

These are the Town Board Meeting Minutes held on May 3, 2023 at the Blenheim Town Hall.

Meeting commenced at 6:30 pm with the salute to the flag.

**Present:** Supervisor Don Airey                      Councilwoman Renee Grabowski  
Councilman Chester Keyser                      Councilwoman Carolee Russell  
Councilwoman Anne Mattice-Strauch                      Highway Superintendent Dave Mattice

**Motion made to approve March 1, 2023 and April 5, 2023 board meeting minutes by Councilman Keyser; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilwoman Russell; so moved**

Supervisor Airey announced that the public hearing on the Short-Term Rental Law will remain open and future comments can be sent to Town Clerk's email (blenheimclerk@midtel.net)

**Supervisor's Report - Supervisor Airey**

- Road Work Bid Opening – Three (3) bids were received by the following:
  - SuitKote - \$13,298.24
  - Peckham - \$16,656.72
  - Gorman - \$22,875.20

**Motion made, subject to Highway Superintendent review, to allow Highway Superintendent to approve and contact low bidder that meets road work specifications that were set forth by Councilwoman Mattice-Strauch; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilman Keyser; so moved.**

- NYS Dept of Tax and Finance (DTF) – Governor's executive budget has passed making renewable energy to now be regulated by agencies such as NYPA. The pending lawsuit regarding taxation on these energy products is now "moot" as these agencies are tax-exempt, and they can acquire land/property by eminent domain.
- NYCDEP- Representatives will be giving a presentation at the June BOS meeting
- Supervisor Airey has requested that the Town retain Lewis-Greer Attorneys as counsel for the clean up of the Richardson property on North Road and issues regarding Miller Road

**Motion made to authorize Supervisor Airey to retain Lewis-Greer Attorneys as 2<sup>nd</sup> counsel for town issues by Councilwoman Russell; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilman Keyser; so moved**

- Short-term Rental Law- will remain open for further comments
- Homeless Shelter Committee- continue to make progress; GPI will begin site work to relay to county; there is up to \$10M available for the project
- Fire Dept Jaws of Life Training- Supervisor Airey and Councilwoman Grabowski attended
- NYPA EAP Meeting – meeting will be held at SUNY Cobleskill on 5/25. Supervisor Airey plans to attend along with Mike Hartzel of OES
- Blenheim Bridge – County Historical Society has suggested that they can create "coasters" from the wood pieces. Supervisor Airey to get more details on this project. Comment made if projects are made from the wood, can some of the proceeds come back to Blenheim?
- Broadband- Supervisor Airey has spoke with Jim Becker regarding this project. Mr. Becker is "confident" that grant awards will end in 2024 and work to begin in 2025
- Thank you, Dave for attending the BOS meeting in April. It was nice to see representation from the town.

**Privilege of the Floor:**

It has come to the board's attention that there has been loose dogs and a resident has been bitten. The resident spoke to the board inquiring as to what can be done about the situation. No licenses have been issued and no documentation as to vaccinations for rabies were found, therefore the resident had to receive a series of rabies vaccinations. Resident stated that the Dog Control Officer was contacted but did not respond. About the same time as this incident, another resident reported that a dog had been hit by a car and was near the NYPA entrance. Since Blenheim's DCO could not respond, a second dog control officer was contacted who did respond. The dog was immediately transferred to the Cobleskill vet to evaluate its injuries and then was transported to the shelter.

Supervisor Airey stated that the first and foremost concern is the safety of our residents. This issue has involved multiple agencies: Ag & Markets, health department, County and State Police, DSS and the Animal Shelter. Supervisor Airey contacted Ag & Markets to understand the roles of dog control officers and to discuss possible solution(s) to the ongoing problem of unlicensed dogs. One fact that was made clear during his conversation was that no DCO should cross town jurisdictions! The dog control officer's job is to enforce that every dog is licensed and vaccinated but DCOs do not have the right to enter resident's homes to enforce. In this case, the DCO worked in conjunction with the Health Department, and the DCO issued and served the owner of the dog a violation ticket with

deadlines to vaccinate and license the dog OR owner will have to surrender the dog to the Shelter. If neither of these happen, the DCO and/or police will need to enforce the surrender of the dog to the Shelter. Supervisor Airey further stated that issues/events like this have been happening all over the county and the shelter is at capacity. He also stated that the director of the Howes Cave Animal Shelter will be on the agenda for the next BOS meeting to discuss the issues they are facing and request funds be made available for an expansion at the current facility (approximate cost of \$45,000). Supervisor Airey is working to advocate that there be an Animal Control Officer that will cover all of Schoharie County and he is in support of the funding for the Shelter expansion.

