Machias Town Board Meeting Minutes

August 15, 2022

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 pm, following the Public Hearing on the RIC Machias Solar Project. 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; Code Enforcement Officer Christopher Lexer; and Town Clerk Rebecca Grimmelt. Also in attendance were MDA representative Derek Rule; Youth Board members Karen Insley, Michelle Polcz, and Jenna Hehl; Bernie Horschel; Kevin Bliss and Sheila Ransbottom from RIC; Jennifer and Joshua Dusterhus; Brandon Boehmer; Daniel Blecha; Mark Foster; LuAnn and Rafael Tudela; Gerard Heimbuch; and Andrew Hehl.

Frank Bork made a motion to accept the minutes of the July 18, 2022, meeting. Bob Shenk seconded. All were in favor and the motion carried.

The Board went into an immediate executive session to discuss legal issues; Derek Rule and Chris Lexer joined them. The regular meeting was reconvened at 7:55 pm. At that time, Supervisor Cornwall announced that all discussion and action regarding solar projects would be tabled until the Town’s attorney could be consulted.

The supervisor told the board about a proposal to relocate a fire lane at 221 Broadbay Circle to run parallel with the lot line, instead of through the middle of the property. The owners of the property, Jack and Marylou Putnam, had already gotten approval from the Machias Fire Commissioners to move the fire lane and had contracted with a surveyor to resurvey and show the proposed fire lane. Resolution #43, “Resolution to relocate an eight (8) foot fire lane at 221 Broadbay Circle” was read. Tom Reese made a motion to accept the resolution and Robert Green seconded the motion. All were in favor and the resolution passed.

Karen Insley, from the Youth Commission, was invited to give a report. She said that they had had their “Color Run” on Saturday, August 13th, at the park. They had about 50 participants and received some generous donations from the community. They raised approximately $700.00 which will go toward new playground equipment. The REC program ended on August 12th.

The town pool will remain open from noon to 5 pm through Sunday, August 21st. After that, the water level will be lowered to allow for some repairs. It will be closed for the season during the week of August 29th. Highway will make sure that the pool cover is moved to the pool for the closing. The pool is scheduled to be opened on June 5th, 2023, to prepare for next summer’s programs.

The Youth Commission will be holding a Boot Drive on Saturday, September 17th, at the corner of Rt. 16 at the blinking light. It will coincide with the Rt. 16 Yard Sale event. The Highway Department is providing safety vests for those working the drive.

Tom Reese said that Roy Shepherd, who he had asked to review the grants for the new playground equipment, said that two had expired, but that they renew every quarter. Roy will keep track of the grants and see when they can apply. Tom also reached out to Senator George Borello regarding grant money. He said that nothing was available at this time but that he would put the Town on his list and keep us apprised of any grant opportunities that would be available.

The Youth Commission has earmarked $18,000.00 of their savings for the new playground. They are continuing to fundraise and have a Cash Raffle that will be drawn on December 2nd. Tickets are $10.00 each and are available from Youth Commission members, at the American Legion, and at Town Hall.

Tim Byroads gave a report for the Highway Department. Martin Road has been paved; it cost over $160,000.00 to go 1.2 miles, 20 feet wide. They are paving Fox Hill and Prescott now. Blacktop prices have continued to rise and even NYS is just patching problem areas because they can’t afford to fix them correctly. The culvert pipe that was replaced on Riceville Road above Krepps was inspected by the DEC. They gave it their full approval. Highway is still planning to replace the tube across Riceville at the Ashford Town line, but it may get pushed back to the spring.

Ashford’s highway department is going to train our highway department on replacing a manhole. They will fix the one on Route 16 that was damaged by the state. Tim is still looking into options for a vacuum truck to clean drains. He will ask the NYS DOT if they will clean the drain that runs across Route 16 near the lake. A resident requested some ditch repairs done near the railroad on Potter. Tim said he will do it if he gets written permission from the railroad company. They are also addressing some flooding issues on Felton Hill and Krepps; they will be clearing some ditches and pouring some concrete to alleviate the water problems.

All of the equipment is running well. They have submitted paperwork to Buffalo Mack for a new Volvo dump truck to replace our 10-wheeler. It will take several years for it to be available. They are still waiting on the F-350 that was ordered last year.

Resolution #44, “Audit of claims for August 2022” was read. Tom Reese made a motion to accept the resolution and Bob Shenk seconded the motion. All were in favor and the resolution passed.

Steve Cornwall gave a brief update on the new water meters. EJ Prescott has delivered a couple of meters and the computer and meter reading equipment. The Town is still waiting on most items.

Tom Reese will get in contact with Zuech again to check on whether they are interested in assuming the part-time maintenance of the sewer district. If not, the Town will need to look at other possible candidates for the job.

There was some discussion regarding the solar projects and concerns about flooding. Mark Foster inquired as to why we can’t just stop the projects. It was noted that without zoning the Town has very little control over what happens and what businesses move into our Town. The Board invited the community to look at zoning as a way to protect Machias and keep it the community we love. No one wants to make our town like the suburbs of Buffalo. A referendum vote for zoning has failed in the past. With the new cheese factory being constructed in Franklinville, it may increase other construction and businesses in our area. Zoning, or lack thereof, will become much more important soon. The Board invited the community to look at what they would like in a zoning law and to share that with the Board.

Rebecca Grimmelt will investigate other ways of sharing information with the residents of Machias. Many attendees felt that the sign board and the Arcade Herald were outdated and obsolete. She will inquire as to what other towns in Cattaraugus County do for their communities.

Tom Reese made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Bob Shenk seconded, and all were in favor. The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Grimmelt, Town Clerk

*August 2022 Vouchers*

GENERAL $ 32,972.61

YOUTH $ 4,721.00

HIGHWAY $ 210,946.41

STREET LIGHTING $ 1,576.78

WATER $ 22,163.78

LIME LAKE SEWER DISTRICT $ 7,329.66

LIME LAKE SEWER DISTRICT CAPITAL $ 0.00