

REGULAR MEETING –ATHENS TOWN BOARD – October 3, 2016

A regular meeting of the Athens Town Board held on October 3, 2016, was called to order by Supervisor Robert F. Butler, Jr. at 7:00 p.m. with the Pledge of the Allegiance to the Flag.

The following people were present: Supervisor Butler; Councilwoman Mary H. Brandow; Councilman Michael Ragaini; Councilman Anthony Paluch; Councilman Richard M. Surrano, Jr.; Highway Superintendent John J. Farrell and Town Clerk Linda M. Stacey.

These people were also present: Attorneys Virginia Benedict and Clotelle Drakeford; Acting Assessor Carol McBride; Bookkeeper/ Budget Officer Michael Strenka; Code Enforcement Officer George Holsopple; Deputy Supervisor Joseph Iraci; Michael Campbell; Barbara Trembacz and Fran McCusker.

The following bills were audited by the Board and ordered signed.

General Abstract #18, vouchers #449 through #474, inclusive for \$71,815.03.

Highway Abstract #17, vouchers #167 through #171 inclusive for \$678.67.

Code Enforcement Officer George Holsopple reported that water from the water well of Thomas McGuire was tested by the State and they determined that it wasn't contaminated with Ecoli, but total Coliform. The State advised Mr. Holsopple that the Report is to be sent next week.

The Court date for Mr. Lanahan is this Thursday at 2:00 pm. Discussion followed.

Acting Assessor Carol McBride informed the Board that there were 2 small claim parcels filed for 2016 to date.

An Article 78 has been posed to the Town Attorney, as the Assessor disagrees with the decision of the Hearing Officer of the Small Claims case.

STAR TRANSITION

Star is now called the Star Benefit. NYS Taxation and Finance will be mailing checks to those registered. Also, NYS Taxation and Finance will be combining the Property Tax Freeze Credit and the Property Tax Relief Credit automatically under one check. Upstate NY Property owners in Greene County will be receiving \$185.00. In addition to the Property Tax Freeze Credit, in its final year, based upon the 2% Cap.

Mrs. McBride stated that as of this date there will be no Board of Assessment Review meeting for October, to review Petitions of the Assessor. Town Board is pending approval of a fifth Board of Assessment Review Member.

Solar Opt Out: Mrs. McBride expressed some concerns on solar farms and leaseholders. Are they receiving an agricultural exemption? Her office is trying to find verbiage in the law that will allow the exemption for the residential property owners. (She handed out fact sheets to all Board members and the Attorney.

Enhanced Star Renewals to be mailed out this week.

2017 Revaluation Update: Assessor McBride reported that Town consultant, Bob Hilbert, Bob Boatwright and Donna Steubens were in the office last week finalizing the update and collecting commercial inventory data at North East Treaters, Peckham and JR Deshaine Truck Terminal per the Town's approved cyclical Plan with the State. This data doesn't include new construction, demolition, Roll Sections 5, 6, and 7. Disclosure notices of new values are to be sent by March 1st, and informals with property owners will be held at the Fire House, tentative March 13, 14, & 15 and March 20, 21, & 22. Appointment for hearings scheduled between the hours of 1:30 – 6:30 pm. The remainder of the balance due for their work for 2017 is \$3000.

Supervisor Butler asked if we had something signed saying that we were going to do the reval? He said that last year when it came up at a meeting, the Board didn't decide to do it. He said he was curious as to why we were doing it, not opposed to it, just curious, if nothing was signed. Discussion followed. It was decided to continue to move forward as the work has already been done, however communications need to be worked on.

Highway Superintendent John J. Farrell reported that the grad all work was finished. Town Highway employees attended a couple of seminars. They worked on the purling on the new fuel shed.

The benches and tables that were ordered by Lynn Brunner for Green Lake Park (from the left over Bicentennial money) have been received, and are being stored at the garage until they can be installed. Mr. Farrell is waiting for the proper placement from the County, before they can be set permanently.

Board members were reminded that Cleanup Day is October 15th from 8:30am to 12:30 pm at the Town garage.

Discussion followed of putting a generator in the new addition to the Town Garage.

Bookkeeper/ Budget Officer Michael Strenka reviewed the Supervisor's monthly Report with the Board. He then went over the tentative budget with the Board. He explained fund balances, expenditures and revenues, etc.

Councilman Richard M. Surrano, Jr. made a motion seconded by Councilman Michael Ragaini *to approve the Supervisor's Report as presented*. Ayes-5 (Butler; Brandow; Ragaini; Paluch; Surrano) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Mr. Strenka encouraged the Board members to review the tentative budget and come back with any changes by October 17th.

Joe Wolodkevich of Intelligent Technology Solutions (ITS) came before the Board to talk about the quote he presented to the Board for computer maintenance and a possible website. He stated the lifecycle of a new computer is 5 to 7 years. He spoke about costs, and about the three computers that are being rented. He said the oldest computers are in the Code Office (2010), the Bookkeeper's office (2010) and the laptop in the Assessor's office. He suggested that the Assessor's office computer be replaced first. The Server was purchased in 2014. The Router renewal is due in 2017.

Website: Structural Changes- bringing all the current info to the new website, and setting it up. This would be \$2800.00. After someone was trained on what to do, the website would be self-managed.

The Town Clerk's Report was reviewed by the Board.

Supervisor Robert F. Butler, Jr. made a motion seconded by Councilman Michael Ragaini *to approve the Town Clerk's Report as presented*. Ayes-5 (Butler; Brandow; Ragaini; Paluch; Surrano) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Councilman Richard M. Surrano, Jr. made a motion seconded by Councilman Michael Ragaini *to approve the minutes of September 19, 2016 as read*. Ayes-5 (Butler; Brandow; Ragaini; Paluch; Surrano) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Attorney Virginia Benedict handed out a proposed local law to Opt out of Exemption from Taxation for Certain Solar or Wind Energy Systems or Farm for Board review.

Handbook: Attorney Clotelle Drakeford handed out copies of Civil Service Rules for Greene County, and Greene County Civil Service Commission Rules Appendices to Board members. These can be placed on file to replace section 75 in the handbook; they will be referenced in the handbook.

Deputy Supervisor Joe Iraci Spoke on Short Term Rental Law. He stated that he had been re-thinking the law. He imagined living in the house with one of these weekend parties, and all that goes with it and knows he couldn't do it. Now he feels that the law should be made for a stay of a month or two at least.

Budget Workshop scheduled for October 12th at 6:00 pm.

Supervisor Robert F. Butler, Jr. made a motion seconded by Councilman Richard M. Surrano, Jr. to purchase 3 computers for Assessor (to replace laptop); Codes; and Bookkeeper out of this year's budget. Ayes-5 (Butler; Brandow; Ragaini; Paluch; Surrano) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Councilman Richard M. Surrano, Jr. made a motion seconded by Councilwoman Mary H. Brandow to move forward with ITS for the Website. Ayes-5 (Butler; Brandow; Ragaini; Paluch; Surrano) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Supervisor Robert F. Butler, Jr. announced that there would be a joint meeting with the Town Board of Catskill on October 17th, at 6:00, for the Leeds Fire Protection Contract.

As there was no further business to come before the meeting, a motion to adjourn was made by Councilman Anthony Paluch seconded by Councilman Michael Ragaini. Ayes-5 (Butler; Brandow; Ragaini; Paluch; Surrano) Noes-0 Absent-0 Abstentions-0

Meeting Adjourned 8:50 pm