

Town of Thurston Board Meeting Minutes  
Held: Wednesday August 21, 2024 at 7:00 P.M.  
Location: 7578 County Route 333, Thurston

Present: Town Supervisor: Michael Volino

Town Council Members: Noel Sylvester, Holly Chase, Daniel Gee, Jennifer Hargrave

Town Highway Superintendent:

Town Dog Control Officer:

Town Attorney:

Town Code Officer: Nick Nolton

Town Historian: Noel Sylvester

Town Assessor: Jerry Gebhard

Town Justice:

Absent: Randy Akins, Darlene Smith, Rachel Treichler, Saige McGarvey, Diana Dixon

Visitors: Shannon Nowicki, Matt Nowicki, Marge Taft, Sam Dick, Teresa Borhman, Jeff Sweeney, Karen Warner, Eva Turner, Larry Schilling, Ruth Schoonover

Supervisor Volino called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. The Board opened with the US Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Comment: Larry Schilling stated that Casella was working with NYSDEC to build a biosolid (sewage sludge) composting facility on Bonny Hill in the Town of Thurston. Jeff Sweeney stated that NYSDEC has been inspecting a gas well on Knowles road. Sam Dick stated that the Town of Thurston cleaned ditches on Smith road but didn't clean a culvert that had debris in it. Ruth Schoonover stated that the potholes are getting worse on Tucker road. Karen Warner introduced herself to the Board. Warner stated that she lives on Hanrahan road and has applied to sit on the BAR in the Town of Thurston. Warner is training for Assessor positions in the Town of Rathbone and the Town of Caton. Motion was made by Noel Sylvester seconded by Dan Gee to close Public Comment. Put to vote: Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye. Carried.

Minutes: Motion was made by Jennifer Hargrave seconded by Holly Chase to accept and approve the July 24, 2024 CDBG Public Hearing meeting minutes and the Regular Board meeting minutes. Put to vote: Noel Sylvester, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Holly Chase, aye. Carried.

Bills Payable: Motion was made by Daniel Gee seconded by Noel Sylvester for Michael Volino to pay all claims listed in the General abstract dated August 21, 2024 totaling \$17,656.25, the Highway abstract totaling \$39,207.72, and the T&A totaling \$158.00. Put to vote: Noel Sylvester, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Holly Chase, aye. Carried.

Clerk's Report: July 2024 monthly deposits were \$1,436.40. Dolores Crooker stated that Micayla Decker applied to use the Town Hall on 9/14/24 from 2pm till 4pm but would like to get in earlier to set up for the party.

Justice Report: Justice Smith collected \$300.00 in the month of July. A new Desktop computer has been delivered from the Unified Court System to replace the one that was destroyed during the storm on July 15, 2024.

Tax Collector Report: Nothing

Assessor Report: Jerry Gebhard stated that the Assessors would like to have an informational session on the Star program at 6:30 pm on October 16, 2024.

Historian Report: Noel Sylvester stated that according to documents from Margarete Wilson the Risingville Church owns the Community Building which sits on the Town of Thurston property.

Code Enforcement Officer's Report: Nick Nolton issued five building permits, issued one certificate of occupancy, and has 4 open violations.

Dog Control Officer's Report: Randy Akins reported 2 dogs running at large and that a drive through rabies clinic is scheduled for Thursday September 26, 2024 from 6 pm till 8 pm at the Thurston Highway dept.

Highway Superintendent's Report: Saige McGarvey reported that work still continues on Hanrahan road. Pot holes have been patched on Forty Dollar road and Bonny Hill road. Noel Sylvester donated one load of material to the project on Hanrahan road. Several ditches were cleared of debris. The Highway dept has been awarded PERMAS safety grant of \$2,600.00. PPE, safety cones, signs, and many other safety items will be purchased with the funds.