**Highway Report - Superintendent Mattice**

- Excavator rental usage- Eminence and Dugas Roads; equipment being used for ditching and tree removal
- Cobleskill Stone Products will be hauling stone to Eminence – it is cheaper to have them do it. All will be charged to CHIPS
- Brush tractor – expected 6/5/23
- New truck pricing – cost is up for International and Western Star – taking longer to get price and it will take 20 months to build to specifications
- Schoolhouse – no more repairs can be done with the water well pump. New pump to be installed and moved up instead of in basement

**Code Enforcement Officer Report – Brian Caron**

- April report has been received and can be viewed during Town Clerk's business hours

**Judge's Report – Ralph Arrandale**

- Nothing to report

**Assessor's Report – Robert Mann**

- Nothing to report

**BLTCRC Report – Gail Shaffer**

- Beginning 5/5/23 BCC will be open Fri/Sat/Sun

**Other:**

- Councilwoman Grabowski has requested that the Schoolhouse and the old garage be painted at the same time as the BCC. Contractor quote she has received:
  - Scraping and painting of Schoolhouse/roof/annex for \$4,980
  - Scraping and painting of old garage building and roof for \$4000

Comments made: at this point is it worth it? Maybe put this money towards the repair of the BCC belfry? Councilwoman Grabowski suggested that the BLTCRC contact contractors for quotes to repair the belfry work to be brought before the town board

**Motion made to accept quote of \$4980 and \$4000 to scrape and paint Schoolhouse and old garage by Councilwoman Russell; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilwoman Mattice-Strauch; so moved**

- Councilwoman Grabowski also announced that local students have been selected for Boys State and Girls State: Larkin Graham, Polly Kelly and Jacob Strauch – CONGRATULATIONS!!!
- Judge Arrandale has requested a cell phone in order to conduct court business instead of using his personal phone.

**Motion made to purchase a cell phone to conduct court business by Councilman Keyser; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilwoman Russell; so moved**

**PUBLIC HEARING COMMENTS:** No comments made at this meeting regarding the Short-Term Rental Law. Public hearing will remain open.

**Correspondence (not read at meeting but available during Town Clerk's business hours):**

- Schoharie County Conservation Association Newsletter
- The Gathering Place Newsletter
- Notice of Violation from Schoharie County Health Depart regarding resident with unvaccinated dog(s)
- Invitation to attend annual review from NYPA
- Letter from Schoharie County Treasurer granting Tax Collector extension to tax collection period

- Letter from Division of Licensing Services notifying that all Notary Public are required to maintain a journal of notarial acts performed
- Solicitation letter from Bank of Greene County
- Facsimile Transmission regarding Resolution in Objection to Governor Hochaul's "New York Housing Compact" proposal from Town of Geddes
- Keep Mohawk Valley Beautiful bulletin
- Notice from Ag and Markets Municipal Shelter Inspection Report – satisfactory
- Request for Letter of Support for Schoharie County EMS to obtain a permanent Certificate of Need- Supervisor Airey responded with Letter of Support

**Motion made to pay bills \$11,866.23 General; \$16,865.06 Highway by Councilwoman Mattice-Strauch; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilman Keyser; so moved**

**8:25 pm Motion made to enter into Executive Session to discuss personnel issue by Councilwoman Mattice-Strauch; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilman Keyser; so moved**

**8:35 pm Motion made to exit Executive Session by Councilman Keyser; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilwoman Mattice-Strauch; so moved**

**8:35 pm Motion to adjourn made by Councilman Keyser; 2<sup>nd</sup> by Councilwoman Mattice-Strauch; so moved**

**Minutes respectfully submitted by Robin Alley, Town Clerk**

*Renee Strabouski Councilwoman*

*Robt Keyser  
Carollee Russell*

*[Large signature]*  
*D. Airey  
1000 April 2007*