**REGULAR MEETING, TOWN OF COLUMBUS, May 8, 2025**

A Regular Meeting of the Town Board of the Town of Columbus, County of Chenango

and the State of New York was held at the Town Courtroom, 4340 State Hwy 80 in Columbus on

**May 8, 2025**

Meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm by Diane Scalzo, Supervisor, with the Pledge of Allegiance; and the Clerk called the roll.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Diane Scalzo Supervisor

Jane Prohaska Board Member

Judith Lowe Board Member

Gretchen Robinson Board Member

ABSENT: Alexis Wilcox Board Member

ALSO PRESENT: Elizabeth Vermeulen Town Clerk

Kevin Cross Highway Superintendent

OTHERS PRESENT: Charles Edmonds

**Supervisors Report by Diane Scalzo:**

* Diane attended a recent Chobani event where the new $1.2 billion production facility in Rome was announced.
* Chobani has nine parcels in Columbus, with 2025 taxes collected of $318,990. Of that, the County receives about $196,000 and the town receives about $122,800.

Chobani property tax payments are 21.18% of the town’s total tax warrant of $579,653.

The manufacturing facility is valued at $9,694,530 and the cold storage warehouse is valued at $9,980,277. These are the values agreed to in the legal settlement and do not necessarily represent the assessed values.

* Diane attended an event at Colgate on poverty in America; local, state and regional perspectives were presented.

**Board of Health:** nothing to report

**REVIEW OF PRIOR MEETING MINUTES:**

April 10, 2025

Motion was made by Jane and seconded by Gretchen to approve the minutes of the April 10, 2025 meeting.

* Judy pointed out that there were several instances where numbers ten or under were not written out in words. Clerk will change that in these minutes, and keep in mind for future.

4 Ayes. 1 absent

Motion carried and minutes were approved with noted changes.

**Communications**:

* No Primary Election in June. The General Election will be on Nov 4th.
* Received a Notice of Conditional renewal of our insurance program for the Aug 9 renewal.
* General Municipal Law section #300 has specific regulations concerning municipal websites for towns with population over 1500. The population in the Town of Columbus is under 900.

**Public Comment:** None

**Highway Superintendent’s Report by Kevin Cross**

* Update on equipment repairs.
* Road work filling potholes and will grade dirt roads once things dry up more.
* Cutting brush.
* CHIPS work is subject to weather.
* State budget has passed but no numbers released yet.
* No word on FEMA payment yet.
* Worked on crushed stone base for broadband hut. Kevin will provide an estimate of materials used and time spent, for grant reimbursement to Highway.

**Dog Control Report –** Several dogs were picked up and returned to owners. Clerk discussed the new SPCA contract with Carol, and mentioned that the new contract specifies that we will need at least two DCOs. She said that Kelly Small will be her backup for Columbus. They work well together and have both taken the recent DCO training in Guilderland.

**Planning Board –** Clerk stated that Oaths of Office were received from the two new members.

**Committee Reports:**

**Communications/Community Engagement:** no report

**Park:** by Jane Prohaska :

* Discussed the slow park reservations so far. Jane will do a FaceBook post.
* Discussed plantings around the gazebo.
* The playground mulch can’t be started until the ground dries up; still standing water in areas.

**Highway:** A current listing of our large equipment will be needed for our upcoming insurance renewal.

**Infrastructure, Buildings and Facilities** by Judy Lowe

* Kevin has pulled out the bad bushes and broken posts.
* Brian Banks and TJs will be contacted for proposals. A reminder that if the business has employees, their proposal would need to charge prevailing wage and we would need a W-9 form. Diane will look up the prevailing wage for these categories.

**Legal & Finance** by Diane Scalzo

* Diane spoke with the town attorney about possible open seats in the upcoming election; If there is a failure to elect a new Supervisor or Town Board member, the current officer would hold over as needed to establish quorum and appoint a new officer.
* The annual report for ARPA expenditures was filed in April.
* Reviewed April financial statements.
* Updated Schedule of Fees and Fines were distributed.
* Diane will inform Joanne about our larger budget this year due to the Broadband grant, so it does not affect our renewal proposal.

