

October 6, 2020

The regular meeting of the Varick Town Board was called to order by Supervisor Robert Hayssen at 7:00 p.m. Present at this meeting were Councilmen, Richard McCulloch, Tom Fox, Eric Riegel and Richard Peterson, Town Clerk, Donna Karlsen, Attorney for the Town, Joe Midiri, Assessor, Anne Morgan, and Water/Sewer Operator, Ben Karlsen. Absent: Highway Superintendent; Ben Freier and Bookkeeper, Angela Testa.

A motion by Richard McCulloch, seconded by Eric Riegel and so carried unanimously to open the Public Hearing on increasing the operation and maintenance fee for Varick Sewer District No. 2.

Supervisor Hayssen reviewed the necessity of increasing the operation and maintenance fees for this district citing the costs pertaining to the installation of a by-pass system for the existing pump station and repair of that station in excess of \$110,000. A portion of this repair cost will be funded through this districts fund balance with \$85,000 being barrowed from Seneca Lake Water District until a loan can be secured for that amount. Supervisor Hayssen contacted Rural Development seeking available funding to offset this cost but currently there are no funding available. He will continue to seek other funding opportunities.

As there were no comments, the supervisor asked for a motion to close the public hearing.

A motion by Tom Fox, seconded by Richard McCulloch and so carried unanimously to close the public hearing at 7:05.

Abstract: A motion by Richard Peterson, seconded by Richard McCulloch and so carried unanimously to approve Abstract No. 10, General Fund, Vouchers A0020-116 to A0020-122 in the amount of \$1,729.37, Highway, Vouchers DAO20-079 to DAO20-090 in the amount of \$4,765.98, Varick Water District No. 1, Vouchers VW120-018 to VW120-019 in the amount of \$230, Seneca Lake Water District, Vouchers SWS20-076 to SWS20-084 in the amount of \$38,051.21, Varick Water District No. 3, Vouchers VW320-021 to VW320-023 in the amount of \$423.15, Varick Water District No. 4, Vouchers VW420-028 to VW420-030 in the amount of \$2,798.80, Varick Sewer District No. 1, Vouchers VS120-034 to VS120-037 in the amount of \$272.51, Varick Sewer District No. 2, Vouchers SSS20-025 to SSS20-030 in the amount of \$6,805.36, Building Capital Project, Voucher HO120-006 in the amount of \$785.50.

Supervisor: A motion by Eric Riegel, seconded by Richard McCulloch and so carried unanimously to approve the Bookkeeper's Report.

Highway: Nothing to report.

Judge: Nothing to report.

Code: Nothing to report.

Assessor: Mrs. Morgan reported that she has been completing field work and updating deed transfers. She noted that the market is slow currently and there is little inventory available. She reported that there has been some discussion regarding the codes assessors use and should not be used as a valuation tool.

Water/Sewer Operator Monthly Report: September 2020

- Marked out Dig Safety's
- Got weekly meter reads
- Did weekly water tests for each district
- Took bac t samples in all 4 districts
- Filled out and submitted monthly water report to health department
- Data logged water usage in each district
- Ordered Parts to fulfill inventory and for upcoming projects
- Turned water off as needed
- Exercised and did maintenance on fire hydrants on Seneca Lake
- Helped Highway when needed
- Replaced Grinder pumps for sewer
- Painted Fire Hydrants on Seneca Lake District
- Met with Builders and engineers for new home being built in Seneca Lake Water District
- Answered questions dealing with each water district and sewer system
- Hauled Topsoil to Sewer pump station to repair yard
- Called in Dig Tickets for upcoming projects
- Changed Meters

