

REGULAR MEETING – ATHENS TOWN BOARD – April 18, 2022

The regular meeting of the Athens Town Board was called to order on April 18, 2022, at 7:00 p.m. at the Village of Athens Volunteer Firehouse at 39 Third St, by Supervisor Michael Pirrone with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

The following people were present: Supervisor Pirrone; Councilmember Michael Ragaini; Councilmember Anthony Paluch; Councilmember Shannon Spinner and Town Clerk Linda M. Stacey. (Councilmember Mary H. Brandow and Highway Superintendent John J, Farrell were absent.)

These people were also present: Attorney George McHugh; Bookkeeper/Budget Officer Don Pietro; Code Enforcement Officer Albert Gasparini; Barbara Trembacz; Nancy Poylo; Mary Finneran; Donald and Cari Gardner; Mike Campbell; Peggy Pieruzzi; Nolan and Susan Pazin; Constance Pazin; Tom Satterlee; Robert Brunner; Paulette Miller-Travis; Gerald Bunting and M. K. Garvey.

Supervisor Pirrone and Attorney McHugh spoke about who was sent copies of the proposed local law. All of the Town Board members and the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals Chairmen.

Councilmember Anthony Paluch made a motion seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini to approve the following vouchers that were audited by the Board members.

General Abstract #8, vouchers #163 through #184 inclusive for \$14,769.57.

Highway Abstract #8, vouchers #49 through #61 inclusive for \$5,826.69.

Trust & Custodian Abstract #2, voucher 2 for \$2,360.00. (Convenient store/gas station) Ayes-4 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Paluch; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-1 (Brandow) Abstentions-0

Councilmember Shannon Spinner made a motion seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini to approve the minutes of April 4, 2022, as read. Ayes-4 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Paluch; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-1 (Brandow) Abstentions-0

Department Heads: (John is on Vacation this week.)

Clean up Day is all set for April 30th behind the village Firehouse and DPW building from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in Athens.

Also, on April 30th there will be a prescription drug take back at the Sheriff's Office on Route 9W in Cocksackie.

Permits have been submitted to the New York State DEC as well as Army Corp of Engineer's for the culvert project for this summer waiting to hear back from them.

He has met with the Board of Elections in reference to the polling place and they have approved the handicapped accessibility and they will be ready for this year's Primary. (This would be for Districts #2 and #4.)

The highway crew have been busy with the gradall on Town Roads. With the recent heavy rains, they made sure all the ditches were open and not plugged with leaves.

The highway crew will spend Monday putting docks in, with the Village. They have an employee who is leaving. John had an ad put in Daily Mail as well as putting it on the Town webpage. Currently waiting on resumes.

Assessor Dawn DeRose's written report showed that the Town's Final taxable assessed value for 2021 was \$531,563,771. The tentative taxable assessed value is currently \$532,579,939, this is an increase of \$1,016,168.

This increase is due to permits received from the building inspector or data collector. This also includes splits, mergers, special franchise, and ceilings. When the Town does the systematic analysis, all the data collection will be assessed Town wide, since the data collection has been going on for the past two years and is still incomplete. It will all be valued at that time.

Code Enforcement Officer Albert Gasparini reported that he attended a WebEx conference with NYS Building and Codes on April 12,2022 for Dresser Properties variance appeal to use his cabin for short term rental. The variance was denied. The State said that it can't be used for short term rental.

The Building Department continues to work with Attorney John Dowd on Freepoint Solar Article 78.

Mr. Gasparini also issued 2 building permits; He did 10 building inspections; Answered building permit inquiries; and had 8 Certificate of Occupancy Search requests.

Bookkeeper/Budget Officer Don Pierro reported that the current year Funds are running normally with 25% of the year now recorded and closed. All Bank Statements and cash Reconciliations for the first quarter of 2022 have been provided to the Outside CPA Firm, along with a backup of the QuickBooks activity for their review. January 2022 was previously provided to the Firm as Part of the 2021 Annual Financial Report preparation and verification which is now completed.

Mr. Pierro was able to participate in several webinars for the ARPA Funds. He received the working plan for infrastructure improvements applying ARPA Funds as provided by the Superintendent of Highways and reviewed by the Town Supervisor. The deadline for the first part is April 30, 2022.

The lease expenditure for 2022 rent for the Village of Athens has been accrued, (as per the Supervisor and 2 Councilmembers), and classified the expense to a liability account (Due to other Governments). The funds will be held as a liability until the Board approves the lease and the rent payout as part of the AP voucher process thereby clearing out the "Due to other Governments."

The Annual Financial Report (AUD) has been filed, received, and published.

