

May 21, 2020

Regular Town Board Meeting

*Meeting was held via the Zoom Meeting application to be in compliance with the rules set forth by Governor Cuomo during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Present: Supervisor Edward Bender, Councilman Paul Aubertine, Councilman Alan Wood, Councilman Dan Wiley, Councilman Marty Mason, Keith Brass and three visitors.

Supervisor Bender opened the meeting at 6:30pm with the pledge of allegiance. Supervisor Bender introduced Gertrude Karris, Partnership Specialist with the US Census Bureau.

Gertrude told the board that the response from Cape Vincent is very low, in fact it is the lowest in the County at 17.4%. She explained that Census is responsible for funding, and tax money that could be returned to the town. She said that Census takers usually go door to door but during the Pandemic shutdown, they are not allowed to do this. She said they need to try a grass roots attack, email blasts and reach out to organizations that could help to spread the word to residents to complete their Census forms and get them in.

Councilman Wood suggested a note be put on the town sign and high school sign. He also suggested a story be put in the TI Sun.

Supervisor Bender suggested a story be put in What's Happening, and that Shelley at the Chamber of Commerce office be contacted. Supervisor Bender said that he is aware of how important the numbers are for Cape Vincent, and how it helps with tax dollars and grant funding.

Councilman Wiley asked if she had any information that could be given to the town, if she could send it electronically. He said that there is a list of organizations that could help get the word out.

Gertrude thanked the board for their time and help.

Councilman Mason made a motion to accept the minutes of the April 16, 2020 meeting, seconded by Councilman Wood. All members voted AYE.

Supervisor's Financial Report was reviewed. Councilman Aubertine made a motion to accept the Supervisor's Financial Report, seconded by Councilman Mason. All members voted AYE.

Reports:

Supervisor Bender talked to the board regarding the request from Matt Cooper to send out a questionnaire regarding the proposed sewer district. The board reviewed the chart of proposed districts and the costs within those areas. Matt Cooper is asking the board if they are ready to take the next step, which would be to send out the questionnaire. The Councilmen agreed to move forward by making a decision on which district the questionnaire should be sent to. Councilman Wiley said that he would like to pick a dollar figure that he feels people would be comfortable with.

Councilman Aubertine asked if the dollar figures quoted are rates used in the village. Councilman Mason said that he thinks they are the village rates. Councilman Aubertine also asked if the costs of doing the mailing for the questionnaire would be reimbursed through the funding.

The board discussed Area 1, the river area, also known as water district #1 area. They asked Keith Brass if he knew how many parcels are in that area. Keith told them that he was not sure, but has placed 684 meters in that water district.

Councilman Aubertine made a motion to continue to explore the creation of a sewer district in the location known as Area 1, which has a yearly cost of under \$1,000.00, seconded by Councilman Mason. All members voted AYE.

Supervisor Bender said that the court can open to perform daily activities, but in person court activities are still suspended until further notice. Town Clerk, Michelle Bouchard told the board that the court has put in a shelf to conduct business through the outside window. There have also been signs placed to inform the public of how the court will conduct business. The court has also sent their re-opening plan to the Fifth Judicial District for approval.

Recreation Park – Keith Brass reported that the Board of Elections has contacted him to use the building in June for the Primary. He said that they are going to have a cleaning agency come in before and after the election, to clean and disinfect the room. He said that the American Red Cross is going to hold a blood drive there too in June.

Water – Keith Brass told the board that they are getting a lot of calls for turn ons and they have done two new water installs.

The board discussed re-opening the town offices. Steps have been taken to get hand sanitizer, but not masks. The board said that they want to keep the public and employees safe and ways to stay socially distanced was discussed. Councilman Mason suggested a window be placed in each office door that will allow for business to be done through the window.

Councilman Wood suggested the office operate by appointment only until things settle down.

Councilman Aubertine said that he would like to recommend that it is time to start having the board meeting in person. He said that social distancing could be done safely at the Recreation Park building. He said that the Public Hearing regarding water district #7 held via zoom worked well, but want to move forward with the meetings being held in the recreation park building. Councilman Aubertine said that he feels the petitions will come in and there will be a referendum on the district creation. He asked if there has been any discussion on how the vote will take place and he said that the ground rules should be made clear to the public.

Councilman Wood said that he feels the vote should be determined by simple majority.

Councilman Aubertine said that he would like the user rate explained to the residents. He said that during the public hearing he felt there was a lot of confusion and it needs to be made clear what the water rate is and that the seasonal resident's year rate won't be the \$733.00 because they won't be using water year round. Councilman Aubertine said that he is pretty confident that the town sets the ground rules for the vote. He said that he is not comfortable with moving on with the project if 49% of the votes are not in favor of the project.

Councilman Wiley said that Scott Burto is working on Club Street and will be having a conference call on June 1 regarding the RFP. Councilman Wiley said that he is upset to think that the town has to pay the interest on the Bond from Citizens Bank. He said that he is certain that Attorney Russell told them that

they would only pay interest on the amount of funds used. Councilman Wiley said that he was going to review his emails regarding this.

Supervisor Bender said that he will contact the bank and Attorney Russell.

Councilman Aubertine said that he understands that because of Covid-19, there won't be any summer camps for the kids, and asked Councilman Wiley if the Youth Commission was considering anything for the kids. Councilman Wiley said that he didn't think there are any plans. He said that all league play has been cancelled. Councilman Wiley said that there are so many unknowns. He said that he tried to spearhead an effort to get kids back into activities, but no one was interested.

Councilman Aubertine said that he feels the kids need the activities; he said maybe the board should make some noise, "move some goal posts".

Councilman Mason said that the town crew has been helping with the construction at the East End Park Pavilion. He said the project is moving forward and that the trusses should be in at the end of June.

Supervisor Bender said that Tim White is researching the steps to remove the Swenson house and the boat house. He said that they are discussing with DASNY the paperwork needed to bring in some of the funds to the town. He said that the docks are out for this year, but they are moving forward with the bath house. Supervisor Bender said that Attorney Russell has to submit an Opinion of Council to DASNY, this has been done.

Supervisor Bender and Tim White told the board that an Authorized Agent needs to be appointed.

Supervisor Bender said that if Tim is not the agent then the board will have to be.

Councilman Wood made a motion to name Tim White as the agent for acquisition of permits, seconded by Councilman Wiley. All members voted AYE.

Councilman Mason asked if the town crew can demo the house, and Tim White said that this is not a reimbursable cost. He said it would help if the crew could do this.

Bills: General Fund, 173-206 \$27,900.02; Capital Water Project #7, 9-10 \$6,110.00; Highway, 100-119 \$14,174.97; WD #1, 59-79 \$29,587.42; WD #2, 63 \$1,949.01; WD #3, 59-79 \$1,270.81; WD #4, 59-79 \$1,556.63; WD #5, 59-79 \$1,943.89; WD #6, 62-79 \$587.62.

Councilman Mason made a motion to approve the payment of the vouchers, seconded by Councilman Wood. All members voted AYE.

Councilman Wood made a motion to hold a budget work session on May 28 at 10am in the Recreation Park building, seconded by Councilman Aubertine. All members voted AYE.

Councilman Aubertine made a motion to adjourn at 7:55pm.

Michelle Bouchard, RMC – Town Clerk