

HOPEWELL TOWN BOARD MEETING APRIL 15, 2020

The regular scheduled Town Board Meeting for the Town of Hopewell was held at the Hopewell Town Hall on Wednesday evening April 15, 2020 at 7:05 P.M., with Supervisor Ted Bateman presiding.

Present:	Supervisor	Ted Bateman
	Council Member	Erin Everson
	Council Member	Adam Sanford
	Council Member	Jeff Trickey
	Council Member	Matt Goodman

Others Present: Code Enforcement Officer Norm Teed, Town Assessor Kelly Ducar, and Town Clerk Denise Hood

A motion was made by Council Member Trickey, seconded by Council Member Goodman to approve the Minutes of the March 18, 2020 Town Board Meeting.

Adopted: Vote: Ayes 5 Nays 0

Privilege of the Floor

No one spoke for Privilege of Floor

Communications and Reports

The following communications and reports were received since the last meeting:

- a. Clifton Springs Fire Department-2019 Annual Report
- b. The Inside Dirt- Cornell Cooperative Extension- April 2020
- c. Happy Tails Shelter Report- March 2020

Old Business

Approve Monthly Reports

A motion was made by Council Member Sanford, seconded by Council Member Trickey to approve the monthly reports of the Town Clerk, Water Superintendent, Code Enforcement and the Supervisor.

Adopted: Vote: Ayes 5 Nays 0

Audited Vouchers-Abstract #4-April

A motion was made by Council Member Trickey, seconded by Council Member Goodman to pay the following Audited Vouchers for Abstract #4:

Vouchers # 81-105	\$ 21,919.87	General
Vouchers # 1047-1062	\$ 14,787.83	Highway
Vouchers # 2050-2073	\$ 58,685.44	Water

Adopted: Vote: Ayes 5 Nays 0

New Business

Updates by Town Officials

Town Clerk-Denise Hood

The end of the tax season has come. The Town of Hopewell is at 94% collected. On Tuesday, April 7, 2020, I mailed the Ontario County Treasurer their final payment of \$499,742.31. The process was done a bit differently than past years, because of COVID19. Most of the process was completed on line. There are 99 unpaid 2020 Town/County tax bills returned to the Ontario County Treasurer.

The following records from 2013 will be destroyed since they have reached their 7 year retention period: 2013-Water Bill Receipts, Water Department Vouchers, Highway Department Vouchers, Bookkeeper Abstracts, and General Vouchers and Tax Receipts.

This week the Town has begun learning about the new Square Credit Card System. The Refuse Station, Town Clerk and Code Enforcement Officer will be able to accept Credit Card payments. We are still in the learning stages and are working on being able to accept the credit cards on line for payment.

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There is a fee that is charged to the Town for the use of the Square. The Town of Hopewell will be charging an additional 3.4%, user fee, when an individual uses a credit card. When the Town is able to accept credit card payments through the computer system, there will be a higher percent rate to pay a bill, because of a higher security risk. We are not sure of the rate percentage at this time.

The town received another bid for landscaping of the cemeteries. **(Exhibit B)** Currently they have bids from Bay landscaping and FTLC, LLC. The Board read the bids and decided to accept the bid from Bay Landscaping. Supervisor Bateman added FTLC will be mowing the Benham Cemetery.

A motion was made by Council Member Sanford, seconded by Council Member Goodman to approve the bid from Bay Landscaping for the landscaping of the cemeteries.

Adopted: Vote: Ayes 5 Nays 0

Code Enforcement Officer – Norm Teed

Code Enforcement Officer Teed provided a copy of the T.Y. Lin International, Code Compliance Services Agreement to the Board, for their review and potential approval. The completion of the agreement would expedite Uniform Code Compliance Reviews and make other Code Compliance Services available, when and if requested by the Code Enforcement Officer.

Code Enforcement Officer Teed commented that he is issuing permits via mail and email. Limited inspections are being completed due to the virus. At least 2 local municipalities have suspended all permits as well as inspections. He is continuing inspections if he feels the location is safe to do so and is wearing PPE and practicing social distancing. Applicants are informed of construction restrictions detailed in the Governor's Executive Order 202.6.

The Planning and Zoning Boards have paused due to Covid-19. The Boards will resume meeting as soon as practical and will most likely increase the meeting frequency at that point in order to catch up on any application back-log.

Supervisor-Ted Bateman

TY LIN Proposal-The Town Board discussed the TY LIN engineering company, Council Member Sanford expressed concern of this being the only option. As discussion ensued, the Town Board came to a decision to use TY LIN engineering as Code Enforcement Officer Teed indicated they were the best for the town.

A motion was made by Council Member Trickey, seconded by Council Member Goodman to use TY LIN Engineering.

Adopted: Vote: Ayes 4 Nays 1-Council Member Sanford

Accept resignation of Stewart North from the Board of Assessment Review- Stewart North has resigned from the Board of Assessment Review.