Supervisor's Report: Supervisor Volino stated that the CDBG Block grant for housing rehab assistance was submitted on July 30, 2024. The end of the month report was emailed to the council members on August 2, 2024. Supervisor Volino stated that he received a letter from Casella's attorney regarding litigation and permit modification status on August 5, 2024. Supervisor Volino stated that he replaced the American Flag at the Town Hall on August 8, 2024 and took 3 old flags to the American Legion for proper disposal. Supervisor Volino attended a virtual Supervisor's roundtable offered by the Association of Towns on August 20, 2024. Steuben County is in the midst of redistricting the agricultural district offering all land owners the opportunity to participate. Supervisor Volino stated that he received a letter from Tom West stating that Casella dropped litigation. NYS Ag and Markets might not ever determine if sludge spreading on land should be permitted or not. Ruth Schoonover asked if anything was being done about the PFAS contaminated water wells in the Town of Thurston. Supervisor Volino is working with the Sierra Club for grants to purchase filter systems to clean up contaminated wells. Jennifer Hargrave and Holly Chase are working on the Fall news letter with plans to finish it by September 12, 2024. Motion was made by Noel Sylvester seconded by Jennifer Hargrave to accept and approve the Clerk's report through the Supervisor's report. Put to vote: Noel Sylvester, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Holly Chase, aye. Carried.

Unfinished Business: Supervisor Volino stated that the Aldrich cemetery is the only cemetery in the Town of Thurston with any space left for burials. Supervisor Volino stated that he has rules and regulations provided by the Association of Towns that could be followed by the Town of Thurston. Supervisor Volino read aloud the rules and regulations after which a discussion took place. Motion was made by Holly Chase seconded by Jennifer Hargrave to approve the rules and regulations put forth. Put to vote: Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye. Carried. Plot pricing and deeds were discussed that a 5x10 plot size could hold 1 full sized burial and 2 cremations. Price for 1 plot will be \$300.00 for residents of the Town of Thurston and \$600.00 for non-residents. Motion was made by Jennifer Hargrave seconded by Noel Sylvester to approve the plot size and fees established. Put to vote: Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye. Carried. Supervisor Volino stated that Gary Abraham is available to amend the Town of Thurston Solar Law for \$5,000.00. The Board decided to make a decision at the September Board meeting. Motion was made by Noel Sylvester seconded by Jennifer Hargrave to close Unfinished Business. Put to vote: Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye. Carried.

#### New Business:

Supervisor Volino stated that Karen Warner has submitted a letter of intent to sit on the Board of Assessment Review for the Town of Thurston. Motion was made by Daniel Gee seconded by Holly Chase to appoint Karen Warner to the Board of Assessment Review 5 year vacant position commencing on October 1, 2024 and ending September 30, 2029. Put to vote: Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye. Carried.

Supervisor Volino stated that there was \$50,000.00 unanticipated revenue from Steuben County sales tax received in June 2024. Volino would like approval to pay an additional \$51,233.62 towards the 2022 Peterbilt dump truck in 2024. The Board decided to wait closer to December incase an unexpected problem arises. Supervisor Volino stated that most of the security cameras need to be replaced at the Town Hall and the Highway shop. Supervisor Volino received an estimate from Eastern Security for \$4,038.00 for the Town Hall and \$6,675.00 for the Highway Shop. The Board asked for another estimate to compare pricing. Supervisor Volino asked the Board to consider a property tax exemption for volunteer firefighters and ambulance workers. Motion was made by Holly Chase seconded by Noel Sylvester to move forward with the tax exemptions with the help of Rachel Treichler as legal council. Put to vote: Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye. Carried.

2025 Budget: Supervisor Volino stated that he would like to have a budget workshop prior to issuing the Tentative Budget to the Board at the September Board meeting. Motion was made by Holly Chase seconded by Jennifer Hargrave to have the budget workshop on Thursday September 12, 2024 at 7:00 PM. Put to vote: Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Noel Sylvester, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye. Carried. Motion was made by Holly Chase seconded by Daniel Gee to close New Business. Put to vote: Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye. Carried.

Announcements: Next Regular Board Meeting September 18, 2024 at 7:00 PM

Motion was made by Holly Chase seconded by Daniel Gee to adjourn the regular board meeting at 8:17 p.m. Put to vote: Noel Sylvester, aye; Jennifer Hargrave, aye; Michael Volino, aye; Daniel Gee, aye; Holly Chase, aye. Carried.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by Dolores Crooker, Town Clerk