On a motion made by Councilmember Anthony Paluch seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini the Board moved to approve a departmental compilation of the financial activity within the Fund Balance accounts for Funds "DA" and "DB". The scope of this financial exercise will begin between the period 12/31/15 through 12/31/19 to determine the nature and use of said funds. Ayes-3(Ragaini; Paluch; Spinner) Noes-1 Pirrone Absent-1 Brandow Abstentions-0

RE: Real Property Tax Representation with respect to the Athens Generation Plant.

Supervisor Pirrone handed out resumes to the Board members, for Laurence P. Farbstein. Mr. Farbstein is President, of IUVC, Inc. and a NYS Certified Appraiser.

Resident Cari Gardner spoke about Green Hydrogen. Hydrogen is only acceptable when it is extracted from water. This is non-polluting and has the potential to support a renewable energy and clean economy.

Supervisor Pirrone reminded the Board that Laurence Farbstein had proceeded with Resolution #21-40 for services regarding the Planned Systematic Evaluation for Real Property Assessment and Taxation Consultant services.

He informed the Board that confirmation to proceed with the new proposal from Mr. Farbstein to be available, for negotiations with Greene County, Greene County IDA, Athens Generation Facility and/or any combination thereof, with respect to any potential settlement of their request for a PILOT extension/new PILOT including, but not limited to, direct discussions with all sets of attorneys and/or their principals.

Councilmember Shannon Spinner made a motion seconded by Councilmember Michael Ragaini RE: Real Property Tax Representation with respect to the Athens Generation Plant to obtain the services of Laurence Farbstein in his capacity as Real Property Tax Consultant. Mr. Farbstein will be available at the Supervisor's express direction, for direct negotiations with Greene County, Greene County IDA, Athens Generation Facility and/or any combination thereof, with respect to any potential settlement of their request for a PILOT extension/ new PILOT including, but not limited to, direct discussions with all sets of attorneys and/ or their principals.

Further, he will work with the Town Assessor and Town Attorney with respect to the placement of a future assessed value for the plant complex consistent with the Town's interest.

This motion was passed as follows: Ayes-4(Pirrone; Ragaini; Paluch; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-1(Brandow) Abstentions-0

The Town Board reviewed the preliminary Celebration Venue Proposal, which contained possible zoning changes. This was the first time they had looked at it with only the Town of Athens added.

Attorney McHugh advised them to read it over and come back with questions and suggestions so we can get this moving the proper way.

Resident Michael Campbell came before the Board to discuss property issues, and made an appointment to go and meet with Attorney McHugh.

The Town received a request from the Village of Athens to support their solicitation of ARPA funds for Infrastructure Projects and Repairs (i.e., underground waterlines & sewer lines).

Councilmember Michael Ragaini made a motion seconded by Councilmember Shannon Spinner that the Town Board of Athens, support the Village of Athens in their solicitation of ARPA Funds for Infrastructure Projects and Repairs (i.e., underground waterlines & sewer lines). Ayes-4 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Paluch; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-1(Brandow) Abstentions-0

The Town Clerk handed out copies of air purifiers for Town Board consideration for use in the Town office. Three (3) quotes were submitted: one – A Bissell Smart Purifier for \$236.89. Second- Hestrom Hepa Air purifier for \$249.95. Third- is Okaysou smart Air purifier for \$159.99. They all cover about 1000 Sq. Ft.

Councilmember Michael Ragaini made a motion seconded by Councilmember Shannon Spinner that the Clerk order the Bissell Air Purifier for \$236.89 from Amazon. Ayes-4 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Paluch; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-1(Brandow) Abstentions-0

Reminder that Village & Town Cleanup Day is April 30, 2022. Medical disposal will be conducted at the Greene County Sheriff Dept. on Route 9W, Cossackie, also on April 30th.

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Other Reminders:

Town Planning Board Meeting: April 28, 2022

Town Board Meeting: May 2, 2022

Town ZBA meeting: May 13, 2022

Athens Community Day: June 11, 2022

Tuesday MAY 24, 2022 the Village and Town of Athens will present: Building Sustainable Business in Athens. (From 5:30 to 7:00 pm at the Athens VFD, 39 3rd St.)

Supervisor Pirrone informed the Members that Patrick Doyle had advised him, that Flint Mine Solar had started drilling.

As there was no further business to come before the meeting, a motion to adjourn was made by Councilmember Anthony Paluch seconded by Councilmember Shannon Spinner. Ayes-4 (Pirrone; Ragaini; Paluch; Spinner) Noes-0 Absent-1 (Brandow) Abstentions-0 Meeting adjourned at 7:40 P. M.