

Machias Town Board Meeting Minutes

September 19, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 7:27 pm, following the Public Hearing on the proposed solar moratorium. The pledge of allegiance was said by all in attendance prior to the opening of the Public Hearing. Attending were Supervisor Stephen Cornwall; Councilmen Robert Shenk, Frank Bork, Robert Green, and Tom Reese; Highway Superintendent Tim Byroads; and Town Clerk Rebecca Grimmelt. Also in attendance were MDA representative Derek Rule; Bernie Horschel; Legislator Ginger Schroder; Kevin Bliss; Sheila Ransbottom; Brenda Hanson; Jennifer and Joshua Dusterhus; Brandon Boehmer; Daniel Blecha; Mark Foster; LuAnn and Rafael Tudela; Gerard Heimbuch; Ken Dash; Dominic LeBel; Thomas Lippert; Jessica and Shawn Malayny; Katie Cornwall; Bill Arlow; and Henry Zomerfad. Josh Borowski, Tim Smith, Travis Ward, and Joe Ciarolo from the Highway Department were also present.

Frank Bork made a motion to accept the minutes of the September 6, 2022, special meeting. Bob Shenk seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

The supervisor began the meeting by reading the resolutions relating to the proposed Local Law No. 1-2022, "A six-month moratorium on the approval of solar farms in the Town of Machias". Resolution #45, "A resolution relating to the State Environmental Quality Review Process" was read. Tom Reese made a motion to approve it and Robert Green seconded. All were in favor and the resolution was adopted. Resolution #46, "Resolution to adopt Local Law No. 1-2022" was read; Frank Bork made a motion to approve it and Tom Reese seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried. The supervisor then read the text of the new law, Law 2022-1 "Six Month Moratorium on Solar Development".

Steve Cornwall then asked if there were any comments from the floor. Several of the community members in attendance gave their thanks to the Board for the new law.

Kevin Bliss from RIC asked to speak. He wanted to know if his letter of response to the August public hearing had been shared with the community because he thought it would answer many of their concerns. (It is now on the town website under "Minutes".) He said that one of the things that these solar projects do is create jobs for the local community. There was some back-and-forth discussion regarding the truth of that statement. Ken Dash, a resident of Machias, who works with Local 210, said that he was there to make sure that their people work on these projects. They want to insure there will be jobs in the Union for younger people in the community. John

Buszak, also from Local 210, wanted to let everyone know that the “Wild West Show” of solar farms is over. They weren’t happy with the type of construction that was being performed, the erosion control, the way the land was being managed. It made everyone upset. There were low wages and out of town workers. NYSERDA has added a lot of criteria to the projects. There are a lot of laws that were added, effective January 1, 2021, and now the developers are being held to a much higher standard. He said it’s important to have everyone attend the Solar Seminar by the Cattaraugus IDA next month.

Ginger Schroder added that the IDA won’t even approve a PILOT unless there is an absolute guarantee that local labor will be used on the project.

A woman spoke up to thank the board for strengthening municipal law and home rule. Steve Cornwall thanked her on behalf of the Board. Tom Reese added that the only reason any of them are on the Board is because they love the Town of Machias and will always look out for the best interest of the community.

The supervisor invited the Youth Commission to speak. Jenna Hehl announced that they raised \$1,583.22 with their Boot Drive. They invited Bill Arlow to show the preliminary sketches that he has drawn for the proposed playground layout. (I missed some of the discussion due to side noise from other attendees of the meeting. I asked them to continue their discussions outside.) The Board asked that the Youth Commission work with Tim Byroads to make sure that all of the bases are covered before they move forward. They all agreed that a new playground would happen. Tim said that no matter what the brochures say, any wood product would have to be sealed every two to three years. The playground is in direct sun all day. Tim would prefer powder-coated steel to wood. The Board assured them that they are in full support of the playground, but we need to plan financially and look at what playground material is going to last the longest with the least amount of maintenance.

Steve Cornwall said that financially the town is between a rock and a hard place. New York State will only allow the town to increase our tax revenue by \$15,000 for the year. That is for everything – salaries, cost of supplies, town projects, etc. There is a 2% cap on tax increases. The increased revenue won’t even cover the increased cost of fuel and utilities for this year.

Tim Byroads gave his report for the Highway Department. Everything is good.

Steve Cornwall said that Bernie Horschel has accepted the job as Code Enforcement Officer. Everyone was in favor. He was a CEO previously and will update his certification.

Derek Rule gave an update on the Water System. Health Department did a sanitary survey in February 2022, for the two well houses and the distribution system. They noted a number of deficiencies and have stated that the town must come up with a plan to remediate the problems. MDA has put together a draft of a letter to the Health Department which outlines two options: (1) we will take care of everything as one big project, requiring engineering and obtaining funding (grants); (2) the town breaks repairs into smaller projects with different completion dates for each. Derek would like two of the Board members to meet with him and Randy Jansen to discuss the issues and make sure that everything is prioritized correctly and any projects that are in addition to those laid out get considered and any additional concerns get addressed and added to the plans. Issues need to be taken care of before they become a problem that will be very expensive to fix. Derek wants to get together next week and finalize the letter because the Health Department needs our plan by the middle of October.

MDA is working with North Collins on a new walking trail with life stations (exercise spots) and a pickle ball court. North Collins applied for a grant that will pay for the project. Derek will get the information on the grant to Tom Reese for our park.

Derek has also talked with the companies regarding the new water meter installations. The delivery of the new meters has been delayed. The installer has agreed not to charge us any extra for having to install them next year. He will have a change order prepared for the next meeting to change the required completion date to August 1, 2023.

Bob Shenk moved that the Board go into executive session to discuss the upcoming budget and payroll concerns. Bob Green seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried. The Board went into executive session at 7:52 pm with the Highway Department employees. The Board meeting resumed at 8:13 pm.

Steve Cornwall read Resolution #47, "Audit of Claims for September 2022". Steve Cornwall moved to accept the resolution and Frank Bork seconded. All were in favor, and it was accepted.

The Board was presented with financial statements for August 2022.

Bob Green made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tom Reese seconded. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Grimmelt, Town Clerk

September 2022 Vouchers

GENERAL	\$	7,531.96
YOUTH	\$	2,421.91
HIGHWAY	\$	16,898.29
STREET LIGHTING	\$	1,662.97
WATER	\$	6,805.89
LIME LAKE SEWER DISTRICT	\$	10,005.23
LIME LAKE SEWER DISTRICT CAPITAL	\$	0.00