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## TOWN OF NEWFANE

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### **TOWN OF NEWFANE TOWN BOARD WORK SESSION MAY 9, 2024, 6:30 pm**

The Town of Newfane Town Board Work Session was held in the Town Hall, 2737 Main Street, Newfane, NY. The Session was called to order by Supervisor John Syracuse at 6:30pm

#### **Town Board Members Present:**

Supervisor, John Syracuse, Councilwoman, Sue Neidlinger, Councilmen, Robert Horanburg, Rick Coleman and Peter Robinson.

#### **Others Present:**

David Schmidt-Building Inspector/Code Enforcer, Mike Mills, Jon Miller, Jim Sansone - Town Attorney, Rosemary Sansone, Mary Hastings, Brian Sibiga, Julie Nankey and guests Paula Gill and Ron Zito.

Meeting called to order at 6:30pm. The March 18, 2024, Special Meeting Minutes and the April 11, 2024 Work Session minutes were asked for approval. Rick Coleman made a motion to accept both sets of minutes and Robert Horanburg seconded. All agree. Motion passed.

Supervisor Syracuse brought up the matters regarding the Jackson Street Waterline Project and asked Brian Sibiga, our Town Engineer from Wendel, to explain. Jackson St. has older water lines, probably close to 100 yrs. old and contains very hodge-podge fixes and has questionable water flow and pressure. This is questionable for the necessary "fire flow" of water needed for emergencies that flow through them. This is an area that badly needs upgrading. Wendel wants to apply for grant funding. We also need to pass a Bond Resolution to show seriousness of the Town's part of getting grants. Some of the insulated pipes are already in a high-water table.

Also, as part of this project is the West Lake Rd. The pipe conditions here are very serious. Old black cast iron pipes that are really in bad shape; people need filters to have clear water. This infrastructure is in need of immediate attention. Prices for the needed materials have gone up considerably. But Wendel wants to be prepared and not short us for funding. The Bond Resolution is needed for these improvements. This will give us money and not have us borrow funds at high interest rates. Old sections of Town pipes are

deteriorating that will require up-sizing. The time span starts working with DOH. We will be getting bids for everything except crossing the streams. Wendel wants qualified people to send in bids. Brian stated that time depends on materials and getting everything in place. Existing lines will stay in place while the new lines are put in. This will not affect the farmers and irrigation. West Lake Rd has been in the thought process since 2017. Unfortunately, Covid hit and additional time has passed, and we really need to work on these times before something happens. The Water Dept has already been fixing major holes in this pipeline. Jackson St. pipelines are newer and already have an Order for Public Hearing and an Order of Publication of improvements.

After hearing all the information that Brian Sibiga offered to the Board, Sue Neidlinger made a motion to proceed with the Bond Resolution and Pete Robinson seconded it. A Roll Call vote was taken.

- Sue Neidlinger - Aye
- Rick Coleman - Aye
- Pete Robinson - Aye
- Robert Horanburg - Aye
- Supervisor Syracuse - Aye.

Motion passed.

Brian Sibiga presented some old photocopies that were found at Wendel Engineering from past years. The Town gratefully accepted them as they showed “ideas” of a Break-wall years before we needed one. He also informed the Board that the Hawkins Law firm will engage in Bond Council. Rick Coleman made a motion to accept Hawkins Law firm and Robert Horanburg seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed.

Supervisor and Brian Sibiga are to meet in regard to the Fish Grinder located at the Marina, which is not working properly at all and unfortunately it is getting to be a busy season already. Brain stated that the "Barracuda Model" that is being looked into for a new replacement is used by the State and they highly recommended this unit. Funding help is in the works.

The Supervisor referred the Board to pages 4-5 of current Work Rules, referring to Retirement and unpaid accrued Sick Time. Mike Mills, Mary Hastings and Julie Nankey were invited to join the Board, as this affects them and their decisions regarding retirement. Currently Sick Time can be used prior to the actual retirement date but it also states that a doctor’s note is needed with more than 3 consecutive “sick-days” taken. There is a misconstrued understanding of how this works. This also could leave a huge gap in timing of someone retiring and someone filling that position. So now this is being brought to the Board for discussion. The Supervisor is asking to amend the work rules so that future non-Union Employee-Retirees can be paid-out for their accrued sick time. Our Union group already does this. Different ideas are talked about. The Supervisor stated that a one-time payout would be best for the Town and the Employees. Amending the work rules would be the best place to start. No actual dates of Retirement have been stated from anyone. And looking at things from the management side, having the bodies in place during transitional time, such as Retirement, is more important than having the employees "take sick time” at the end of their career, here with the Town. The Supervisor is very thankful that these employees have given a significant amount of time to get things in place for their successors. It was asked if training can happen before the actual retirements are announced because training is necessary and working side by side

important. Worst case scenario is that a training person can learn and be available even if the "retired" person stays on a bit longer. The Supervisor stated that he and Mary Hastings, Town Assessor, will be meeting with John Shoemaker from the County, on Friday May 10th, to discuss the Assessor Position. What is being discussed with a payout to Retirees is that it is a compliment to the Town Employees and all their dedicated service through the years! The appropriate language will follow the Union contract wording on Retirement, replacing the last three (3) paragraphs of page 4 on the current Town Work Rules. Rick Coleman suggested that the wording be fine-tuned and presented at the May Board Meeting. A Resolution will be needed as well.