A motion was made by Council Member Trickey, seconded by Council Member Goodman to accept the Resignation of Stewart North from the Board of Assessment Review.

Adopted: Vote: Ayes 5 Nays 0

Resolution #8-Recognition of Appreciation for Stewart North (Exhibit A)

A motion was made by Council Member Goodman, seconded by Council Member Trickey to approve the Resolution of Appreciation for Stewart North.

Adopted: Vote: Ayes 5 Nays 0

Appointment of Karen Carson to complete Stewart North's term- After hearing of Stewart North's resignation, Karen Carson expressed interest in completing his term on the Board Assessment Review. The Town Board members asked if it was necessary for a 5th person, right now. Assessor Ducar indicated that on a year, such as this being a re-val year, it would be nice to have a full Board. Training goes through Robin Johnson as per NYS requirements.

The Town Board ensued a lengthy discussion that the applicants for the Board of Assessment Review must maintain a high degree of professionalism and confidentiality due to the sensitivity of the assessment process. While assessments are public knowledge, deliberations are not.

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A motion was made by Supervisor Bateman, seconded by Council Member Sanford for the appointment of Karen Carson to the Board Assessment Review to complete Stewart North's term till 9/30/2023.

Adopted: Vote: Ayes 5 Nye 0

Water Districts #4 & #6 Special Election- There has been questions asked to the Town board Members as to who is allowed to vote in the Special Election, currently scheduled for May 20th. Jeff Graff, Town of Hopewell's Attorney, has given a better explanation of who is allowed to vote as follows:

Pursuant to New York State law, the following rules govern the voting in this special election:

- Each owner may vote once.
- Each tenant by the entirety, tenant in common and joint tenant owning property within the district is entitled to **one** vote.
- Any owner of multiple parcels still has but **one** vote.
- A partnership, corporation or other business entity has **one** vote to be cast by a partner, officer or other agent established by written resolution and presented to the election official.
- An estate that has been opened has **one** vote to be cast by an administrator/executor who is established by Letters of appointment issued by the Surrogates Court and presented to the election official.
- A trust has **one** vote to be cast by a trustee who is established by a copy of the trust agreement or memorandum of trust identifying the trustee(s) and presented to the election official.

In light of the current COVID 19 requirements, the date of the Special Election will change.

Re-Evaluation- Council Member Trickey mentioned that there is a concern for the tax payers because of the COVID19 situation going on. Council Member Trickey asked Town Assessor Kelly Ducar if there would be a penalty to hold off the re-evaluation for a year or would it have to be in the next four years. Town Assessor Kelly Ducar indicated it takes a complete year to do the evaluation. Also, Ducar stated the re-evaluation is done. It is too late to stop the Re-evaluation, right now. Unfortunately, Ducar indicated, they have to move forward with the re-evaluation. Town Assessor Kelly Ducar stated whether the taxes changes, it depends on the budget.

Council Member Goodman stated that these are very unprecedented times and it is very difficult to make a decision for our taxpayers. Council Member Everson is concerned for the taxpayers and would rather have the re-evaluation postponed for a year. Supervisor Bateman mentioned that if we wait 4 years, the taxpayers will suffer down the road. The school budget is what changes your school taxes. Council Member Goodman asked to go on record to have the re-evaluation to be put off a year.

Council Member Trickey asked Town Assessor Ducar if the sales are lowered, after this re-evaluation, then Town Assessor Ducar will have to do an adjustment? The answer was yes.

A motion was made by Supervisor Bateman, seconded by Council Member Trickey to continue with the Re-evaluation.

Adopted: Vote: Ayes 3 Nays 2-Council Member Goodman & Council Member Everson

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Town Budget- Supervisor Bateman brought to the Town Boards attention; he had spoken with the Town Accountant, Tina DeNigro. Tina indicated to Supervisor Bateman, since the Town heavily depends more on sales tax than property tax, it is not looking good. Supervisor Bateman and Tina DeNigro looked at Hopewell's budget conservatively; the Town of Hopewell will need to watch expenses to a tune of approximately \$320,000.

It was decided that the truck that was ordered for the Highway Department, be postponed. Discussion ensued regarding what can be done to save money for the Town of Hopewell. Code Enforcement Officer Teed recommended when anyone wants to spend money, Supervisor Bateman and/or Deputy Supervisor, Sanford is/are to approve it, as other Towns are doing.

The Town Board agreed that a Resolution be made for a Spending Pause, effective as of April 15, 2020. Expenditures are to be approved by Supervisor Ted Bateman and/or Deputy Supervisor Adam Sanford.

A motion was made by Council Member Goodman, seconded by Council Member Trickey to have the Resolution written up to have a Spending Pause in the Town of Hopewell. **(Exhibit C)**

Adopted: Vote: Ayes 5 Nays 0

A motion was made by Supervisor Bateman, seconded by Council Member Everson to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 P.M.

Respectfully submitted, *Denise L. Hood - Town Clerk April 22, 2020*

Next Meeting: May 20, 2020 at 7:00 P.M.