reports for each fund and account be more easily accessed and evaluated.

2) Bucci explained about some reserve funds set up in the general (A) fund that were not entirely accounted for. He noted that since all the monies were commingled and since the reserve funds were not reported properly, the Town assumed they had a greater fund balance of \$86,000 than what was actually available.

3) Bucci stated that Tammy Shaw was very instrumental in keeping the Town of Chatham financially afloat after previous accountant Debbie Cesternino passed away. Without her assistance in helping the Firm unravel puzzles, they would not be where they were. He asked that Shaw be commended for her labors.

4) In regards to the White Mills Road bridge project, Bucci explained how money was taken out of the general (A) and highway outside village (DB) funds before grants were obtained to reimburse the money. He further explained that the Firm did not have enough time to go through the details but believed there was a deficit since \$130,000 is expected from the DOT to cover the \$269,000 owed back to the funds, although Shaw claimed that more grant money was coming in. There was some discussion regarding the project between Bucci, Shaw, and the Board, and Bucci concluded that he still needed to work on figuring out the details.

5) Bucci stated that despite the problems of the past years, the Town was not in dire straits, and he was confident that if everyone put their heads together, the situation could be resolved for 2016 and 2017.

Bucci also had a draft of a report for Fiscal Year 2015 that he believed was 95% accurate. He explained how each Town fund was doing and also mentioned what reserve funds were available based on the rules for using the tax stabilization fund. He summarized that if the tax stabilization fund was used properly, there would be a deficit of \$1000. Within his remarks for each fund, he explained how each fund was doing, as follows:

A fund: Bucci explained that there was a deficit, even though \$76,000 was underspent from 2015, B fund: Deficit of \$11,700 at the end of 2015 because of an unexpected fund appropriation of \$22,800. Bucci commented that the Town will need to cut expenses, raise fees, and ultimately raise taxes to cover this deficit.

DA fund: Healthy balance of almost \$50,000, especially since the Highway Department stayed within their budget and enjoyed a mild winter.

DB fund: Also a healthy balance of \$448,000, even after buying new highway equipment. Bucci noted that this total includes the \$176,000 still needed in grant money, so only \$272,000 is cash.

Special funds: Bucci also addressed the capital projects funds briefly but said he needed to talk with Shaw to make a final determination of those details. He also made a note about a fixed asset account, which was difficult to understand in government settings and also because records were not kept for the Town land and buildings. He concluded that he would review everything and then talk with the Board to determine whether those accounts should be maintained.

Special accounts: Bucci recommended that Town maintain an escrow account separate from the trust and agency account as soon as possible, along with detailed reporting for each escrow balance.

Bucci moved on to address Fiscal Year 2016 by stating that everything was reconciled so far and by providing monthly reports with detailed balance sheets. There was some discussion of Hudson Valley Resource Group taking over payroll and several irregularities with a couple retirement accounts that would need to be examined. Bucci also stated that he hoped to transfer everything to QuickBooks and go live with the new program after Shaw was comfortable with the new system. He concluded that he hoped to meet with the budget committee after completing the work for 2016 to talk about strategies to fix some of the problems and address several complications, such as not being able to use balances from years prior to make a new budget and staying under the 2% tax cap while still providing services to the public.

Lull asked **Bucci** when he would be able to meet with the committee, to which he replied that after everything is set up with **Shaw** in July, he hoped to begin working on everything else in August and September, which is when departments send in their budget requests. **Lull** asked if the Town needed to put anything on hold. **Bucci** spoke about costs and his hopes to have enough information to evaluate where the Town is at in September to offer solutions. He mentioned that Highway is difficult since it only takes one hard winter to wipe out reserves since the prices of salt and sand will not decrease. **Bucci** recommended that the Town see what they can do and they will work together for ideas, even though there were no easy solutions. **Lull** replied that she felt confident that the Town was in good hands but was also disappointed that they were not looking forward to clear sailing. **Balcom** thanked the Firm, since he had had questions for three years and never received answers, especially for reserve funds, and noted that he was looking forward to the upcoming budget year. **Lull** added that the volunteer committee has been working very hard under **Michael Richardson**. **Bucci** concluded by saying that he hoped that the reports would be on the website for people to look at, since the best ideas are implemented when many people have the details at their disposal.

Accounting Update 05-19-16 is on file.