Water Superintendent Mike Mills and Highway Superintendent Jon Miller were asked to join the Board at the table. The Supervisor explained the situation of Jon Miller taking over the open position of Mike Mills once he retires. Other towns have a shared Highway/ Water Superintendent. Many discussions, including the Union, have been in the works to start this process. Mike Mills commended Jon Miller for his confidence in taking on this dual position and moving forward with getting his "D" license. Jon had been with the Water Dept for 7 years prior to the Highway Department. A deputy Water Super will be needed (as there is already a Deputy Highway Super.) Another body in the Water Dept is a good thing. The Deputy can bring things to the Supervisors attention but not approve things. The Deputies are in the Union. Mike explained that Newfane works with Lockport and Wilson Water Departments when extra help is needed. They go above and beyond when extra help is needed in neighboring towns. The concern of two different positions was brought up in the fact that one is an elected position, the Highway Superintendent and one is an appointed position, the Water Superintendent. There were different options discussed. The most logical was splitting it back to 2 Positions if and when the time ever comes that a new Highway Super was elected. Supervisor asked if the Board was comfortable with proceeding as he wants to have a Civil Service stamp of approval. The Town Board is fine with proceeding with this action. Notifying the Union is part of this action.

Next on the agenda, the Supervisor introduced Paula Gill from the Bike Trail to Wilson and Ron Zito, Co-founder of Friends of the Lakeshore Trail. Charlie Polimey is an Engineer that they work with. Paula is technology and partnership. The Niagara River Greenway Commission continues on a Shoreline Trail South of Buffalo, to the Niagara River at Fort Niagara. They want to extend this trail all along the Lake Ontario Shore. This is a Multi-Billion dollar possibility. Including the Northern Municipalities, they would connect all of these trails. It was originally planned for the WWTP/Sewer lines that were to be done between Wilson and Olcott, but that unfortunately didn't happen. Paula announced that NYS on their own, is repaving Route 18, but not sure how long and far this will be. Their group has been racing forward with ideas to improve Route 18 for bike trails as well. They are a fast moving team, with not a lot of rules to follow. Wilson wants to reach out to other Municipalities to create partnerships and make this trail happen. Many different ideas and options are out there. They want to work "in concert" with what we are already planning. They are offering their services to help us move forward quickly.

- Paving and striping along the new paved roadways.
- Signage for travelers on foot, bikes or vehicles to identify area attractions.
- Business development signage with QR Codes, so people can download these on the cellphones for easy advertising.

Because of this summer paving, things need to move fast. We, Newfane, can utilize their services to keep this moving quickly. Their interest is somewhat different than the Greenway. The Board questioned who engineers these bike paths as there are many bridges on Route 18. It was stated that their third co-founder is an Engineer to help with these matters. They don't ask for changes from the State - they ask for considerations. They maximize what they can and plant seeds and work with the DOT for the long term. They are currently working with Wilson and are looking at Newfane and Porter, with the hopes of reaching out to Somerset when RTT would make its Northern towns part of the RTT. The Supervisor is asking about a budget. Robin stated that the biggest ticket is the paving and stripping and that the State is doing that! Signage will be the next big thing. Some signs may be donated, but signs are a definite to protect riders but also promote business along the way. The Board is highly interested in using their free services to continue on with this. They can submit reports or come in person to report to the Town. An Engagement Letter is all that is needed at this time and will be sent to them next week by the Supervisor. He will also make sure that the Board Members and Town Attorney receive all the same paperwork that he has via email.

The Supervisor asked the Town Board for permission regarding Municipal Solutions and if he could sign paperwork to allow them to gather Grant Funding for the future, for the Town of Newfane. Sue Neidlinger made the Motion and Peter Robinson seconded. All were in favor. Motion passed.

The Kayak launch will need to be "re-adjusted" from a 80" to a 60" and a separate 20" to house electrical. A Charge Order for Kayak Launch was received for the amount of \$3,392.85. Rick Coleman made the motion to accept the CO and Robert Horanburg seconded. A Roll Call vote was taken:

- Sue Neidlinger - Aye
- Rick Coleman - Aye
- Pete Robinson - Aye
- Robert Horanburg - Aye
- Supervisor Syracuse - Aye

Motion passed.

The Town is in its third year of the Bathymetric Survey, which was covered by Redi Funding. We will need to sign up for another 3 years of testing. Robert Horanburg made a motion to sign on ASI again for their services. Pete Robinson seconded. A Roll call vote was taken.

- Sue Neidlinger - Aye
- Rick Coleman - Aye
- Pete Robinson - Aye
- Robert Horanburg - Aye
- Supervisor Syracuse - Aye

Motion passed.

The Supervisor gave compliments to the Building Inspector for sticking to the rules getting letters out to the residents that require being notified.

Sunday, May 19th is the Historical Society Apple Blossom Festival with the Time Capsule being dug up and transported by horse and carriage to the grounds, as part of the Towns Bicentennial.

They are looking into the possibility of new signage in front of the Court Building, which is the old Town Hall, after the capsule, which was buried there, has been removed. The entrance to the Court-house and re-tiling of bathrooms also needs updating.

The seasonal employees are working hard on Main Street including south of Ewings Road. Olcott cleanup is underway. It was brought up that the Free Book Library at the LVS is interfering with electrical panels and Robert Horanburg was wondering if it can be moved. Recommended to talk to Gina and the Lions Club as well about this issue.

Sue Neidlinger made a motion to adjourn, and Pete Robinson seconded. All were in favor. The Work Session was adjourned at 8:08pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary L Zeller  
Confidential Secretary