Varick Water District No. 1: Nothing further to report

Seneca Lake Water District: Supervisor Hayssen and Water Operator Ben Karlsen have reviewed the water loss for this district which has been substantial the last two quarters. Mr. Karlsen reported that he checked the flow of the master meter at the pump station during the middle of the night and it is averaging between 4 to 6 gallons a minute and would indicate there isn't a major leak in the system. He also reported that he has exercised all the hydrants in this district and walked this line and felt that if there was a substantial leak it should have been recognizable due to the lack of rain over the past month or so. Supervisor Hayssen expressed concern over the accuracy of the county master meter. Mr. Karlsen recommended seeking a quote for 12" ductile iron pit flowmeter from Selmon Unique Instruments to be installed in the meter pit at Kennedy Road which is owned by this district to monitor the accuracy of the county's master meter. He reported that he does not have an amount for this meter but will obtain one. Supervisor Hayssen and Mr. Karlsen received the third quarter billing reports today and is concerned about the amount of estimated water reads. Mr. Karlsen noted that he found several accounts where new meters were installed and still had estimated reads. He also reported the inconsistency with meters that will correctly read one quarter, not read the next quarter, but are able to be read the following quarter. He expressed his opinion that if the board wants better control of billing, it should be moved in-house so that some of the issues can be addressed at the time the meters are being read. Supervisor Hayssen would like to move forward with the purchase of a meter for this district and recommended the board approve this purchase. Mr. Karlsen stated he does not have a price for

this meter and informed the board he would have a price available to them for the November meeting. Mr. Midiri suggested that if the board were to move forward with this purchase now, an amount to not exceed should be stipulated.

A motion by Richard McCulloch, seconded by Eric Riegel and so carried unanimously to approve the purchase a 12” ductile iron pit flowmeter not to exceed \$4,000.

Mr. Hayssen reported that he had received a drafted letter from Attorney Frank Fisher to be sent to the Mormon Camp addressing the need for a meter to be placed at their connection on East Lake Road. He will review the contents of this letter for its accuracy prior to having it sent.

Varick Water District No. 3: Mr. Karlson reported that he assisted the Town of Fayette in the installation of a new fill station on Leader Road.

Varick Water District No. 4: Mr. Hayssen reminded the board this district continues to show unaccountable water usage and would like to purchase the single channel ultra-sonic flow meter that was previously discussed months ago. Mr. Karlson reminded the board that the cost of this meter was approximately \$3,400, but since then the Pandemic is making it difficult to get parts and pricing has increased so he is unsure of what the price of this meter is currently.

A motion by Richard McCulloch, seconded by Eric Riegel and so carried unanimously to approve the purchase of an single channel ultrasonic flowmeter not to exceed a cost of \$4,000.

Varick Sewer District No. 1: Supervisor Hayssen reported the fund balance for this district is low and recommended the operation and maintenance cost for this district be raised from \$20 to \$40 per quarter effective with the first quarter billing of 2021 and would like board’s approval to hold a public hearing on said increase at the November meeting.

A motion by Tom Fox, seconded by Eric Riegel and so carried unanimously to hold a public hearing for raising the operation and maintenance fee from \$20 to \$40 in Varick Sewer District No. 1 effective with the first quarter billing of 2021.

Varick Sewer District No. 2: Supervisor Hayssen reported he approved payment to Blue Heron Construction of \$75,000 as originally agreed to their quote of July 27, 2020 for the work done to repair the pump station. The bill submitted was for \$112,821.96 which reflected a discount of \$5,434.20. Matthew Rodenhizer explained the submitted bill includes two days of emergency work prior to starting the repair which was not included in the agreed amount. He also stated that the bypass pumping was almost double the cost than what was anticipated, material costs were 10k more than expected and labor was 5k to 7 k more. Mr. Hayssen, Mr. Karlson and Mike Gable had some questions regarding some of the items and services that were being billed for and hope to get these issues resolved so an accurate settlement of this bill can be paid.

Supervisor requested a motion from the board to raise the operation and maintenance fee to Varick Sewer District No. 2 to \$48 effective with the last quarter billing of 2020.

A motion by Eric Riegel, seconded by Richard Peterson and so carried unanimously to raise the operation and maintenance fee for Varick Sewer District No. 2 from \$33 per quarter to \$48 per quarter effective with the fourth quarter billing of 2020.

It was noted that the odor at the fire house has been excessive and it was recommended that the fan placed in the hedge row be replaced to address some of this issue.