SUB-COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Crellin Park Committee (**Haber** and **Wapner**): **Wapner** explained that the new committee is nearly complete with members from Chatham Central School, a representative from Family Resources, the Town Board, **Mike West**, and the Chatham Area Business Alliance President. They were still looking for a representative for senior citizens. A second little league group under the Chatham Little League was looking for using a medium-sized field and had considered using the Town's land. **Wapner** concluded that the program plans were coming along well, many staff returned, and they were confident that the season would go well.

Citizens Finance and Planning Committee (**Balcom**): **Balcom** explained that there was a subcommittee with **David Levow**, **Jim son**, **Julia Veronezi**, **Tammy Shaw**, and **Michael Richardson** to go through the financial codes and invoices. At the last full meeting, **Richardson** provided an explanation on codes, which **Balcom** thought was not easy, especially in how money moved in the Highway Department. He hoped that it should be done in the next week or so and then they will work on a budget framework. If the whole committee is satisfied with their framework, they will send it to Town Board and then begin working with the Accounting Firm.

Planning Committee (**Balcom**): **Balcom** mentioned a letter accepted by the Board in the last meeting and recommended five people to work with **Nan Stolzenberg** on the Comprehensive Plan, explaining why he chose those particular individuals. He also discussed the estimated implementation costs and stated that **Stolzenberg** would do the writing and **Attorney Lyons** would edit the reports as needed. **Stolzenberg** would also meet with the committee periodically, and they would attempt to schedule more phone conferences in order to keep costs down.

RES. 109-16 to Appoint Members to the Planning Committee

Offered by Councilman **Balcom**, moved adoption to appoint **Randi Walker**, **Van Calhoun**, **Karen Murphy**, **Don Hegeman**, and **Balcom** to assist **Nan Stolzenberg** and **Attorney Lyons** with the planning efforts for the Town of Chatham. Councilwoman **Haber** seconded the motion.

VOTE

Ayes: **Lull**, **Balcom**, **Haber**, **Wapner**, **Nays None** Resolution adopted.

RES. 110-16 To Set Planning Committee Budget

Offered by Councilman **Balcom**, moved adoption to accept the estimated Planning Committee budget that would not exceed \$19,500, as outlined in a letter written by **Nan Stolzenberg**.

Councilwoman **Haber** seconded the motion.

VOTE

Ayes: **Lull**, **Balcom**, **Haber**, **Wapner**, **Nays None** Resolution adopted.

SUPERVISOR'S BUSINESS:

Water Testing: Lull reported that the water tests came back with a good report and that a press release had been sent out with the results.

Town Building Lighting: Lull reported that a proposal to change the lighting throughout the Town buildings had been received, explaining that installation would cost \$5,849 and result in an annual savings of \$1,724. Lull suggested that the Board table any action until they determine what happens with their finances.

Disc Golf Activities: Lull stated that she met with Mike West and a Disc Golf club member and explained that the Town was in negotiation with the Village about moving to the Tracy Memorial.

Connect Columbia: Lull met to learn about bringing major truck lines into the County. The initiative was started by three people in Ghent and she thought it was a good grassroots committee that will put pressure on the Board of Supervisors and the Governor to address the fact that Columbia County is very underserved.

Crellin Park Improvements: Lull spoke with Town Engineer Patrick Prendergast, who gave quotes for installing two sets of swings at the Park that are federally approved.

Grant Money: Lull attended a meeting at Columbia-Green Community College with Haber to explore options to obtain state grants.

Communications Committee: Lull explained that the Town recently launched a Facebook page and publishes press releases in the two Town papers and the Times Union. The Committee will continue to work on the Town website plans.

Cyber Security: Lull attended the conference put on by the Association of Towns in Saratoga and explained that due to the serious problem of certain municipalities being hacked and held ransom, each Town is recommended to have a cyberspace policy.

Drug Recovery: Wapner stated that he attended a drug recovery meeting at Chatham High and was amazed how many community residents attended the gathering. He added that the next meeting was on June 28 and that it was important for the community to be aware that heroin addiction is a serious problem in the whole County. Wapner did not know how the Town fit into the equation and Lull suggested that more people talk about the issue and create a greater awareness.

REPORTS

Highway: Rickert gave his report, a copy of which is on file. There was discussion about the process for the temporary access permit, since he submitted information for review and did not hear back. Lull suggested that fees be increased across the board in conjunction with the budget process. Rippel noted that building fees had been increased several years ago. Rickert explained how difficult it was to determine those details when there was no set fee structure, especially with security deposits.