**Public Health & Emergency Preparedness** by Gretchen Robinson

* May is Mental Health Awareness month
* The Columbus Rabies Clinic will be on Tuesday, May 13 from 5:30 to 6:30

**ConnectALL Fiber Broadband**

* Communications Hut
* Bids received for Outside Plant Construction which will range from brush clearing to hanging the fiber.
* Marketing: Newspaper articles, spools, and yard signs.

50 signs were received and 65% (38 signs) are for Columbus

**OLD BUSINESS**

Kevin brought the master list of Town Road names, and Diane made a copy and will get a copy to Liz.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Resolution #38 Appointment of Dog Control Officer II**

**Whereas**, the Chenango County SPCA contract now requires the appointment of two Dog Control Officers, and

**Whereas**, Carol Lawrence was appointed Dog Control Officer in Resolution #14-2025 Deputies and Other Town Titles, and

**Whereas**, Kelly Small has the necessary skills and experience to provide this service;

**Therefore, be it resolved** that Kelly Small is appointed Dog Control Officer II.

* Moved by Diane and seconded by Gretchen.
* Discussion: Liz will contact Carol to let Kelly know that she was approved as our second DCO at a salary of $100 monthly. Kelly should contact Diane to get the necessary paperwork signed.
* Roll call vote:
  + D. Scalzo Aye
  + J. Prohaska Aye
  + A. Wilcox Absent
  + G. Robinson Aye
  + J. Lowe Aye
* Motion carried and Resolution passed.

**Resolution #39 Dog Control – SPCA Contract**

**Whereas,** the Town of Columbus is required to contract with an animal shelter to provide care to stray dogs or those separated from their owners, and

**Whereas**, the Chenango SPCA is a facility located in Norwich and which can provide such care, and

**Whereas**, the designation of a Dog Control Officer is required to respond to incidents involving stray dogs or those separated from their owners as well as other tasks such as dog enumeration, and

**Whereas**, the designation of a veterinary care facility is required to provide basic veterinary care to such stray dogs and those separated from their owners, pursuant to a requirement by the Chenango SPCA that all injured dogs must be examined by a veterinary care facility prior to placement at the Chenango SPCA;

**Therefore, Be It Resolved** that the Town Supervisor is authorized to sign such necessary documents;

**And Be it Further Resolved** that Carol Lawrence and Kelly Small are appointed as Dog Control Officers and the New Berlin Veterinary Care Facility is named to provide required services.

* Moved by Diane and seconded by Jane.
* Discussion: Diane may wait until the end of the month before signing the contract, in case any terms get changed.
* Roll call vote:
  + D. Scalzo Aye
  + J. Prohaska Aye
  + A. Wilcox Absent
  + G. Robinson Aye
  + J. Lowe Aye
* Motion carried and Resolution passed.

**Resolution #37 – Budget Modifications and Adjusting Journal Entries**

**Whereas**, budget modifications are required from time-to-time to ensure adequate budget funding for necessary expenditures, and

**Whereas**, adjusting journal entries are required from time-to-time to correct prior entries for accuracy;

**Therefore, be it resolved** that the budget be modified to increase A3510.12 Dog Control Salary $700.00 and decrease A1990.4 Contingency $700.00;

**Resolved** that adjusting journal entries be made to increase DA5110.41 April – Sept Fuel $1,792.03 and decrease DA5142.41 Oct – March Fuel $1,792.03; increase A2397.1 ConnectALL Grant Revenues $128,486.72 and increase ConnectALL Grant Account Receivable $128,486.72; increase A5010.4 Highway Contractual $125.00 and decrease A1920.4 MUNI Association Dues $125.00.

* Moved by Diane and seconded by Gretchen.
* Discussion:
* Roll call vote:
  + D. Scalzo Aye
  + J. Prohaska Aye
  + A. Wilcox Absent
  + G. Robinson Aye
  + J. Lowe Aye
* Motion carried and Resolution passed.

Highway Budget analysis and review in preparation of 2026 budget.

**REVIEW OF EXPENDITURES**:

Motion to Pay bills made by Gretchen and seconded by Jane. All Approved.

GENERAL FUND – Abstract #5, Vouchers #115 - #154 for a total of $188,592.96

HIGHWAY FUND – Abstract #5, Vouchers #62 - #72 for a total of $41,523.27

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Gretchen and seconded by Judy.

All Approved.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Elizabeth Vermeulen, Town Clerk

NOTE: The Audible recording of the Town Board meeting is available from the Town Clerk as a FOIL request.