Town Clerk: A motion by Richard Peterson, seconded by Eric Riegel and so carried unanimously to approve the Town Clerk's Report: Supervisor: \$380, NYS Ag & Markets: \$14, Total Disbursements: \$394.

Minutes: A motion by Richard Peterson, seconded by Eric Riegel and so carried unanimously to approve the minutes of September 1, 2020.

Planning Board: Planning Board is continuing to work on vacation rental zoning. The zoning for Hillside property now leased by Martin will need to be followed closely to make sure all uses are in compliance with town zoning.

2021 Tentative Budget:

Supervisor Hayssen reviewed the 2021 Tentative budget line by line with discussion from the board. Mr. Hayssen reported that he had reduced expense lines across all the funds and reduced the amount he appropriated from the fund balance, resulting in a tentative budget reflecting a 10% per thousand increase. He reminded the board that there has been no town tax increase in many years which has been accomplished by keeping expenses down and appropriating the fund balances to offset any of the increase in expenses. The fund balances have been spent down and now requires the dollar per thousand to be raised. He reminded the board that some of the fund balance was spent on the necessary renovation to the town hall and upgrade of the facility. The board discussed South Seneca Ambulance's budget request and agreed to a 6% increase and reviewed with the Supervisor the anticipated fund balances and recommended using \$15,000 more from the fund balance to reduce the tax increase to 5% per thousand.

A motion by Eric Riegel, seconded by Richard McCulloch and so carried unanimously to accept a 6% increase from South Seneca Ambulance Corporation for the 2021 Preliminary Budget.

A motion by Tom Fox, seconded by Richard McCulloch and so carried unanimously to appropriate and addition \$15,000 from the fund balance for the 2021 Preliminary budget.

Supervisor Hayssen reported that with the increases, the town will have to introduce Local Law Number 2 of the Year 2020 to override the Tax Levy Limit Established in General Municipal Law §3-C. The intent of this local law is to allow the Town of Varick to adopt a budget for the fiscal year, commencing January 1, 2021 that requires a real property tax levy in excess of the "tax levy limit" as defined by General Municipal Law §3-C.

A motion by Eric Riegel, seconded by Tom Fox and so carried to hold a public hearing on Local Law No. 2 of the year 2020 on November 4, 2020 at the Varick Town Hall, 4782, Route 96 at 7:00 p.m. to override the tax levy limit established in General, Municipal Law §3-C.

Roll Call:

Robert Hayssen Yes
Richard Peterson Yes
Tom Fox Yes
Eric Riegel Yes
Richard McCulloch Abstained
So Carried 4 to 1

A motion by Eric Riegel, seconded by Tom Fox and so carried unanimously to hold a public hearing November 4, 2020 at the Varick Town Hall at 7:00 p.m. upon the 2021 Preliminary Budget of the Town of Varick and preliminary budget of the water districts, sewer districts, special districts, fund budgets and adopted fire protection units.

Roll Call:

Robert Hayssen Yes
Richard Peterson Yes
Tom Fox Yes
Eric Riegel Yes
Richard McCulloch Abstained
So Carried 4 to 1

New business, old business, correspondence:

Declaration Energy Solar Project: Attorney Wendy Marsh requested a status on this project from Michael Nozzolio. In response, Mr. Nozzolio stated NextEra continues to proceed with the proposed Declaration Energy Solar Project at the former Seneca Army Depot and currently is evaluating the requirements of the newly enacted New York State law governing energy projects siting requirements and the effect of the proposed regulations just issued this past month in conjunction with the statute. Until the evaluation is completed, he is not able to adequately advise on scheduling, but will certainly let Attorney Marsh know when those evaluations are completed. Attorney Marsh indicated in an email to Supervisor Hayssen that she is not happy with his response and expressed concern that the town will be blindsided with a submittal and not be prepared. She also does not want to see the town waste money if the project is not going to proceed.

A motion by Eric Riegel, seconded by Richard McCulloch and so carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted
Donna Karlsen
Varick Town Clerk