RES. 111-16 to Accept Price Quote for a Roller

Offered by Supervisor Lull, moved adoption as follows:

WHEREAS, the Town of Chatham Superintendent of Highways has received three price quotes for the rental of (One) Asphalt Roller for the Highway Department, and

WHEREAS, the Highway Department has a budget of \$150,000 in the Highway General Repairs Contractual Account (DB5110.4), and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chatham Town Board accepts the price quote for the rental of (One) CASE DV26 Asphalt roller from Monroe Tractor, 423 Old Loudon Rd Latham, New York 12110 for the sum of \$1500.00 per month/ 100-hours per month and will be paid with money budgeted in the Highway General Repairs Contractual Account (DB5110.4). Councilwoman Haber seconded the resolution

VOTE

Ayes: Lull, Balcom, Haber, Wapner, **Nays** None Resolution adopted.

RES. 112-16 to Accept Price Quote for a Post Driver from Ray Drivers, Inc.

Offered by Supervisor Lull, moved adoption as follows:

WHEREAS, the Town of Chatham Superintendent of Highways has received three price quotes for (One) Gas Powered Post Driver, for the Highway Department, and

WHEREAS, the Highway Department has a budget balance of \$12,244.00 in the Highway Machinery Account (DB5130.2), and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chatham Town Board accepts the price quote for (One) Rediboss Gas Powered Post Driver from REDI Driver, Inc., 1557 Foothill Dr. #A103, Boulder City, NV 89005 for the sum of \$2,413.00 and will be paid with money budgeted in the Highway Machinery account (DB5130.2). Councilwoman Haber seconded the motion.

VOTE

Ayes: Lull, Balcom, Haber, Wapner, **Nays** None Resolution adopted.

RES. 113-16 to Accept Price Quote for an Electric Sander Controls

Offered by Supervisor Lull, moved adoption as follows:

WHEREAS, the Town of Chatham Superintendent of Highways has received three price quotes for Electric Sander Controls for the Highway Department, and

WHEREAS, the Highway Department has a Budget of \$ 269,000 in the Highway Machinery Account (DB5130.4), and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Chatham Town Board accepts the price quote for (Two) Electric Sander Controls from Henderson Truck Equipment, 22686 Fisher Road, Watertown, NY for the sum of \$3,500 per controller making the total sum of \$7,000.00 to be paid with money budgeted in the Highway Machinery account (DB5130.4). Councilman Wapner seconded the motion

VOTE

Ayes: Lull, Balcom, Haber, Wapner, **Nays** None Resolution adopted.

REPORTS

Highway: report on file

Haber noted that if the Highway Department had an urgent need, she did not think it would be a problem since there were two meetings a month and they could pass resolutions at the end of workshop meetings. Lull mentioned that she had seen graffiti on roadways around Town. Balcom asked about the plans for County Route 13, and Rickert explained that the County will be chip sealing County Route 13 and then putting blacktop on County Route 17 next year.

Code Enforcement/Building Inspector: report is on file with the Supervisor.

Animal Control: On file.

Justice Court: On file.

Assessor: On file. Lull read the assessor's report about the tentative roll and Grievance Day.

Recreation: On file.

Supervisor (County Business): Lull explained that she was on the Real Property Committee and they were evaluating foreclosure properties to put a price on them to sell at the next auction. She also reported on the population decreases across the whole county. Town of Chatham estimates: April 2010: 4128, July 2015: 4000. Village of Chatham estimates: April 2010: 1770, July 2015: 1696.

Town Accounting Firm's Monthly Financial Report & Abstract: Presentation given.

Town Clerk/Collector: Rippel reported that the tax books will be returned to the County at the end of the month.

TOWN BUSINESS

Tax Exemptions: Lull reported that the State updated the STAR process, explaining that new applicants would not receive a STAR exemption but would need to register with NYS Tax and Finance and then receive a check, which would equal the amount they would ordinarily receive off their taxes. She stated that there is information on the website and residents are able to contact the assessor's office.

Baseball Team: Lull stated that the Board would meet with the Chatham Reds on May 25.

Building Department Hiring: Lull explained that the Board interviewed James Dallas and Kent Pratt and recommended Pratt since he had over 20 years of experience as Building Inspector in New Lebanon.

RES. 114-16 to Appoint a Second Building Inspector

Offered by Supervisor Lull and moved adoption to appoint Kent Pratt as a second building inspector for 15 hours per week at the rate of \$30 an hour. Councilwoman Haber seconded the resolution

VOTE

Ayes: Lull, Balcom, Haber, Wapner, **Nays** None Resolution adopted.

Tracy Memorial Renovations: Lull stated that the Board met with the Village on May 18 to further explore renovations. The Board agreed to ask Barton & Loguidice to do a feasibility study and noted that Mayor Tom Curran was forming a committee to address the wish list of projects.

Meeting Minutes: Lull noted that Resolution 82-16 from the minutes of March 17 should be edited to reflect that the Recreation Director's seasonal salary is \$16,500.

RES. 115-16 to Approve Town Board Meeting Minutes

Offered by Councilwoman Haber and moved adoption to accept the minutes of March 17 as edited, , March 25, April 7, April 14 and April 21. Councilman Balcom seconded the motion.

VOTE

Ayes: Lull, Balcom, Haber, Wapner, **Nays** None Resolution adopted.

RES. 116-16 To Accept the Abstract as Presented and Pay the Bills

Offered by Supervisor Lull and moved to accept the abstract as presented and to pay the bills. Councilman Balcom seconded the resolution

VOTE

Ayes: Lull, Balcom, Haber, Wapner, **Nays** None Resolution adopted.

RES. 117-16 To Accept the Town Accountant's Financial Report

Offered by Supervisor Lull and moved adoption to accept the Town Accountant's financial report. Councilman Balcom seconded the resolution

VOTE

Ayes: Lull, Balcom, Haber, Wapner, **Nays** None Resolution adopted.

RES. 118-16 To Apply for a Hudson River Valley Greenway Grant

Offered by Councilman Balcom, moved adoption as follows:

WHEREAS, the Town of Chatham is applying to the Hudson River Valley Greenway for a grant under the Greenway Communities Grant Program for a project entitled Comprehensive Plan Implementation to be located in Town of Chatham,

WHEREAS, the grant application requires the applicant municipality to obtain the approval/endorsement of the governing body of the municipality or municipalities in which the project will be located;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the governing board of the Town of Chatham hereby does approve and endorse the application for a grant under the Greenway Communities Grant Program, for a project known as Comprehensive Plan Implementation and located within this community. Councilwoman Haber seconded the resolution

VOTE

Ayes: Lull, Balcom, Haber, Wapner, **Nays** None Resolution adopted.

PUBLIC COMMENT

An Unidentified Woman asked about the bridge project and how it was paid by federal grants. Tammy Shaw explained that the Town pays the money and then is reimbursed by the County and State.

Joe Rickert asked about the new Building Department appointment by noting that an hourly rate of \$30 seemed extravagant and wondered if that was only for now or all year round. Lull replied that the Building Department now had two part-time inspectors and there was a lot of work to do. There was some discussion about the previous building inspector and that the Town could afford the new salaries because they were not covering health insurance. Rickert asked how much the current inspector made per hour. Lull replied that it was \$21.37. Rickert asked if he was okay with the new inspector earning \$30 an hour. Lull replied that the current inspector was still in school. **Brian Albert** asked if the position was advertised and Lull replied that it was not but that the Board had been beating the bushes. Albert stated that Mr. Quinn, current building inspector, said that if Albert had any issues with the department that he should apply for the position.

Jim Temple reiterated from his comments from past meetings that the Town should look into issue of having the Town Engineer take care of the water protection plan and noted that if the Engineer was familiar with the Comprehensive Plan there should not be any charges. Temple also offered to look into the issue. Lull stated that they have an advisory committee with a professional planner for these issues. Temple stated that he was talking about the Engineer's expertise, not the planner's ability. Balcom stated that the planner would identify the issues and address them. Temple concluded that as long as the Engineer looks at the Plan, he would be happy.

Tammy Shaw mentioned the Engineer's price quote for the swing set and that the Town was paying him a good amount of money for the review. She asked why the Park department head or another Town employee could not get a free price quote on the equipment. Lull explained that the engineer did more by conducting an evaluation, site review, and equipment recommendations.

MOTION TO ADJOURN: Balcom moved to adjourn, Haber seconded, and it was unanimously carried to adjourn the meeting around 9:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted by,

Beth Anne Rippel, Town Clerk